



Rozhovor s Milanom Adamčiakom

Interview with Milan Adamčiak

Dušan Barok / Conducted by Dušan Barok

Trojrozměrná partitura III pro dva hráče na smyčcové nástroje a koordinátora, 1969
(Prvý večer Novej hudby, Ružomberok), Robert Cyprich, Jaroslav Vodák
foto: Lubomír Adamčiak
Three-Dimensional Score III for two string players and coordinator, 1969
(First Evening of New Music, Ružomberok), Robert Cyprich, Jaroslav Vodák
foto: Lubomír Adamčiak

Mladosť

D.B. Ako ste sa dostal k hudbe a grafickým partitúram?

M.A. Obaja s bratom sme sa narodili rizikovo. Mali sme vyklbené nohy a museli nás dávať dohromady. Mňa sa podarilo, ale bratovi nie, zostal invalid a jednu nohu má kratšiu. Rodičia mu vychádzali v ústrety, všetky jeho želania im boli sväté. A on chcel byť muzikantom. Zobrali ho na harmoniku do novej hudobnej školy v Ružomberku. Mňa naučil hrať na husličky Palo Čonka, miestny Róm, ktorý roznášal mlieko a vynikajúci huslista. Keď som mal okolo 13 rokov, v miestnej hudobnej škole ma prijali do violončelovej triedy, kde ma učil tiež Róm, Jožko Lakatoš, strašne dobrý človek. O dva roky som pokračoval vo violončele na konzervatóriu v Žiline. Čoskoro som zistil, že viem o hudbe málo, tak som začal čítať knihy. V priebehu dvoch rokov som prečítal všetko, čo v češtine a slovenčine vyšlo. A povedal som im, že budem teoretik. Bolo to v 64-tom roku, kedy sa začalo písať o súčasnej hudbe. Jeden profesor si to všimol, a povedal mi, že nielen hudba je na svete. Priviedol ma k poézii, nosil nám knihy a odporúčal ďalšie. Vychádzali vtedy také štvorcové knižočky o výtvarnom umení aj o poézii, tak som sa do toho pustil.

V 64-tom roku, zhodou okolností, prišiel do Prahy John Cage. Môj profesor pozval mňa spolu s ďalším študentom k sebe domov. Pustil rádio, prechádzal frekvencie, a ja mu hovorím stop. Zastavil, a tam... pííp, pííp. Hovorím, to je Webern! Nikdy som ho predtým nepočul. Len som si myslel, že asi tak nejak bude znieť. Keď to skončilo, oznámili, že to bolo Päť kusov pre sláčikové kvarteto Antona Webera. Nato zahľásili, že John Cage je v Prahe, s Rauschenbergom a Cunninghamom, a začala relácia. Cage povedal, “mojím zámerom je nemať zámer.” A ja som povedal, mojím zámerom je mať nekonečne veľa zámerov. “Čuš, počúvaj.” Arnold Kojnok¹ to má vo filme, bol za pánom profesorom Edom Bekem, v tej istej miestnosti, pod tou istou knižnicou. Nevedel som, či si to bude pamätať, no pre mňa to bolo nesmierne dôležité, vtedy som naozaj prvýkrát v živote počul Cagea aj Webera. Ale predtým som skúšal, ako asi vyzerá Weberova hudba, robil som si partitúru,

Youth

D.B. How did you get into music and graphic scores?

M.A. Both my brother and I were born with complications. We both had dislocated legs and they had to fix us, so to speak. They managed with me, but not with my brother who remained disabled and one of his legs is shorter. Our parents were always forthcoming with him, all his wishes were holy. And he wished to be a musician. He got accepted for accordion to a music school in Ružomberok¹. I learnt to play the violin from Palo Čonek, a local Roma who delivered milk and was an excellent violinist. At around 13 years, I was accepted to a violoncello class at the music school where I was taught by another Roma, Jožko Lakatoš, a really good person. Two years later, I continued cello at the conservatory in Žilina. Soon I found out that I knew too little about music, so I started reading books. Over the course of two years I read everything that had been published in Czech and Slovak. I wished to become a theorist. It was in 1964, the year they began to write about contemporary music. One professor noticed it and told me there's more to the world than music. He introduced me to poetry. And since at that time, more books on fine arts and poetry was being published, I delved into it.

Coincidentally, Cage visited Prague in 1964. My professor invited me and another student to his apartment. He turned on the radio, flicked through it, and I told him to stop. He stopped, and there was... beep, beep. I said this must be Webern! I'd never heard it before. I just thought it might sound like that. When it was over, they announced it was Anton Webern's Five Pieces for String Quartet. They also said that John Cage was in Prague, with Rauschenberg and Cunningham, and the radio show started. Cage said: „My intention is to have no intention.” To which I responded that my intention is to have infinitely many intentions. Arnold Kojnok has it in his film². He visited Professor Edo Beke, in the same room, under the same library. I wasn't sure if he could remember it. It was extremely important to me, I heard Cage and Webern for the first time in my life. I had explored Webern's music before, doing a score, linking a pseudo-scheme, one point here, one point there, and suddenly I heard it live. It was at this time that I decided to explore the music of the 20th century. In the same year, Jaromír Paclt, the second most progressive musicologist in Prague alongside Vladimír Léb, was featured in Slovenská hudba (Slovak Music) magazine. He wrote about Milan Grygar, Warsaw Autumn and Palermo Festival. He went wherever something happened. Anestis Logothetis³ gave him a set of mu-

¹ A city in northern Slovakia.

² Slovak film director and producer made two documentaries about Adamčiak.

³ Greek avant-garde composer.

sic and graphic scores. He couldn't get it published in the Czech Republic, so he published it in Slovakia, in Slovak Music. When I saw those four pages about Logothetis' scores, I realised I want to do this – „graphic music“. I was elated. That was in 1964.

Smolenice

D.B. Ligeti, Stockhausen, Kagel and Lutosławski visited Slovakia for Smolenice Seminars on New Music in the late 1960s. How did this event come about?

M.A. Warsaw had its own festival, Warsaw Autumn, and my colleague, composer, musician and conductor Laco Kupkovič performed there with Hudba dneška (Music of Today). Inspired, he wanted to do something similar in Slovakia. There was no need to organize another festival, so his colleague, musicologist Peter Faltin, suggested to do a symposium instead. A seminar with musicologists, theoreticians and musicians. Since the Smolenice Castle was the workplace of the Academy of Sciences, a recreation centre where representative events could be held, they agreed to host it there. In 1968, I was still at the conservatory, and learned about the first seminar later. At that time, Stockhausen attended, dedicated his composition to the Music of Today and they performed in his presence. I attended next year when Ligeti came. They refused to play his composition, a symphonic poem.

D.B. Why did they reject it?

M.A. Apparently it wasn't music. He brought it along as a sort of musical joke. There is also a recording, presented by Jožko Malovec, coincidentally one of the composers of new music and one of the artists. He was laughing. It was amusing to him even though it actually was something serious through which he wanted to present the rasters used in his symphonic poems. He was also included in the Fluxus movement with them because they express it. But they could also be done on a metronome. They did not managed to get 100 metronomes, only around 60–70 and Ligeti agreed. Six of us executed the piece, including Jožko Malovec, composer Juro Hatrík and three engineers from electroacoustic studios from Prague, Pilsen, and Bratislava. Laco Kupkovič conducted. A review was published in the form of a collage by Ilja Zeljenka, who replaced Kupkovič by a circus horse. A horse on his back legs, as he conducts. This was when Ligeti was here... Can you imagine such nonsense?

At that time, I performed in Smolenice for the first time. I gave them three propositions. Two of them got declined, the third one got executed. I opened for Mauricio Kagel⁴. The piece was called *Dislocation*. Eight musicians play checkers against eight others. They made a 6x6 meter carpet to fit into the hall. The

⁴ German-Argentine composer.

nalinkoval akoby pseudo-osnovu, a tuto bodík, tuto bodík... a naraz som to počul naživo. Vtedy som sa rozhodol, že sa budem venovať hudbe 20-teho storočia. V tom istom roku vyšiel v Slovenskej hudbe Jaromír Paclt, vedľa Vladimíra Léb, druhý najprogressívnejší muzikológ v Prahe. Písal o Milanovi Grygarovi, o Varšavskej jeseni a o festivale v Palerme. Chodil tam, kde sa niečo dialo. Od Anestisa Logothetisa² dostal konvolút a grafické partitúry. V Čechách mu to odmietli vydať, tak to vydal na Slovensku, v Slovenskej hudbe. Keď som videl tie štyri strany o Logothetisových partitúrach, reku bože môj, veď toto chcem robiť – “grafickú hudbu”. Bol som v siedmom nebi. Stále sa písal rok 1964.

Smolenice

D.B. Na Slovensko koncom 60-tych rokov zavítali

Ligeti, Stockhausen, Kagel, či Lutoslawski.

O Seminári Novej hudby v Smoleniciach sa ale dodnes veľa nenapísalo. Ako akcia vznikla?

M.A. Varšava mala svoj festival, a môj kolega, skladateľ, muzikant a dirigent Laco Kupkovič, na ňom koncertoval s Hudbou dneška. Videl ako to tam beží a chcel spraviť niečo podobné na Slovensku. Festival nebolo treba robiť, keď už jestvoval vo Varšave, tak jeho kolega, muzikológ Peter Faltin navrhol zorganizovať sympóziu. Seminár s hudobnými vedcami, teoretikmi, aj hudobníkmi. Keďže Smolenický zámok bol pracoviskom Akadémie vied, rekreačným domom, kde bolo možné robiť reprezentačné podujatia, odsúhlasili semináre tam. V 68-mom som bol ešte na konzervatóriu v Žiline, o prvom seminári som sa dozvedel až po ňom. Vtedy prišiel Stockhausen, Hudbe dneška venoval svoju skladbu, a tá ju uviedla za jeho prítomnosti. Ďalší ročník navštívil Ligeti, tam som už bol. Hudba dneška odmietla hrať jeho skladbu, symfonickú báseň.

D.B. Prečo ju odmietli?

M.A. Nebola to hudba. Doniesol ju ukázať ako hudobný vtip. Jestvuje aj nahrávka, ktorú uvádza Jožko Malovec, zhodou okolností jeden zo skladateľov novej hudby a jeden z interpretov. On sa pri tom smeje. Pre neho to bola sranda. Pritom to bola seriózna vec, ktorou chcel ukázať rastre, ktoré robí vo svojich

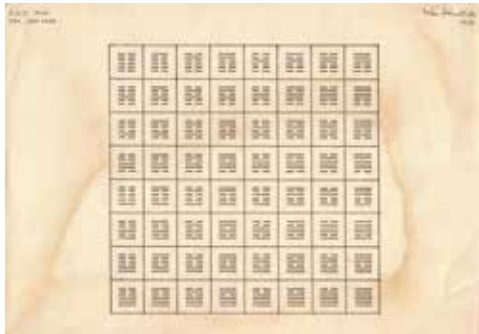
² Grécky avantgardný skladateľ.

symfonických básňach. Zaradili ho s nimi aj do Fluxu, pretože to vyjadruje. Dajú sa spraviť aj na metro-
nome. Sto metronomov nezohnali, bolo ich okolo
60–70 a Ligeti s tým súhlasil. Šiesti sme to robili,
Jožko Malovec, skladateľ Juro Hatrík a traja inžinieri
z elektroakustických štúdií v Prahe, Plzni a Bratislave.
Dirigoval Laco Kupkovič. Recenzia vyšla v podobe
koláže Ilju Zeljenku, ktorý Kupkoviča nahradil cirkuso-
vým koňom. Kôň na zadných, ako diriguje. Vtedy, keď
tu bol Ligeti... Vieš si predstaviť túto idiotinu?

Vtedy som v Smoleniciach prvýkrát účinkoval.
Ponúkol som im tri veci. Dve z nich odmietli a tretia
sa uskutočnila. Robil som predkapelu Kagelovi. Volalo
sa to Dislokácia. Osem hudobníkov hrá proti ôsmym
dámu. Vyrobili koberec 6x6 metrov, aby sa vmestil do
sály. Priebeh hry sa oznamoval mikrofónmi do sused-
nej miestnosti, kde boli hudobníci. Nadomnou stál
muzikológ, šachista, ktorý sa bál, že prídem o štyri
figúry. A ja mu hovorím, chvalabohu, chod' si ich
vypočuť, budem rád keď odtiaľ odídu, lebo nevedia
hrať. Spravili sme to dvakrát a publikum malo mož-
nosť vidieť rozdiel. Aby som dal hudobníkom šancu
zahrať to lepšie, mal som kriedou označené figúrky,
ktoré treba vyhodiť čo najskôr. Lebo išlo o muziku,
nie o to aby som vyhral v dáme.

D.B. Ako dlho trvala tá performance?

M.A. Ako partia dámy. 12 minút? 20? Chceli to nahrá-
vať, no neprial som si to, lebo som vedel, že to neza-
hrávajú dobre. Vôbec to predtým necvičili... Paradoxne
ma vzápätí pozvali do Darmstadtu. Ale štyri roky som
nesmel vycestovať. V 74-tom som tam šiel tajne,
dali mi ansámbľ. Po štvrtjej skúške som povedal, že
nechcem, nevedia to hrať. Špičkoví muzikanti.
“Ešte dve skúšky... A budeš si to riadiť.” Takisto som
im povedal, že nechcem nahrávku. Ale oni ju archi-
vovali. Vlni som ju dostal k mojím narodeninám. Keď
sa ma spýtali, povedal som im, že to nehrali ako mali.
Majú ma za náročného. Špičkový klavirista Herbert
Henck, ktorý mi viedol ten súbor, sa ma spýtal, že keď
som vedel, ako to má byť, prečo som to tak nena-
písal. Ja som ale chcel, aby to bolo tak ako to vedia
oni, lebo hrávajú oni, nie ja. Nazýval som ich “projekty”.
Nikdy ich neuviedli tak ako som chcel, “podľa pro-
jektu Milana Adamčiaka”, nie hrá Adamčiaka. Zaradila
ma ako skladateľa do lexikónu slovenských sklada-
teľov, tak som im vynadal. “Veď ja nie som skladateľ,
kde ste to nabrali?” “Hrali sme tvoje skladby.” “Nehrali



Milan Adamčiak, First Page For John-Cage, kresba na
papíru, 1967, 30×21 cm
Milan Adamčiak, First Page For John-Cage, drawing on paper,
1967, 30×21 cm

game was announced through microphones to the
neighbouring room where the musicians were. Above
me stood a musicologist, a chess player, who was
concerned I would lose four figures. I told him, thank
God, go listen to them, I will be glad if they leave,
because they cannot play. We did it twice and the
audience had a chance to see the difference. In order
to give musicians a chance to play it better, I marked
with chalk the figures to throw out as soon as possi-
ble. Because it was about music, not about winning
checkers.

D.B. How long did the performance last?

M.A. Like one game of checkers. 12 minutes? 20?
They wanted to record it, but I disagreed because
I knew they wouldn't play well. They did not rehearse
together... Paradoxically, soon after, they invited me
to Darmstadt. But I had not been allowed to trav-
el for four years. In 1974, I secretly went there and
got an ensemble. After four rehearsals I told them
I don't want to do it, they can't play it. These were top
musicians. „Two more rehearsals... And you're going
to manage it.” I also told them I didn't want a record-
ing. But they archived it. I received it last year for my
birthday. When they asked me, I said they didn't play
as they should have. They find me difficult... The top
pianist Herbert Henck, who led the ensemble, asked
me that if I knew how it should be, why I hadn't written
it that way. But I wanted it to be the way they can
play, not me, because it's them who play it. I called
them “projects”. They never presented them the way
I wanted: playing according to Milan Adamčiak's proj-
ect, rather than playing Adamčiak. They included me
as a composer in the lexicon of Slovak composers, so
I scolded them. „I am not a composer, where did you
get it?” „We played your compositions.” “You didn't
play my compositions, you played my project.” Music
is often compared to architecture. The architect can

do various projects, but there is a builder and a brick-
layer between him and the occupant of the house,
who can change it quite significantly. And then the
resident who can totally mess it up. Or improve it.
I have a friend, a semiotic ant. When he gets his hand
on a composition, he gnaws it to the point no one can
put it back together. He goes to the bottom of things,
down to their bone. Eugen Suchoň told me, “don't
write it, leave a little secret. For the listener. Even for
the composition.”

D.B. What were the discussions at the Smolenice seminars about? Participants came from different backgrounds.

M.A. We would have guests from Germany, Slovakia,
Czechia, Poland, Hungary and elsewhere. Guests from
Russia, Romania and Bulgaria were invited, but they
did not come. Things were discussed as it is done in
contemporary arts. What is the issue? Music. How?
The problem of harmony, the problem of rhythm, the
problem of perception of this, the sociology of that,
the psychology of contemporary music. The psychol-
ogy of German contemporary music is quite different
from that of Czech music, so it was discussed. How
come every present composer had different approach
to composing when they had been working in the
same field for years? For me as a student it was fan-
tastic, I was in heaven. I had already had five years of
experience in Warsaw because I had been attending
the Warsaw Autumn festival since 1965. And I was
cheeky. I went to the musicians and composers and
asked them to explain something or just to chat. But
this was work, there were no random attendees.

D.B. At the time of Smolenice, the Experimental Studio had been already operating in Bratislava.

M.A. In 1964 the first electronic music workshop took
place in Pilsen, organized by the Research Institute of
Radio and Television. At that time, Pilsen was given
permission to establish an experimental studio. They
had engineers and composers. I learned about it
about half a year later from the magazines I sub-
scribed to. I wrote to the Institute and received their
magazine *Radio and Television Work*. All the texts from
the Smolenice seminar were in there. Later the pro-
ceedings were also published. From Slovakia, Jožko
Malovec joined the Pilsen studio, he had some experi-
ence and made music, and Ivan Stadtrucker, an engi-
neer. The composer Peter Kolman was a radio drama-
turg at that time and decided that a studio would also
be created in Slovakia. The Slovak Television (STV) had
set up a work unit. Jožko Malovec began working at
TV as well. The experimental radio studio in Bratislava
was established and approved later, in 1965. The
communication between them was very friendly.
I talked about Ligeti's metronomes in Smolenice in
1969. Miloš Blaha from the studio as well as Ježek,
Jaromír and Peťo Janík immediately went there to deal

ste moje skladby, hrali ste podľa môjho projektu.”
Hudba sa prirovnáva k architektúre. Architekt môže
spraviť rôzny projekt, ale medzi ním a obyvateľom
domu je ešte stavbár a murár, ktorý to môžu veľmi
markantne zmeniť. A potom obyvateľ, ktorý to
môže totálne sprzniť. Alebo skrášliť. Mám kamaráta,
semiotického mravca. Keď vezme skladbu, ohlodá ju
tak, že ju už nikto nedá dohromady. Ide až na dno, na
lebkú. Suchoň mi povedal, “nepíš to, nechaj trošku
tajomstva. Pre poslucháča. Aj pre skladbu.”

D.B. O čom sa viedli diskusie na smolenických seminároch? Účastníci pochádzali z veľmi rozdielnych prostredí.

M.A. Mávali sme hostí z Nemecka, Slovenska, Česka,
Poľska, Maďarska. Pozývali sme aj z Ruska, Rumunska
a Bulharska, ale neprišli. Diskutovalo sa tak ako to
býva pri súčasnom umení. Čo je problém? Hudba.
A odkiaľ pokiaľ? Problém harmónie, problém rytmu,
problém vnímania toho, sociológia tamtoho, psycho-
lógia súčasnej hudby. Psychológia nemeckej súčas-
nej hudby je úplne iná ako u českej, tak sa o tom
debatovalo. Máme tu skladateľov, nech povedia ako
to robia, prečo je každý iný, keď roky robia na tom
istom hniezdočku? Pre mňa ako študenta to bolo
fantastické, bol som v siedmom nebi. Mal som už
patročné skúsenosti z Varšavy, lebo od 65-teho som
chodieval na Varšavskú jeseň. A bol som drzý, išiel
som za hudobníkmi a skladateľmi, nech mi niečo
vysvetlia, alebo podebatia. Ale boli to pracovné
stretnutia, nemali sme náhodných divákov.

D.B. V čase Smoleníc už v Bratislave fungovalo Experimentálne štúdio.

M.A. V 64-tom bol prvý seminár elektronickej hudby
v Plzni, ktorý organizoval výskumný ústav rozhlasu
a televízie. Vtedy dostala Plzeň súhlas na založenie
Experimentálneho štúdia. Boli tam inžinieri a sklada-
telia. Ja som sa o ňom dozvedel asi o pol roka
neskôr z časopisov, ktoré som odoberal. Napísal
som na výskumný ústav a dostal ich časopis
Rozhlasová a televizní práce. Boli tam všetky texty zo
Smolenického seminára. Neskôr vyšiel zborník. Zo
Slovenska tam bol Jožko Malovec, už mal skúsenosti,
už robil hudbu, a Ivan Stadtrucker, inžinier. Peter
Kolman, skladateľ, bol vtedy rozhlasový dramaturg
a rozhodol sa, že štúdio vznikne aj na Slovensku.
V Slovenskej televízii (STV) vzniklo pracovisko.

Jožko Malovec začal tiež robiť v televízii. Rozhlasové experimentálne štúdio odsúhlasili neskôr, v 65-tom. Komunikácia medzi nimi bola bohovsky priateľská. Spomínal som Ligetiho v Smoleniciach. Miloš Blaha zo štúdia, rovnako ako Ježek, Jaromír a Peťo Janík šli naozaj okamžite obslúžiť tie metronomy. Bolo pre nich samozrejmé žiť s tou hudbou. Navzájom spolu aj komunikovali, neexistovala rivalita. Mali nesmierne priateľské vzťahy. Ľudsky aj profesionálne. Keď sme robili prvý festival elektronickej hudby a vyšiel aj časopis a CD-čka, bolo samozrejmé, že je to otvorené všetkým, či z Plzne, Brna, Prahy či Bratislavy. Naše štúdio bolo urobené podľa varšavského modelu, lebo jeho zakladatelia, Dobrowolski a Patkowski, boli naši osobní priatelia. Ja som bol ešte soplôš, ale brali ma ako kolegu. Bol som zvedavý a sčítaný. Mal som si s nimi čo povedať. Mal som šťastie, natrafil som na tých lepších. Môžem povedať, že na tých najlepších.

D.B. Bol naplánovaný aj štvrtý ročník Smoleníc?

M.A. Bol. Mali tiež hrať moju vec, dokonca mi mal prísť súbor z Holandska. Tretie Smolenice robil Ivan Parík. Chceli sa zapáčiť, tak pozvali aj národných umelcov a iných ľudí, ktorých to vôbec nemuselo zaujímať. Robila sa Kupkovičova skladba *Ad libitum*, vo všetkých priestoroch bol spravený grafikon, diagram, ktorý každý z nás dostal. “Tu si môžeš zahrať na husličkách, tam na bubnoch, tuna choď potichu, tam krič, tam si zaspievaj, tam počúvaj...” V novinách to sprznili. Ukázali národného umelca ako hrá na rozhodcovskej píšťalke, a prišiel nám príkaz od ústredného výboru strany – koniec. Kupkovič emigroval. Peťo Faltin po ňom.

D.B. Hrala tá recenzia takú dôležitú úlohu?

M.A. Samozrejme. Našinci to spravili, neurobil to politik, ale jeden zo závistlivcov, ktorý to potreboval zosmiešniť. V 70-om roku ešte nebola normalizácia, policajti ešte na to nemali vplyv. My sme boli ešte na akademickej pôde, kam vplyv mať nemohli, aj keby chceli. Pre mňa bol šok, keď som sa to dozvedel. Bolo to nepochopiteľné, veď sa to rozbehlo. Iní ľudia nechápali čoho sa bojím. Bol som už po hladovke za Jana Palacha, a policajti ma mali v palci, vedeli aj o tomto. Aj ja som vedel, čo si môžem dovoliť, a čo už nie. Po rokoch som sa dozvedel, že *Sebastian Pont* sa v Smoleniciach neuviedol, lebo jeden skladateľ povedal, že je to zákerná skladba. Viete o čom je

with it. It was obvious for everyone involved to live with the music. They also communicated with each other, there was no rivalry. They had extremely friendly relationships. Humane and professional. When we organized the first electronic music festival and published a magazine and CD's, anybody could have been there, regardless whether from Pilsen, Brno, Prague or Bratislava. Our studio was made according to the Warsaw model because its founders, Dobrowolski and Patkowski, were our personal friends. I was still a kid really, but they treated me as a colleague. I was curious and well-read. I was able to talk with them. I was lucky to come across the better ones. The best ones, in fact.

D.B. Was there a fourth year of Smolenice planned?

M.A. Yes. They were also supposed to play my piece, by an ensemble from Holland. The third edition of Smolenice was put together by Ivan Parík. They wanted to appease and invited national artists⁵ and others who might have not cared about it. Kupkovič's composition *Ad libitum* was performed, with a graphicon, a diagram made for each room, that each of us received. „Here you can play the violin, there the drums, go quietly here, scream over there, sing there, listen here...” They ridiculed it in the papers, showing a national artist playing on the referee's whistle, and consequently we received an order from the party's central committee – it was the end. Kupkovič emigrated. Peťo Faltin followed.

D.B. Did the review play such an important role?

M.A. Of course. It was someone from our circles who did it. It wasn't a politician, but one of the envious who needed to ridicule it. In 1970 there had been no normalization yet, and the police had no influence. We were still on academic grounds where they couldn't intervene even if they wanted to! I was shocked when I found out. It was hard to believe, as it only got going. Some people didn't understand what I was scared of. But after I took part in the hunger strike for Jan Palach⁶, the police kept an eye on me and they were also aware of this. I knew what I could afford to do and what not. I learned years later that *Sebastian Pont* was not included, because one composer said it was a malicious piece. Do you know what Saint Sebastian is all about? His own soldiers were to shoot him because he became a Christian. This was my allusion to the arrival of the Soviet troops, with Catholic undertones. Suddenly I received a telegram that *Sebastian Pont* could not be realized for technical reasons. Well.

⁵ A state honorary title awarded to exceptional artists in the postwar Czechoslovakia.

⁶ Czech student whose self-immolation was a protest against the invasion of the Warsaw Pact troops in 1968.

East-West

D.B. **Recently I learned about a center in Austria, where scientists from the East and the West worked side by side on so-called non-contentious topics in the 1970s, among them also the first experiments with the Internet. In 1977, a three-week telematics conference experiment happened between centers in Vienna, Wrocław, Kiev and San Francisco.**

Bratislava was also involved in the development of the international computer network. What was your experience with the West?

M.A. I was at the Slovak Academy of Science between 1972 and 1991. During this time I learned about the East-West collaboration. In 1987, the Americans proposed a cooperation to Czechoslovakia. In December, three of us attended a conference in Prague. We were told that by January – in a month's time – we should propose topics for a 10-year cooperation between Czechoslovak academies and US institutions. The center was called IREX, and was supposed to deal with history, present, forecasting topics, and mutual research. We would explore American reality and they the European one. The Americans already had a precise topic for the first meeting. The first event took place in May 1988 in the US. It was a conference about Leoš Janáček. They invited specialists from all over the world: seven people from Czechia, from Slovakia my boss was supposed to go. It was an attempt at whether we could communicate at all, whether there would be clashes during the conference already, before the longer term research. My boss got scared. When he found out who was coming, he refused to go. The Americans insisted that there must be a Slovak person participating. In April I was told that next month I should have a presentation in Saint Louis, US. I had a lot to do to become an expert on Janáček in a month. But I ended up going and found out that the Czechs had been there before, through the Czech-American Society of Antonín Dvořák. Thanks to the *New World Symphony*, Americans consider Dvořák to be an international composer. It was a shock to me when my colleague told me he was there for the seventh time. I was wondering how the hell could he get there? It was simply impossible. Everything was possible, the Americans paid for it. And the Americans also visited us.

D.B. Slowly it has been coming to the surface what sort of rapport was happening.

M.A. I'm convinced that it started right away. As soon as Russia emerged as a superpower. Theremin was in the United States in the 1920s as a Russian electronics specialist, along with Henry Cowell. They even invented the drum machine. But Theremin returned to Russia, and got sent to a labour camp, or the laboratories, to be precise, even though he was the person Lenin had allowed to conduct electronic research. The Russians had the most advanced research on

svätý Sebastian? Vlastní vojaci ho mali zastreliť, lebo sa stal kresťanom. A to je narážka Adamčiaka na príchod sovietskych vojsk, ešte aj katolícky orientovaná. Naraz mi prišiel telegram, že *Sebastian Pont* nemôže byť z technických dôvodov realizovaný. No tak nebude, no čo.

Východ-Západ

D.B. Nedávno som sa dozvedel o centre v Rakúsku, v ktorom v 70-tych rokoch vedľa seba pracovali vedci z Východu a Západu na takzvaných nekonfliktných témach. Jednou z nich boli aj prvé pokusy s internetom. V 77-mom prebehla trojtýždenný experiment telematickej konferencie medzi centrami vo Viedni, Wroclawi, Kyjeve a San Franciscu. Do vývoja medzinárodnej počítačovej siete bola zapojená aj Bratislava. Aké ste mal skúsenosti v spojení so Západom?

M.A. Na Akadémii vied som bol od 1972 do 1991. Za celý ten čas som sa dozvedal o spolupráci Východ-Západ. V 87-mom navrhli Američania spoluprácu Československu. V decembri sme boli traja na konferencii v Prahe. Povedali nám, že do januára, čiže za mesiac, máme navrhnúť témy na 10-ročnú spoluprácu medzi československými akadémiami a americkými inštitúciami. Centrum sa nazývalo IREX, malo ísť o dejiny, súčasnosť, prognostické témy, aj vzájomný výskum. Mali sme skúmať americkú skutočnosť, oni európsku. Američania už mali presnú tému na prvé stretnutie. Prvá akcia sa robila v máji 1988 v Amerike. Šlo o konferenciu o Leošovi Janáčkovi. Pozvali špecialistov z celého sveta, z Čiech tam bolo 7 ľudí, zo Slovenska mal ísť môj šéf. Bol to pokus, či spolu dokážeme vôbec komunikovať, či nedôjde ku konfliktom priamo počas konferencie, a nieto ešte pri dlhodobejšom výskume. Môj šéf dostal strach. Keď sa dozvedel, kto tam príde, odmietol ísť. Američania trvali na tom, že tam musí byť Slovák. Prvého apríla mi prišli oznámiť, že druhého mája mám mať príspevok v Saint Louis v Spojených štátoch. Mal som čo robiť, aby som sa za mesiac stal odborníkom na Janáčka. No ale šiel som a zistil, že Česi tam už chodievali aj predtým, prostredníctvom Česko-amerikej spoločnosti Antonína Dvořáka. Američania vďaka *Novosvetskej symfónii* považujú Dvořáka za medzinárodného skladateľa. Pre mňa bol šok, keď mi kolega povedal, že je tam už siedmykrát. Hovorím si, kristepane, ako si sa sem mohol dostať? Veď to bolo

nemožné. Všetko bolo možné, Američania to predsa zaplatili. A aj Američania boli u nás.

D.B. Veľmi pomaly vychádza na povrch, aké všelijaké kontakty prebiehali.

M.A. Ja som presvedčený, že to začalo hneď. Hneď ako Rusko vzniklo ako veľmoc. Theremin bol v 20-tych rokoch v Spojených štátoch ako ruský špecialista na elektroniku, spolu s Henrym Cowellom. Vymysleli dokonca bicí automat. No ale Theremin sa vrátil do Ruska, a išiel do lágru, presnejšie ho poslali do laboratórií, pritom to bol chlap, ktorému Lenin povolil robiť elektronický výskum. Rusi mali najrozvinutejší výskum elektronických nástrojov a rádiotechniky. Prečo? Lebo Theremin povedal Leninovi, že sa to dá využiť, vojensky. Theremin vymyslel odhlučňovač, mohli odpočúvať ponorky, s oceánografickými mikrofónmi. Jeho dcéra nevedela, kde je otec, a otec o tom nesmel povedať, lebo musel sľúbiť mlčanlivosť. Ale možno sa mal ako prasa v žite. Keď bol v Rusku hlad, jeho americký kolega Cowell medzi americkými intelektuálmi zozbieral peniaze, a poslal do hladujúceho Ruska.

D.B. Oblasť pôsobenia mnohých experimentátorov s novými technológiami presahovala do národnej obrany a bezpečnosti.

M.A. Nikto z nás sa nedozvie, že do akej miery išli do hĺbky. Odkiaľ pokiaľ. Prečo robil Galejev výskum svetelnej hudby. Bol inžinierom na vojenskom letisku v Kazani, kde bol povinný robiť výskum o pôsobení farieb na človeka. Pilotom, ktorí sa orientujú podľa svetiel, stačí zaviesť iný systém, a máme naprosto jednoznačnú manipuláciu. Najväčšie výskumy v Amerike v súčasnom umení sa v poslednom čase robia na MIT. Prečo? Lebo je to vojenské praco-visko. Keď tam poslali Günthera Ueckera alebo Otta Pieneho za šéfov, Európa si povzdychla. Američania vedeli, že umelci vidia tiež dopredu. V tomto sme my bohužiaľ kľaví.

Intermédiá

D.B. Často ste vnímaný ako intermediálny umelec. Na jednej strane môžeme zobrať akékoľvek disciplíny, nielen umelecké, ale aj vedné, a akonáhle tam máme prienik, už sú to intermédiá. Alebo na ne nazeráť kultúrne, cez Fluxus, konkrétnych umelcov, skupiny, odkazy na ne. Ako vnímate tento termín?

electronic tools and radio technology. Why? Because Theremin told Lenin that it could be used for military purposes. Theremin devised the denoiser, a sound absorber, and thus they were able to intercept submarines with oceanographic microphones. His daughter had no clue where her father was, and the father couldn't tell for he had to sign confidentiality. But maybe he lived like a pig in rye. During the famine in Russia, his US colleague, Cowell, raised money among American intellectuals and sent it to the starving Russia.

D.B. The work of many experimenters with new technologies transgressed to national defense and security.

M.A. None of us will ever know about the extent of their activities. Why did Galejev research light music? He was an engineer at the military airport in Kazan and he was obliged to conduct research on how colours affect humans. It is enough to introduce pilots, who orient themselves according to lights, to a different system, and we have clearcut manipulation in place. The largest research in contemporary art in the US has recently been done at MIT. Why? Because it's a military workplace. When they sent Günther Uecker or Otto Piene as bosses there, Europe gasped. The Americans knew that artists could also see ahead of their time. Unfortunately, we ourselves fail at this.

Intermedia

D.B. You are often perceived as an intermedia artist. On the one hand, we can take any discipline, not just artistic, but also scientific, and once there's an intersection, it's branded as intermedia. On the other, we can look at them culturally, through Fluxus, specific artists, groups, links to them. How do you perceive this term?

M.A. Nowadays in a different way than ten years ago. The terms „interdisciplinary“ and „intermedia“ originated in the 1960s. While interdisciplinary was used in science and technology, intermedia was applied in the arts. Where theater has become something more than a theater – something other than theater - although theater itself is intermedia, but this is obvious. Originally, it was syncretical, united, and out of this came painting, sculpture, dance, singing, music. Once it was a ritual that connected everything: from crafts to social life to ideologies. Gradually, it separated, and then it again searched for its way back to reunite. Theater thus incorporated film projection, music absorbed elements from theatre, poetry integrated the visual and vice versa. In the 1960s it was roughly defined that these were intermedia. When it's not clear if it is music or theater, if it is music or drawing. Dick Higgins, coincidentally a member of the Fluxus movement, was the creator of the term “intermedia”. The term “interdiscipline” came about earlier. When Russian formalists encountered the issue of the the-



Milan Adamciak, 2014, foto: Boris Kršňák
Milan Adamciak, 2014, photo: Boris Kršňák

atralization of poetry and dramatization of literature, they realized that it goes beyond linguists and, for example, sociologists need to be involved as well, the term interdiscipline came into being.

D.B. In the 1970s-1980s the term transformed.

M.A. In the 1960s it got generally accepted, indeed. Lettrism originated in visual arts; visual poem in poetry; geometric painting and concretism in painting; concrete poetry in literature; while in music it was music graphics or graphic music. Nowadays, graphic music is considered drawing according to music, but it has established itself. Marshall McLuhan began to speak of the media as mass media, with the media shifting from the hand to the typewriter, or he spoke of car and clothing as an extension of body and skin. Anything could suddenly become the media. Mass media culture ensued, and it was necessary to choose the medium that would be key. Today, intermedia means what works between the media. Historically, it is necessary to speak about old media, or intermedia, and about traditional, classical and historical ones and about contemporary media. Current intermediality allows for human interaction with different technologies, information channels and so on.

When we were doing this, information channels didn't play a big role. The fact that I wanted to find out who was active in this field was my personal interest, and I didn't necessarily need it. When I showed my poems to Láda Novák ⁷, we found an identical one. He also made constellations, and used the letters “N”, but in addition he had an “U”, and I had an “H”. Mine was called *Outlook*, but it could also be called *A Giraffe Between the Antelopes*, and it would be the same - a joke – letters based on the visual. When I showed my poems to Gerhard Ruhm ⁸, he told me that he

.....

⁷ Czech painter and illustrator.

⁸ Austrian author, composer and visual artist.

M.A. Dnes inak ako pred desiatimi rokmi. Termíny “interdisciplinárny” a “intermediálny” vznikli v šesťdesiatych rokoch. Interdisciplinárny znamenal vo vede a technológiách, intermediálny medzi umeniami. Tam, kde sa z divadla stalo čosi viac ako divadlo, čosi iné ako divadlo, hoci divadlo samo je intermediálne, ale to je prirodzené, pôvodne, najprv bolo synkretické, spojené, potom sa vyčlenila maľba, plastika, tanec, spev, hudba. Kedysi to bol rituál, ktorý spájal všetko. Od remesiel, cez spoločenský život, až po ideológie. Postupne sa to separovalo, a potom si to znovu hľadalo cestu k sebe. Do divadla sa tak dostala filmová projekcia, alebo do hudby divadelné prvky, do poézie vizuál a späť. A v 60-tych rokoch sa zhruba definovalo, že to sú intermédiá. Keď je ťažké povedať, či to je hudba alebo divadlo, či je to hudobný zápis alebo kresba. Dick Higgins, zhodou okolností člen Fluxu, bol tvorca termínu intermédiá. Termín interdisciplína vymysleli predtým. Keď narazila Ruská formálna škola na problém teatralizácie poézie a dramatizácie literatúry, keď si uvedomili, že to presahuje rámec lingvistov a musia sa tým zaoberať napríklad aj sociológovia, vznikol termín interdisciplína.

D.B. V 70-80-tych rokoch ten termín menil charakter.

M.A. V 60-tych rokoch sa prijal obecne, naozaj. Vo výtvarnom umení vznikol lettrizmus, v poézii vizuálna báseň, v maliarstve geometrické maliarstvo, konkretizmus, no a v literatúre konkrétna poézia, v hudbe vznikla hudobná grafika, alebo grafická hudba, hudobná grafika. Dnes sa grafická hudba chápe skôr ako kresba podľa hudby, ale akceptovalo sa to. Marshall McLuhan začal hovoriť o médiách ako masmédiách, médiá posunul od ruky cez písací stroj, alebo hovoril o aute a odeve ako rozšírení tela a pokožky. Médiami sa naraz stalo čokoľvek. Prišla masmediálna kultúra, a bolo treba si vybrať médium, ktoré bude kľúčom. Dnes intermediálny znamená to, čo funguje medzi médiami. Historicky treba hovoriť o starých médiach, alebo intermédiách, a o tradičných alebo klasických alebo historických a o súčasných. Súčasná intermedialita počíta s interaktivitou človeka, s rôznymi technológiami, informačnými kanálmi a tak ďalej.

Keď sme toto robili, informačné kanály nehrali veľkú rolu. To, že som pátral po tom, kto sa tomu všetko venuje, bol môj osobný záujem, ja som to nepotreboval. Keď som ukázal moje básničky Láďovi

Novákovi, natrafili sme na jednu identickú. On tiež robil konštalácie, a tiež použil písmená “N”, ale on tam mal “U”, a ja “H”. Moja sa nazývala *Rozhľad*, ale mohla sa nazývať aj *Žirafa medzi antilopami*, bolo by to to isté, vtip, na vizuálnej stránke postavené písmená. Keď som ukázal moje básne Gerhardovi Ruhmovi, povedal mi, že robí to isté. Výtvarník Edo Ovčáček pracoval s písacím strojom, a používal kruhové štruktúry, ktoré sú takmer identické s mojimi. My sme sa na tom zasmiali, každý z nás to robil z iného pohľadu. Keď to dnes dajú vedľa seba, mne je jedno ako sa na to dívajú. Dnes už to je samostatné médium, ktoré nepotrebuje pitvať kontexty. Ak chceš robiť dejiny počítačového umenia, tak tie kontexty nemôžeš obísť.

Nazval by som ich skice pre sérigrafie. Niektoré z Edových sérigrafií sú zväčšeniny toho, čo robil na písacom stroji. Keď som ich prvýkrát videl, rovno som mu povedal, že som ich nemal vidieť. Bol prekvapený. Vytiahol som zo svojho šuflíka takúto istú a on sa rozosmial a povedal, že na tom nezáleží, mám si to nechať. Daroval mi svoje grafiky, aj typografické knižky. Keď som nemal z čoho žiť, bol som desať rokov nezamestnaný, predával som všetko, čo som mal. knihy, obrazy, grafiky. Keď som ho stretol, vtedy už bol šéfom sérigrafickej dielne, prvé čo sa ma spýtal bolo, či si nechcem urobiť sérigrafie. Povedal som mu, že som jeho sérigrafie predal, lebo som nemal z čoho žiť. A on mi odpovedal “Milan, veď ja som ti ich dal na to”. Kurník šopa... vieš aké to bolo krásne? Ja som sa rozplakal.

Včera sa ma Kata Rusnáková spýtala, prečo mám takýto vzťah k svojim veciam. Veľa vecí som daroval, veľa sa zničilo, stratilo, vymenil som za všeličo. Odpovedal som, že som muzikant. Viem čo som počul, viem čo som urobil, mne to chýbať nebude.

Rozhovor vznikol v apríli 2012 v Banskej Bystrici. Dušan Barok by rád poďakoval Michalovi Murinovi za dohodnutie stretnutia a Katarine Sido za prepis.

does the same. The artist Edo Ovčáček⁹ worked with a typewriter and created circular structures which are almost identical to mine. We laughed at it, each of us did it from a different perspective. When they put it side by side today, I don't care how they look at it. Today it is a separate medium that does not need to dissect contexts. If you want to explore the history of computer art, you can't bypass those contexts.

I would call them sketches for screen printing. Some of Edo's screen-prints are enlargements of what he did on a typewriter. The first time I saw them, I told him straight away I shouldn't have seen this. He was puzzled. I pulled an identical one from my drawer and he laughed and said it doesn't matter, I should keep it. He gifted me both the graphics and his typographic books made on a typewriter. When I had no money because I was unemployed for ten years, I sold everything I had: books, pictures, graphics and so on. When I met him, he was already head of a screen-printing workshop, the first thing he asked me was if I want to make some screen prints myself. I told him that I sold his screen prints because I was destitute. And he retorted: “Milan, that's why I gave them to you.” I was floored. It made me cry.

Yesterday, Kata Rusnáková¹⁰ asked me why do I have such a relationship with my work. I gave away a lot, much has been destroyed, lost, I traded it a lot. And I replied that I'm a musician. I know what I've heard, I know what I've done, I will not miss it.

The interview was conducted in April 2012 in Banská Bystrica. The interviewer would like to thank Michal Murin for arranging the meeting, Katarina Sido for transcription, and Lucia Udvardyová for translation. A slightly longer version of this translation previously appeared on the website of Unearthing the Music in December 2019.



Piano Hotel, Samorin, 1997, z archivu Michala Murína
Piano Hotel, Samorin, 1997, archive of Michal Murin

⁹ Czech visual poet, graphic designer, painter, sculptor, photographer, curator, professor.

¹⁰ Slovak curator, art theorist and historian.

ZVUKY
KÓDY
OBRAZY

SOUNDS
CODES
IMAGES

Ilustrace na obálce / Cover illustration:

vpředu / front
Helmholtzův rezonátor
Helmholtz resonator

vzadu / back
Milan Guštar: Entropie – Dvě sklenky, ready made, 2012
Milan Guštar: Entropy – Two Glasses, ready made, 2012

Jitka Hlaváčková
Miloš Vojtěchovský
(eds.)

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