

DAMA DAMA - Ten Years

ENSEMBLE

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This year the Central European percussion group DAMA DAMA celebrates the tenth anniversary of its birth. Its beginnings in fact go back further, to 1981, when its two founder members **Dan Dlouhý** and **Adam Kubiček** got to know each other in the percussion class at the Jaroslav Kvapil People's Arts School, which was taught by the timpanist at the Janáček Theatre Orchestra, Oldřich Pomkła. Both were particularly interested in solo percussion playing and therefore started to meet and practice on two percussion sets. Alongside their own music activities (which in Dan Dlouhý's case meant four-handed piano, appearances with a dixieland orchestra, a renaissance music ensemble, solo performances at exhibition openings and so forth, and in Adam Kubiček's case meant concerts with a rock group), both began to assist in the orchestra of the Janáček Theatre Opera, and to work together in all kinds of other groups including the contemporary serious music ensemble Art Inkognito, founded in the autumn of 1985.

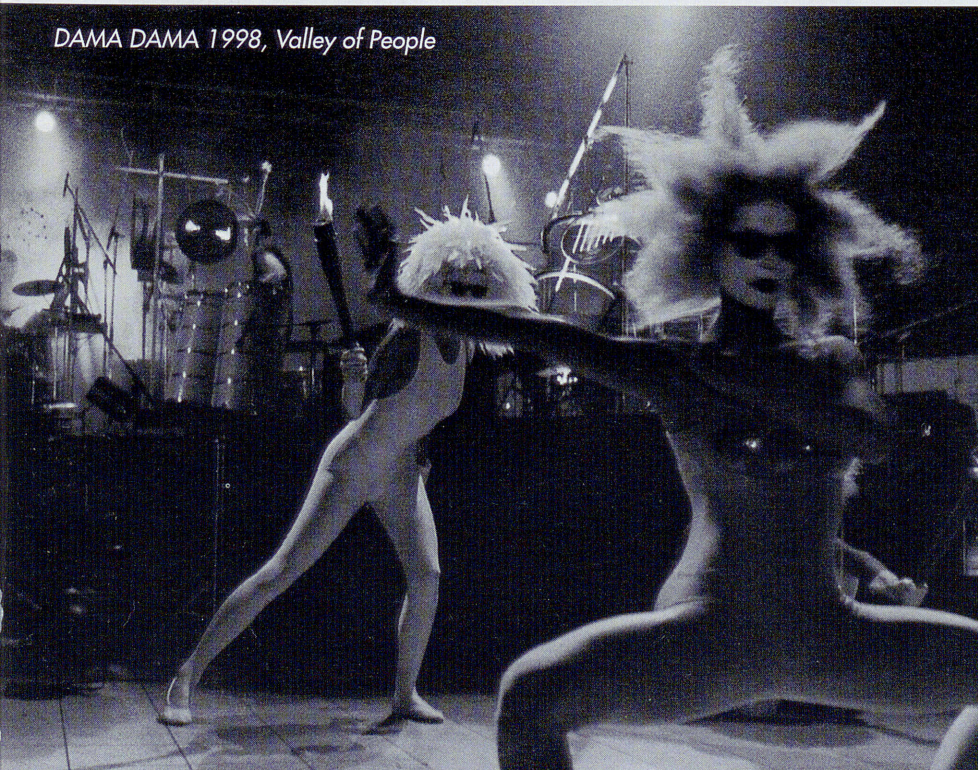
This group, founded by two students of composition at the Janáček Music Academy in Brno (**Ivo Medek** and **Zdeněk Plachý**), gave the two percussionists plenty of space for performance and later composing. After

nearly three seasons, several members left and only composer Ivo Medek, Dlouhý and Kubiček remained. This meant that Art Inkognito concerts essentially - apart from a few solo piano pieces by Ivo Medek - became concerts for percussion ensemble, since the two players invited another three percussion students from the People's Arts School and together rehearsed pieces by Brno composers, Hungarian minimalists and several of their own productions inspired by African and Latin-American music. Their most important and most carefully prepared concert, however, never happened, since the "Na Šelepce" Club where they were supposed to perform was closed just before the concert, supposedly for building alterations. It was probably just an excuse to halt the activities of a club that had been an island of freedom in the prevailing marasma of repression (those who went to the extremely crowded Art Inkognito concerts once even witnessed members of the security services bursting onto the stage). The group only revived its activities several months later in changed composition - Ivo Medek, Dan Dlouhý and Adam Kubiček were joined by Dlouhý's colleague from the percussion class at the Janáček Academy in Brno, the outstanding "sight reader" and specialist in melodic percussion instruments

Josef Blaha. Since the programme now consisted only of compositions for percussion (apart from one solo piano piece by Medek), Dlouhý and Kubiček decided to realise the dream to which all their previous activities had been leading, and to found a proper, regular percussion ensemble. The name DAMA DAMA was chosen by Adam Kubiček, and had several meanings in addition to its pregnantly rhythmic sound (Dlouhý and Kubiček immediately used it as a chant in a piece of the same name). In Hindi it means "concentration", it is also a repeated acrostic of the initials of the Christian names of the group's founders, and the first of the "animal names" that each of the members acquired according to the first vowel in his name (Dan Dlouhý - Dama Dama, Adam Kubiček - Axis Axis, Josef Blaha - the only one whose surname was used - Bubo Bubo, and the new member **Martin Opršál** - Marmota Marmota).

Their first pre-première appearance took place as part of an Art Inkognito concert in Mannheim, when they were billed as "DAMA DAMA - the percussion section of Art Inkognito", and their second, under the same title, at the opening concert of the Summer Vacation Course for New Music in Darmstadt. The official première of DAMA DAMA as a percussion quartet was on the 4th of October 1990 at the Exhibition of Experimental Music in Brno, and was linked to a very sad event, since DAMA DAMA premièred the last composition of the outstanding composer Miloslav Ištvan who had died prematurely the previous January. The piece, called "Makrosvěty" (Macroworlds), had been specially composed

DAMA DAMA 1998, Valley of People



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for the special instruments of Dan Dlouhý and Adam Kubiček).

The group then made a substantially longer appearance when it presented a block of four compositions at the "People to People" festival in Prague in October of the same year, and the first official full-length DAMA DAMA concert took place in the hall of the "White House" (the former seat of the Regional Communist Party Committee) in Brno on the 31st of January of the following year. The programme did not yet consist of the multimedia belt that was later to become typical of DAMA DAMA projects, but from the point of view of concert design already foreshadowed the pattern of the group's later performances by including works by well-known Brno composers (Išvan, Zouhar, Medek) composers from abroad (in this case Soller and Suiyoshi) and its own members (Dlouhý, Kubiček). In 1991 this programme was presented in many venues in Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia and Austria, since the new ensemble was immediately invited to play at all kinds of festivals. The high point of the first year of DAMA DAMA's life (at this point Josef Blaha had already been replaced by **Ctibor Bártek**, nicknamed Conger Conger), was its victory in the International Competition for the Percussion Orchestras of European Higher Music Schools in Enschede in the Netherlands in November 1991. There were a total of eight competing orchestras from the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Russia and Czechoslovakia (the orchestras entered from Great Britain and the USA did not arrive). DAMA DAMA was one of the three ensembles to get through to the second final round, on the strength of their performance of pieces by Dan Dlouhý, Adam Kubiček and Ivo Medek - Adai, collective composition named Axis Axis, and a composition for marimba, vibraphone and piano by Ivo Medek, called Cepheids. Unlike their rivals, who spent the days before the final concert rehearsing feverishly, the ensemble went off on a trip to Amsterdam, during which Dan Dlouhý nearly drowned in a marsh and later spent a whole night getting bits of mud off his clothes. Despite this, DAMA DAMA carried off the victory with ease. The jury was unanimous in praise for the originality of the pieces, the dynamic performance, the use made of the architecture of the podium and the series of "action" elements (such as the combination of the relocation of the players between the pieces by sudden "flight" and the puppet-like movements used during the performance of Dan Dlouhý's Claves, not to mention Adam Kubiček throwing down the instruments from the stage and throwing his sticks at the audience in the dramatic conclusion to the piece Adai). There was particular appreciation for the newly created percussion instruments (DAMA

DAMA was the only group to have brought its instruments by van, in which all the musicians were also squashed in unbelievably inhuman conditions). All these features became as it were the trademarks of DAMA DAMA and were developed further over the years. In the field of repertoire the members of the ensemble increasingly focused on compositions that reflected their own musical outlook and also made full use of the potential of percussion in terms of colour, rhythm and expressive capacity. They therefore started to commission works from "kindred" composers who met their precise demands fully (Ivo Medek, Leoš Faltus, Arnošt Parsch, Alois Piňos, Daniel Forró and others, especially the composers associated with the Brno Janáček Academy, since this music of this circle seemed to DAMA DAMA to offer the optimal combination of innovation and expressive power in the field of contemporary percussion music). The repertoire also grew to include pieces by prestigious foreign composers (such as Steve Reich, seven of whose pieces were studied by the ensemble, as well as Iannis Xenakis, John Cage, Minoru Miki and others), and to an ever increasing extent new music by the group's own members. This was particularly the case with Dan Dlouhý, who after crowning his percussion studies with the first ever solo full-length percussion concert at the Janáček Academy, joined Prof. A. S. Piňos's composition class. Dlouhý's interests in composition have involved a focus on "testing out" the unusual timbre possibilities of traditional percussion, stringed and wind instruments as well as instruments invented by himself. Another characteristic feature of DAMA DAMA - the dynamic execution of pieces - has been taken as far as the creation of composed multimedia belts, the first of which was presented in a shortened version at a joint "mammoth" concert event with the Bratrstvo group in the Býčí Rock Cave in the Moravian Karst area. This concert, organised by the rock group Bratrstvo, was extraordinary for its atmosphere and as an organisational feat. It took place in a unique natural cave site, used a huge lighting park, and involved specially arranged transport for the audience, the presence of TV crews and so on, and was the first DAMA DAMA event of this kind. From this time on, the group systematically developed this unconventional kind of concert, in which extracts from carefully selected pieces are played consecutively and sometimes simultaneously, (thus creating what is from the musical point of view an entirely new form - an evening-length composition that does not consist of individual musical wholes, but of integrated extracts), with the aim of emphasising another non-musical unifying meaning with the help of costumes,

coloured lights, mists, lasers and so forth. Alongside a series of ensemble performances (already with a new member, **Jan Řihák** - Jacan Jacan in place of Adam Kubiček) at various festivals and individual concerts throughout the republic and abroad, the development of this unconventional form - an unusual trend in the field of serious music - culminated in 1995 with three events. Chronologically the first was the independent DAMA DAMA concert at the Prague Spring (unfortunately affected by the fact that the supplier failed to deliver the colour reflectors ordered, and so the stylised movements of the players and their changes of costume were deprived of the necessary magic).

The second important event in the history of the ensemble was the première of Dan Dlouhý's evening-length composition "Vlnoplochy" (Wave Surfaces), subtitled "Musical-visual journeys through the micro-, macro-, mega-world and the human psyche" at the opening concert of the Exhibition of Experimental Music of the Moravian Autumn International Music Festival. This was a multimedia project with many layers of meaning relating to the significance of life, the cost of knowledge and so forth. It was directed by Dlouhý, and his specially composed music was played exclusively on instruments of very various sizes, colours and shapes, all related to the theme of the piece, that he had created together with his DAMA DAMA colleague the technician Petr Dvořák (apart from synthesizers and two drum sets). He had also designed the costumes. (There is a shortened version of the music on the group's fourth CD). Apart from the members of DAMA DAMA and the returning Adam Kubiček the actors included guests - the percussionist Josef Fojta, Petr Dvořák and the later TV anchorwoman Denisa Kapitančíková.

The third project of this fifth year in the life of DAMA was the most intensely "multimedial" of them all. Entitled "Nocojed" ("Night-Eater"), this "Illuminated Concert" by a two-member section of DAMA DAMA calling itself KONVERGENCE and composed of Jana Horáková on the electric violin (instead of the original member Lenka Župková) and Dan Dlouhý, was an entirely special project directed by stage designers Milan Popelka and Kateřina Bláhová. It took the earlier theatrical direction of DAMA DAMA much further, creating a three-man production in which Horáková and Dlouhý (together with actor and composer Martin Dohnal) performed acting roles as well as playing music.

The stage designer Milan Popelka became a long-term collaborator with the group and contributed on the stage design side to other CD christening concerts (these were always pleasant diversions from the usual course of

DAMA DAMA performances, since the christening of a new CD was always preceded by a series of sketches in which Ctibor Bártek, Jan Řihák and Martin Opršál, all gifted parodists, change into sports commentators, the politicians Zeman and Klaus, opera singers and so on). The high point of the collaboration, however, was what is so far the ensemble's biggest multimedia project. Called "Údolí lidí" (The Valley of People), it had its televised première once again at the opening concert of the Exhibition of Experimental Music in October 1998 in the supermodern hall of the Brno Boby-centre, equipped with an advanced lighting park, lasers, dry ice and so forth. Besides the existing members of DAMA DAMA, reinforced by one of the greatest European experts in electro-acoustic music, the composer and synthesizer player Daniel Forró and ten dancers, the group presented a new member, **Stanislav Pliska** or Stello Stello, who took the place of the outgoing Martin Opršál and Jan Řihák. The concert, taking its title from the beautiful poem by painter Paul Klee, developed the thematically serious line initiated by the project "Wave Surfaces". Each composition had its own metaphorically expressed content and the whole production was divided into several sections by danced elements, during which the movements of the dancers created sounds through instruments specially created for the occasion by Dan Dlouhý. (The production was revived for the Prague Spring in May 1999 in the technically rather restricted form made necessary by the smaller space and limited technical facilities of the Archa Theatre in Prague). DAMA DAMA's multimedia presentations, however, do not only take the form of live concerts (by mid-2000 the total number of concerts given by the group had exceeded 300) or television programmes (almost forty). Its Internet site at the address www.damadama.cz is very unusual for its length (it contains a complete biography of DAMA DAMA including its history, pages on individual members, an explanation of Dan Dlouhý's dramaturgical philosophy, notated extracts from the music, a hundred photographs, audio samples, clips and extracts from TV programmes) and for its design and form. Microsoft sponsored the pages and wanted to use them to present what was at that time a completely new form of Internet browser. This means, for example, that the photographs dissolve into each other, moving in the spirit of the music and images of DAMA DAMA, and the visitor can try out the sounds of the musical instruments in the pictures etc. Another multimedia project that is unusual for serious music ensembles is the CD-ROM "Svět DAMA DAMA" [The World of DAMA DAMA], the sixth in the group's series of

CDs, which has a content similar to that of the Internet pages. DAMA DAMA appearances are, of course, very diverse, since from the beginning there has been a whole scale of performances from multimedia to concerts with an entirely conventional form and accompanying commentary. DAMA DAMA's discography is already very extensive, but also unusually varied in terms of type of music and instrumentation, since the ensemble uses a wide palette of both conventional and less conventional melodic and non-melodic percussion instruments, as well as keyboard instruments, special strings and wind, electro-acoustic instruments and also voice). Since 1994 when its first CD was recorded, DAMA DAMA has brought out nine original albums and two albums of selected work. Each of the CDs is quite distinct in terms of content and theme. While the first compact disc of 1994 contained characteristic pieces from the first phase of the ensemble's activities, including those which won it the European competition, the second album, recorded in the same year and released in 1996, was a co-production with the composition class of the Higher Music School in Graz in Austria. Its main interest lies in the juxtaposition of two quite different approaches to composition for percussion instruments. The next three compact discs were recorded in quick succession in late 1996 and early 1997 and released together at the end of 1997. While the CD DAMA DAMA 3 has the title "Valley of People" (Údolí lidí) and is inspired by the same poem as the multimedia production of the next year, the content is different. Just as in the multimedia project, however, it has a kind of screenplay in the form of a booklet that assigns a non-musical meaning to each piece in relation to the whole. The same approach is reflected in the CD DAMA DAMA 4, "Water Surfaces", already mentioned, and the fifth album "KONVERGENCE", which contains music and performance by Dan Dlouhý and Jana Horáková as the two-member DAMA DAMA section of the same name. In 1999, after the sixth multimedia CD ROM, "The World of DAMA DAMA", there followed simultaneous release of DAMA DAMA 7 "DAMA DAMA meets CAMERATA", with pieces by the Brno composers' group, DAMA DAMA 8 with the unusual name "<http://www.damadama8.cz>", which takes as its theme the cataclysmic moods of the end of the millennium and the conflict between the natural in humanity and the pressures of civilisation (which is one of the main and consistent themes of the ensemble, and is treated from a different angle at each concert), and the CD "The Illuminated Concert "Valley of People" - a selection of studio versions of the pieces used in the concert.

This year has brought the latest two products of DAMA DAMA's recording activities. One is the ninth CD "Konfrontace", which is once again unconventionally conceived, presenting only solo performances and compositions by the individual members of the group. The other is the second of two selections from the group's rich discography, and as its name "Energy off line" suggests, it contains the most rhythmically pregnant, and "energetic" pieces from the DAMA DAMA repertoire. The ensemble's activities have not, of course, been limited to its own projects, and it is the most sought-after group in the Czech Republic for the performance of music requiring a large number of percussion instruments. Dan Dlouhý as soloist and the group as a whole has worked with the best performers of contemporary music in the Czech Republic, among whom we might (randomly) mention Ivan Ženatý, the Virtuosi di Praga, Petr Kotík and Zsolt Nagy at the Czech première of Stockhausen's piece "Gruppen", and the Agon ensemble. As my very brief account of the history of the Central European percussion ensemble DAMA DAMA indicates, it is a very unusual musical entity that has been pushing back frontiers not only in relation to instruments, but also in relation to genre, style and music presentation. It is an ensemble that is modern in the true sense of the word, exploiting all the new available technologies in the field of sound production, recording and media presentation of music, and under the direction of Dan Dlouhý it continues to move forward towards new and ever more demanding goals. This has all won the group frequent awards from the professional music public (e.g. it has twice been awarded the Czech Music Fund Prize, and won the Young Platform Festival Competition, while Dan Dlouhý won the Generace (Generation) Prize for Composing in 1995). It has also been sent to represent Czech culture abroad by the Czech Ministry of Culture (recently, for example, at the Europalia 98 festival, EXPO 2000 and others). The ensemble will celebrate its jubilee year with an exhibition of musical instruments from Dan Dlouhý's collection of 900 (Dlouhý is also preparing several new statues - musical instruments, and lectures and programmes on the themes of "The Production and Use of Experimental Musical Instruments", "Composition for Percussion Instruments" and so on), and the release of the tenth DAMA DAMA CD, focused on pieces for percussion and all kinds of orchestra. This represents more than enough plans, but is completely in the spirit of Dlouhý's remark, "If you want to slow me down, you'll have to kill me!"

(from the DAMA DAMA Archives)

On Electro-acoustic Music with the winners of the Musica Nova '99 international competition

Reiner Bürck (R.B.) was born in 1953. He studied composition and piano in Stuttgart, electro-acoustic composition in Nuremberg with Wilfried Jentzsch, and musicology and philosophy at the University in Tübingen. He now works as an independent composer and pianist specialising in contemporary music, and has presented a range of premières. He regularly takes part in important contemporary music in Europe (in Birmingham, London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Rome and elsewhere) and in North America (Montreal, Boston, Kansas City and elsewhere). His regular partner in piano duo is Robert Rühle. Since 1995 he has worked with many different musicians on collective improvisation projects, sometimes using EA (electro-acoustics), for example with Ruoland Greater (cello, voice), the pianist Virginia Scott from Wales, the saxophonist Hartmut Dorschner from Dresden, the Englishman Lawrence Casserley in live EA, and the Canadian John Oliver in EA.

Oh his CDs we could mention, for example, "beyond the physical scope" of 1996. R. Bürck is the creator of his own quasi-stochastic music software and prefers music combining EA with instruments. He is currently president of the German Society for EAM (DEGEM). In the Musica Nova 99 (Prague) Competition he won 1st Place in Category B for instrument and tape with his piece *Flautando*.

Further information can be obtained at the address: www.digitale-medien.com/burck

Francis Dhomont (F.D.) was born in 1926 in Paris. He was a pupil of Ginette Waldmeir, Charles Koechlin and Nadia Boulanger. At the end of the Forties he discovered principles intuitively similar to those of P. Schaeffer in musique concrète, but without directly collaborating with his group. Since 1963 he has specialised exclusively in EAM, and in recent years in what is known as acousmatic music, i.e. purely EA music designed to be listened to in darkness, without visual stimuli, and to develop independent acoustic (especially structural/spatial) imagination. Since 1978 he has lived in Quebec in Canada, where

until 1996 he taught electro-acoustic composition at the university in Montreal. He is a founder member of the Canadian Society for EAM (in 1986), and the author of a series of theoretical works (published in Belgium and Quebec). Of his electro-acoustic CDs (which are by the way very beautifully designed and which have sold very well), we can mention, for example, "Sous le regard d'un soleil noir" of 1996 with music from 1979-81, "Cycle de l'érrance" of 1996 with compositions from 1982-89, and "Forêt profonde" of 1996 with works from 1994-1996. He also works on combined music-art projects with his wife, who is an artist.

In recent years F. Dhomont has been a highly successful composer, regularly winning places in all the major international EAM festivals - in Bourges, Linz, Montreal and elsewhere. At the Prague Musica Nova competition last year he won 2nd Place, and this year 1st Place in Category A, i.e. pure electro-acoustic music, with his piece *Les moirures du temps* of 1999. His compositions will be presented in a broadcast by Czech Radio 3 Vltava station on the 13th of March from 7.05 p.m.

What has inspired you in EAM? Do you write, or have you written instrumental music as well?

R. B.: It's the fascination of sound that I find inspiring in EAM. You can create and model the sound from the very basis, and then change it during reproduction. You are not forced as you are with instrumental music to start from a given kind of sound. The process of composition therefore starts with composing the microstructure of the sound. I no longer compose pure instrumental music, but I like to combine instrumental music with EA. Pure EAM ("for tape") seems to me a little boring for listeners, since I think it's more stimulating for them to watch performers on the podium than just listen to music from media. The gestures of the performer are very important for the perception of music. Someone listening to music on a tape is never really surprised (because he doesn't know what he can expect - L.D. note), but I don't want to disparage music for tape. I compose that too, but not exclusively.

In the Fifties the composer of music for tape found himself in the same position as a painter. Before electronics he had needed a performer to realise his work in audible form, but no performers could ever play the work in identical form - that's the advantage and the disadvantage of instrumental music. I think the composers of that time (i.e. in the 1950s) wanted to occupy the same position as painters - they wanted to be able to create an absolute fixed form, that would sanctify the identity of the work. Now, when electronics is available, the composer really



▲ Francis Dhomont

can work like a painter - he doesn't need a performer and is not dependent on the performer's qualities. And like a painter he can also observe his work in the process of creation, i.e. he can listen to what he has created at any moment and can work until he has the feeling that it is completely finished. The process of composing EAM is therefore more direct than composing instrumental music. Composers can create and listen to pieces that are comparable with orchestral music from the point of view of timbre, density and complexity of sound. It's also true that very few composers get the chance to write real orchestral music because it's so hard to succeed in competition and so composers of instrumental music are very limited in terms of the resources they can use in their work. In this sense EAM is probably more democratic because it means more composers have access to the means of composing.

There's yet another difference between instrumental composing and EAM. In my view the function of the interpreter has been changing since it became possible to use tape. If a composer wants to fix his work absolutely, then he will write music for tape because in instrumental music he won't be able to do it. But on the other hand, having a performer can be liberating. I don't want a performer machine...I want him to be individual and contribute to the realisation of the work in a creative way. Performance shouldn't be a matter of following orders, but should be a genuine process of creation. During the realisation of the work the performer should have a feeling and awareness of creation, and not slavery. It's therefore a kind of co-operation, and for me a very fundamental social aspect of the matter. What is involved is a kind of process of constructive criticism, whereas the composer for tape is working alone. You can probably sense that I see a greater difference between music without a performer and music with a performer than between EAM and instrumental music.

F. D.: I studied so-called classical music with

maestros like G. Waldmeir, Ch. Koechlin and N. Boulanger, and composed a certain amount of instrumental and vocal work, but as soon as I discovered recording at the end of the Forties, thanks to a spool recorder, I quickly realised that there was a whole universe of sound to be explored here. A few years later I was already devoting myself exclusively to this mode of composition, and "note music" had ceased to satisfy me. A loss of interest in instrumental music, in my case especially serial music, led me to deepen my work on a new form of expression based more on the morphological relationships of sound than on mutual melodic relationships. In this sense what seemed to me important was the concept of the parameter of pitch as a constitutive element of timbre, as introduced by Schönberg.

What do you see as problematic or dangerous about EAM, and what is your "solution"?

R. B.: I see the biggest problem of EA as the media itself, which tend to become more important than the musical, compositional and aesthetic aspects of the work. Many composers frantically hunt for new computers and software instead of concentrating on the aesthetic aspects and meaning of their compositions. I think this is happening particularly in America. It's a country in which there are plenty of technological capabilities while aesthetic consciousness and the standard of composition is often low. I also see the speed of the development of technology as a problem. One year you compose a piece for a certain hardware and software and the next year you have a problem with live realisation because these means are no longer available in the right version. That is why I am inclined to write my own software, which I update myself, and that makes things easier. Another disadvantage is the fact that composers have to keep investing in their computers and software. What is my "solution"? As I said, I prefer writing for a performer and tape. It is a link to history, which is given by the tradition of whichever instrument is used. I used electronics primarily to expand the possibilities of the instrument, as in *Flautando*, in which all the sounds are based on the sound of the instrument and

their electronic transformations. The artist is in control of everything - his instrument and the electronic sounds.

F.D.: There is in fact a fundamental difference between the composing process in traditional music and composing based on spectromorphology, and that extends to the mode of thought itself. P. Schaeffer described it very well at the beginnings of *musique concrète*, by saying that instrumental music proceeds from the abstract to the concrete (i.e. to the sound performance of the score), while morphological music proceeds from concrete experiment with sound material to the abstract organisation of this material into structures (note: P. Schaeffer's distinction was actually rather different in connotation - L.D.). This basic distinction is the reason why many composers, trained in the instrumental manuscript technique) have gone astray in this acoustically uncoded music. In EAM, everything that can be done with sound can work for the composer only if he is able to reveal the potential of the sound elements by what is known as "critical listening" (note: a phenomenological term used by P. Schaeffer - L. D.). The whole preliminary score is therefore pure intention, and the work is completed (or perhaps not even then) only with the score as heard. This is also a basic difference, which results from the first difference in the composition process.

I agree that the danger of this music at present lies in a lack of reflection on what is concept and idea, and what is a technical matter... There is a tendency to confuse the means with the end.

My personal solution? It consists in trying never to forget that it is not the machine that composes, but always the composer. I therefore strive, by listening carefully and purposefully, for a music that can be truly perceived, i.e. a music in which the ear can grasp the development of musical discourse. I keep up with advances in technology, but I never regard them as a musical priority.

Do you have your own special method of composing?

R. B.: I don't have any permanent method of composing. Every piece comes into existence in a new way, as it were. When I begin to compose, I experiment a little with the material in order to discover what I can do with it. The idea of the piece isn't something a priori, but is the process of composing itself, which is strongly dependent on who I am. It's

a two-sided dependence. I don't believe in an idea as something *a priori* in the metaphysical sense. For me it is process. I cannot create the form a priori, since the form develops and forms the material, and so the final form is the result of permanent work with the material. For me the form is not a noun, but a verb. I mean that I form the material and the form is the final result of the process of forming.

F. D.: As far as my "method" of composing is concerned, it is a little too complex for me to be able to describe it here and now. Let us say that it is a certain number of "compositional gestures", elaborated over the years and in various different works.

What does silence mean to you?

R. B.: I love silence, and I think it is very important. There is too much "music" all around us. "Music" is everywhere - in supermarkets, on the TV, on the radio. For most people it's a kind of background noise. It's not something that they would consciously listen to. It would be better if we could get rid of this "pollution" so that people could truly listen to music.

F. D.: For me silence is a part of music, it is a part of music like breath, its dynamics. In the context of the intensity of sound it represents the fundamental parameter of music, and its nuances are crucial for the balance of a work. That's why I am not attracted to music that moves on the same sound level throughout the composition. That doesn't mean I want to get rid of the acoustic volumes that electronic amplification makes possible, but it is necessary to play with contrasts, place structures of different densities alongside each other... Naturally everything depends on the musical context.

As far as everyday life is concerned, I am appalled by the noise that is forced on us all the time.

/Lenka Dohnalová/

**MUZIKONTAKT
2001**

The new edition of the music directory containing almost 12.000 entries regarding individual personalities, music ensembles, organizations and companies operating in all spheres of musical life in the Czech Republic. The new directory is an updated and supplemented version of last year's edition, particularly with regard to new e-mail and Internet addresses, and can be ordered at a cost of 20 US dollars (25 US dollars for overseas) from the Czech Music information Centre by telephone, fax, e-mail or in writing.



Reiner Bürck

Tomáš Ondrůšek

- Solo for Percussion

Tomáš Ondrůšek (1963, Ústí nad Labem) is among the leading Czech percussionists. From childhood he lived in Germany, where he studied percussion - first in Nuremberg and then in Prof. Klaus Tesselt's famous class at the Higher Music School in Stuttgart. He was also a member of the well-known Percussion Ensemble Stuttgart. In 1990 he won the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, and won a scholarship to study in Paris.

He has played in many European cities and at important festivals, such as the Warsaw Autumn, in Donaueschingen, the Avantgarde in St. Petersburg or the Berlin Zeitklang. The basic works for solo percussion (Xenakis, Stockhausen, Feldmann, Lachenmann and others) are a firm part of his repertoire. He has premiered Xenakis's *Psappha* and Lachenmann's *Interior I* in the Czech Republic, and has been the first Czech musician to present Stockhausen's *Zyklus*, Feldman's *King of Denmark*, and *Rebonds*, another piece by Xenakis. In recent years many pieces have been written specially for him. Ondrůšek also teaches on performance courses in contemporary music (Munich, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Bonn, Brno). He is a co-founder of the now well-known international composition and percussion courses in Trstěnice, and sits on juries at music performance competitions. He has worked for many years with the pianist Siegfried Wekenmann and the Prague Agon ensemble.

You have lived in Germany for many years, in fact from your early childhood. What made you settle in the Czech Republic. It wasn't a matter of feelings, or an expression of patriotism, but more related to the big plans I had in 1990. Here it was a time of open social conditions and the freedom to develop all kinds of ideas - a kind of virgin field. As far as artistic life was concerned, I felt excitement and readiness to co-operate on every side. And so when the chance of buying an old farmhouse came up, I took it and so fulfilled an old dream of mine. I wanted to build up a space for rehearsal and work with the ensemble, and for symposia and other kinds of artistic activity.

You moved from a big city like Stuttgart to a small village. That must have been a major change in your life.

Not really. I may have grown up in cities, but when I was studying in Stuttgart I lived in a small hamlet thirty kilometres from the city. It was for practical and ideological reasons. As a percussionist I was only able to use all my time fully for the rehearsals I needed in a village, where I didn't have to worry about the limitations on space and loudness that are obvious in a city.

I also liked the quiet, independent life I could lead in a village, close to nature and away from the bustle and lifestyle of the big city, although of course I needed that for my concert activities. Here, of course, I could also go to concerts, galleries and lectures.

In Trstěnice you founded the Urban Music Centre and you hold some exceptionally interesting events there.

That was one of the dreams I mentioned - to set up a place for artists of different genres to get together, specialist symposia, and concerts. It's a matter of linking up "urban" culture with the life of the village. But all the different projects began more or less accidentally. I started to hold concerts in response to the spontaneous interest of my new friends. A drummer came from Germany, and at the same time Pavel Fajt was visiting me, and so we organised the first concert of three drummers. In the course of time the presentation of the

results of the work of the theatre courses, which take place here in co-operation with the Petersburg Theatre Academy, developed into the Trstěnice Faun Festival, that later expanded to include music and dance. The five annual festivals so far have included performances by important artists mainly from the east (Russia, Ukraine, Hungary, China, Kazakhstan), but also from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. From the professional point of view the most important event for me is the Symposium for Percussionists and Composers. It's the only opportunity for further training in this field, and is exceptional at the international level as well.

How did these now famous international composing and percussion courses first come into existence?

Olga Smetanová from the Slovak Music Information Centre in Bratislava approached me with the idea, because there was no course for percussionists in contemporary music in Bratislava. Then I sat down with Vladimír Vlasák and Ivo Medek and we worked out an idea for linking composing and percussion courses. It's a very fertile project, because composers lack training in the instrumentation of percussion (acoustic possibilities, solo and ensemble playing, percussion groups), and percussionists lack experience with contemporary music. We started inviting important percussion soloists from various countries - Christian Dierstein from Germany, Mark Pekarski from Russia, Stanislav Skoczynski from Poland, Mutsuko Aizawa from Japan, and also well-known composers - Siegfried Wekenmann and Hans Koch from Germany, Marek Kopelent, Alois Piňos, Martin Smolka and Miloš Haase from the Czech Republic and others from other countries. Apart from lectures and concerts we decided there should be individual and group teaching, which I took on with Jeff Beer (Germany), Mathias Steinauer (Switzerland) and Ivo Medek. This form of work had made an impression on me when I was studying, and worked on *Interior I* with the composer Helmut Lachenmann himself. I realised how much a composer and percussionist can teach one another and how important it is for them to work together. When the Trstěnice courses started, I was working

with the composer and pianist Siegfried Wekenmann, and this experience also helped in the germination of the idea that is so characteristic for the symposium. Today the courses are made up of duos of percussionists and composers, who learn from each other. This is the unique character of the courses.

Your wife Suzanne Wagner is also a professional musician - a flautist. And you have three children. How do you manage to put it all together?

I'm not a musician who spends all his time rehearsing. I have other interests as well. Life on the farmstead takes a lot of time and energy, more than the family in fact. If Suzanne has concerts (she specialises in historically authentic performance), or is teaching (at the Academy of Early Music attached to the Philosophical Faculty in Brno), I look after the children myself. If I'm travelling, then it's the other way round. I think it's completely natural, as in every other family. The exhausting situations are when music has to be combined with work on the farm - mowing the grass, drying the hay, harvest. On the other hand, these activities cohere unusually well, since I think that connection with nature, and a certain wholeness, are essential for creative life. Physical and intellectual work are two



different perspectives that can be directed to the same goal, by which I mean a certain mystical element - creativity, and ideally they join up. I'm not a fan of people with very narrow horizons, who haven't ever held a scythe or a spade in their hands, or indeed of people who haven't ever read a book or gone to a concert.

Your domain is solo performance on percussion. What specific features does solo work have compared to playing in an ensemble?

Solo set: by that I mean an instrument that first appears in the literature in the Fifties. The first official piece was *Zyklus* (K. Stockhausen), in which you find the first formulation of the idea of the self-sufficiency of the percussion set composed of different sources of sound (individual instruments). This solo set (multipercussion) is sometimes used in ensembles as well, for example in the composition *Le Marteau sans Maître* (P. Boulez). But on the other hand there are plenty of pieces for solo player that are not regarded as pieces for solo set. This is the result of a mode of composition that does not make use of the integral character of one set, but instead uses one instrument after another. The sounds from the different sources are not mutually linked up into a whole. This is an eternal theme that comes up in the percussion symposia we have spoken about.

Ensemble playing is very interesting as the shared creation of something new and as interplay. The performance of solo pieces has a completely different and potent charm of its own, since here one changes into a "co-composer", by which I mean searching for sounds, creating combinations, tackling various problems of "unplayability" and so forth. On the other hand it could be compared with the kind of submersion in role that actors experience - you give yourself up and find something more.

Despite your focus on solo playing you are a member of the Agon contemporary music ensemble. How did you come to work with them?

Ivan Bierhanzl called me and asked whether I didn't have time to play Logothetis piece with Agon. Since I found myself on the same wavelength as Agon from the beginning, the co-operation continued. They had actually found me by accident, since they heard me in 1990 at the first Prague Days festival and remembered me when they heard I had moved to the Czech Republic. Working with them has been very fruitful for me, too, since I made friends with Martin Smolka and Petr Kofroň, which was very valuable for me from the professional point of view as well as the personal.

There's a rumour that you have expressed an interest in teaching at Prague AMU (the Music Faculty of the Academy of Arts).

It's true, but it's only recently that I've expressed real interest. Vladimír Vlasák told me two years ago that there were plans to open a percussion department where I could teach. I didn't take it very seriously, since I am more a performer than a teacher, and above all I was very busy. But six months ago I got a letter from the rector of AMU in which he invited me to a meeting to discuss the department syllabus and the possibility of teaching. When I began to consider the question more seriously, I discovered that AMU had an exceptional position compared to other academies. This department is being set up at a time when the other academies have complete syllabuses for orchestral training, which is understandable, because the system of conservatories producing fully trained players has not been maintained in other countries. AMU, on the other hand, was founded as a school for prospective soloists and today after forty years of the existence of solo percussion sets there is a chance to set up a department for this instrument, which would be the first ever percussion department of this kind. It makes no sense, after all, for orchestral players to study for six years at the conservatory and then go on to another five years at AMU in the same discipline. It's a happy coincidence of circumstances that a new percussion department is being founded at a school

orientated to solo performance in a place where there are also conservatories. I am drawing on the similarly conceived International Performance Competition for Percussion (part of the Moravian Autumn), where I chose pieces for every round with Martin Opršál (who teaches at the Janáček Academy in Brno). It was the first competition for purely solo percussion set. We invited important soloists on percussion set from various European countries to be on the jury. Co-operation and experience with them has made me enthusiastic about the plan I've submitted to AMU.

You often appear abroad. What effect does that have on your repertoire? Do you play Czech music as well?

Of course I often play abroad since in the Czech Republic practically no one is concerned with music for multipercussion solo. I'm often in Russia, and otherwise in Germany and Switzerland, and I've toured other countries with Agon. It's always good experience to get to know a foreign public. In Russia, for example, the public is unusually open-minded. They are interested in the people, composers always come to see you after the concert, and I get various invitations to academies (seminars and lectures). That's one of the reasons I frequently go to the eastern countries.

I do play Czech music, but not often. I'd like to play more Czech pieces, but so far not many exist. It's the same as in world music literature: there are plenty of pieces, but only a few that really inspire me with enthusiasm. My repertoire is mainly composed of the great classic works for percussion solo, such as H. Lachenmann's *Interieur*, K. Stockhausen's *Zyklus*, J. Xenakis's *Rebonds* and *Psappha*, N. Fukushi's *Ground*, D. Lang's *The Anvill Chorus* and so on. It is a cross section of more than forty years of music for solo multipercussion from the very beginning to the most recent years. Since earlier I didn't play any Czech music at all, I have been delighted that Czech composers such as I. Loudová, M. Smolka, I. Medek, P. Cigler, P. Graham and M. Haase have dedicated or even written pieces for me. Their compositions form the Czech side of my repertoire. Putting together a concert programme can be a little problematic, since all the sets must fit into one car, and so the choice of concert music depends on practical considerations as well as musical ones.

You lead the Rasin Akirfa group that plays African music. Have you ever considered founding a serious music ensemble?

Africa fascinates me, and African music has an unusual power that consists in the combination of something very simple with something very complex. I mean the archaic rhythm and the soloist-drummer. In this I see the kind of wholeness I have mentioned before - an earthiness - spiritual power. It's just an extra interest of mine, a little hobby. I meet a different public with the band, since we play at rock and ethno festivals. The audiences are completely different from those who come to serious music concerts. At this year's symposium, for example, several local fans of African music turned up and were puzzled at what we were doing there... I never considered founding a percussion band for serious music until now, in relation to AMU. There must be ensemble play in the department, both percussion and chamber. There are many interesting pieces for percussion ensemble that I would be happy to study with my students.

What are your plans for the coming year?

In September I have three solo concerts (Klatovy, Cheb and Brno), and in November I'm going to teach and play in Moscow and then I'm off with Agon to Poland and Iceland. In March I have a workshop in Zurich and recently I received an invitation to give a solo concert with an orchestra in Samara. In the meantime I shall be spending a lot of time interpreting at theatre workshops with Yuri Vasiliev, with whom I shall be travelling abroad several times. And so I'll be taking a rest from rehearsals until the next work comes along, and vice versa.

/Ivo Medek/

Trstěnice 2000 COURSES

Two Views from People on the Spot

First View - An Impression

Tomáš Ondrůšek's Farm or the Urban Music Centre: Little Julian plays with Tereza and Sara on the grass, and behind us beyond the barn that has been converted into a "concert hall" there are sheep bleating. An idyll, an oasis of quiet cut off from reality, the cool of the ancient metre-thick stone walls. The four permanent members of the teaching team are sitting outside under a tree. They are: JEFF BEER (b. 1952, German percussionist, artist and composer, graduate of the Music Academy in Würzburg. Holder of a string of awards, he has given solo concerts in Berlin, Stockholm, New York.) - a magus. A charismatic personality with mesmerising eyes that nothing escapes - his later concerts appearances give the same, thorough but magical impression.

TOMÁŠ ONDRŮŠEK (b. 1964, studied percussion at academies in Nuremberg and Stuttgart, performed at the Warsaw Autumn and Prague Spring festivals, after moving to the CR founded the Urban Music Centre at his farm in Trstěnice, a member of the AGON ensemble, among others) - canvas trousers, sandals even in the cold and frost, and a constant urge to tease people. But very precise and uncompromising when working, although kind, obliging and self-sacrificing.

MATHIAS STEINAUER (b. 1959, an important Swiss composer, studied at the music academy in Basel and with G. Kurtág in Budapest, since 1986 has taught at the Winterthur Conservatory, has won a series of commissions from institutions and ensembles, and is a specialist in musical stylisation and the use of historical material) - despite his name he is very mild and sensitive, with a huge capacity to empathise with the situation and thoughts of other people, inconspicuously to slip onto their wavelength and with the unerring eye of the steersman to identify the dangers and find the way forward in the complicated voyage through the laws of composition. Getting a little rosy towards evening with the excellent vintage wine from Tomáš Ondrůšek's cellar, always smiling and radiating optimism.

Then the main initiator and organiser of the Trstěnice courses IVO MEDEK (b. 1956, studied at the Janáček Academy in Brno

and today teaches there, winner of a series of prizes in national and international competitions, his works are performed in Europe and the USA) - he seems to keep to the background, and only sometimes makes some comment - easy-going, almost casual, but always capable of broadening horizons, giving a direction, providing encouragement. Tempting aromas float from the kitchen. The tireless Suzanne (Tomáš's wife, a flautist, and it's incredible how she manages everything - concerts, children, the farm, the household) is cooking something tasty. Tereza sings under the table: "I'm on a walk, I'm walking" while Bobeš the dog, of undefinable breed, runs around and barks at the new arrivals, who include this year's guests. IVAN NEBESNÝ (the young Ukrainian composer who has won

school in Winterthur in Switzerland, has brought a unique instrument with him - a lithophone (the only example in the world belonging to the university in Zurich), which he is promoting all over Europe, and he immediately makes for the composers with requests for a new piece.

The representatives of the Czech composers turn up - MIROSLAV PUDLÁK and MARTIN SMOLKA, and also VLADIMÍR VLASÁK, president of the Society of Czech Percussionists. Languages multiply as others arrive - you can hear Russian, English, French, and German, and sweaters multiply too, since it isn't exactly warm (15 degrees is a lot this year). But despite the weather the atmosphere is friendly, and full of anticipation, enthusiasm, curiosity.

/Markéta Dvořáková/



Andrey Doynikov performing

a reputation all over Europe) looks for a sunny spot, lights a cigarette, opens a beer, and smiles contentedly. Soon he has acquired the soubriquet "the blessed". MARK PEKARSKI (A Russian, one of the most important teachers in the whole field of percussion) has brought his own entourage with him - his pupils from the Moscow Conservatory, who later give dazzling performances at the concert, but are now occupied preparing a "throne", bringing wine and pouring it for the Tsar. Mark thaws out, but maintains his imperial dignity. The Japanese Marimba player MUTSUKO AIZAWA, who lives in Stuttgart, trips up on small steps. She is one of the world's top players, but always modest and almost with an apology on her lips, she stands in the corner. FELIX PERRET, a student at the music

A Second View - Reality

This summer the 4th Year of the International Performance and Composition Courses, "Percussion Workshop, Trstěnice 2000" took place in the house of Tomáš Ondrůšek in Trstěnice near Litomyšl from the 27th of June to the 2nd of July. The courses are designed for students (Graduates) of percussion and students of composition interested in the problem of composition for percussion. The

organisers are the Society of Percussionists in the CR, Haus Urban Trstěnice, and the CR Music Information Centre, with the support of the Czech Ministry of Culture, the OSA Music Foundation and the Open Society Fund Prague.

The main content of the courses is joint work in pairs (a performer and a composer) on a composition created on the spot, and therefore involving an immediate linkage between the composer's and the performer's potential. The starting point is the choice of an instrument or group of instruments that the composer hopes to use, and the ensuing joint exploration of the acoustic possibilities of the given instrument. The result is supposed to be a small work which from the point of view of performance respects the structural order established by the composer and from the point of view of composition reflects the character of the instrument.

A catalogue of sounds is the last thing intended. The pairs have running consultations with a pair of older colleagues, the permanent lecturers (Jeff Beer, Ivo Medek; Tomáš Ondrušek, Mathias Steinauer). This encourages a very healthy enthusiasm for work with a therapeutic effect, above all on the composer who can savour the unusual experience of enjoying the attention of so many people.

The culmination of this collaborative work is the final public concert. This year pieces conceived well before arrival ("Sypanation" by Ondřej Adámek) were side by side with compositions that had developed out of the delightful Trstěnice atmosphere ("Will you open to me?" by Markéta Dvořáková) or the capture of a particular moment ("In the morning" by Martin Kostaš). The audience

heard works based on the rhythmic foundation of percussion ("Illusion 11" by Jan Kavan) or music in which the author had clarified the acoustic side ("Nothing" by Roman Pallas). Others tried to achieve a synthesis of rhythm and colour ("4 Pieces of Past" by Bohdan Sehim, or "Compensation" by Blanka Pavelková). Altogether these were very short pieces containing the possible germs of future works.

Some of the young performers introduced themselves on a second concert evening. It is hard to forget the excellent performance of I. Xenakis's "Rebonds" by Andrej Vinitzky, or K. Volans' "She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket" played by Andrey Dojnik. Both musicians are pupils of Mark Pekarski, the guest of the courses.

Jeff Beer's contribution was ravishing. Introducing his composition "Warka" for large drum he drew attention to the necessity for solid compositional structure which in the hands of an experienced performer can become the means to attain a virtuosic grasp of the work. Virtuosity, although of a quite different kind, distinguished a piece by J. Fritsch played on the marimba by the outstanding exponent of the instrument Mutsuko Aizawa. This type of virtuosity depends only on the capacity of the instrument - in this case the marimba - to express colour, enhanced by a precisely organised system of pitch (it is a melodic instrument), and does not rely on precise structural anchorage provided by the composer. I gained the same general impression from the compositions for the lithophone, a special instrument made of stones and played by the very capable Felix Perret, except in the case of the inspired

piece entitled "Steinschlag" that Mathias Steinauer had written for the instrument. The performance of H. Lachenmann's "Interieur I" for percussion was an absolute delight. Tomáš Ondrušek has been working on the piece for years, and his perception of quality is, I believe, only one reason for this. The course also included individual consultations in which the student composers submitted already completed pieces, whether for percussion or other instruments, and the percussion students could discuss the various possibilities for performance of a rehearsed piece with the lecturers. The remaining part of the afternoons offered opportunities for lectures on theory by the lecturers or guests (Miroslav Pudlák, Martin Smolka, Ivan Nebesný), and introductory lectures on the character of individual instruments, the importance of arranging them correctly, and the functions of the stick.

The evenings were left open for the young composers to present their work, either by offering extracts or by theoretical analysis. One new feature this year was the performance of pieces that had been written on the courses in the form of a collage for the Exhibition of New Music in Brno on the 6th of October.

The linkage of two elements - performance and composition - and the concept of the percussion instrument as deserving an independent life, make the Trstěnice courses unique. I believe their prestige will continue to rise, and build on the success of this year's programme, based as it was on the high level of professionalism of all those involved.

/Blanka Pavelková/

ARTⁿ and Roman Z. Novák

Roman Z. Novák (1967), young composer and former pupil of Prof. Marek Kopelent, is known for the breadth of his musical activities. He is the second director of the Prague choral club Hlahol, is now in his eighth year as director of the Church Choir in Modřany (Prague), teaches music at the German secondary school in Prague, and plays keyboards in the Quababába (AB-BA Revival Band). The most important of his musical activities is definitely, however, his musical child, the arts association ARTⁿ.

How did you come to found the ARTⁿ association?

Several of us were involved in founding ARTⁿ. The association was essentially a response to our needs, to make it easier for us to organise the multimedia projects we had been holding before without any organisational backing. And it was also an attempt to create something new, since we wanted a group that wouldn't just play contemporary music and wouldn't give just two concerts a year, and would attract a wider circle of listeners than groups defined by genre. There are already genre groups like that on the Czech scene (such as AGON, or Mondschein which I also helped to found, Resonance and so forth) and it seemed pointless to found something similar.

There's an orchestra with the same name as the association. Was it part of the association from the very beginning?

I founded the orchestra about half a year after the association. It's the same size as a chamber ensemble, i.e. 20-25 players (depending on need), with strings as the basis. This offers us the chance to give "classical" concerts as well as performances of contemporary music, and so we expended the group. Since I had studied and conducted classical repertoire in the past, it seemed to us more versatile to put together so-called "classical" and contemporary music in our concerts. And I think it's quite interesting for the audience as well. It may at first sight look strange or even dramaturgically amateur when you create a programme out of a Mozart piano concerto and a piece by Marek Kopelent and end with Ives's "Unanswered Question", but surprisingly it works. The same people always go to hear classical music, and contemporary music has its own circle of fans, and I try to link them up, except in the case of multimedia projects, which have their own given structure.

How are the multimedia compositions actually created? Which elements do you include in your projects?

Apart from musicians and dancers, the multimedia projects include reciters, artists and sometimes deaf actors, mostly members of the Brno VDN group. A basic running structure is established on a given

theme, and then the elements mentioned are gradually integrated into it and meshed together. The basis is contemporary music, with the spoken text usually following on from it. This is then translated into sign language, and these gestures are the basis for the development of modern dance. In this way the process comes full circle.

Deaf actors frequently take part in your projects. In what way does their sign language inspire you?

It is mainly another element of communication - the capacity to speak through movement as intensively as in normal speech. In our projects it is the principal aspect of inspiration in combination with dance. The choreographer will choose several signs and translate them into movement. We try to make as much use as possible of the artistic components and so get closer to the Utopian concept of "Gesamtkunstwerk".

What role do the multimedia projects play in your work (the last one, for example was "Ať jim toto ticho zní?" [Let them hear this silence], that we heard in the Basilica of St. George)? Do you think this is a way to make contemporary music more accessible to the public?

We only have one larger multimedia project each year, since from the organisational and financial point of view more would be impossible. For me it is the most important element in my work as a composer. What is interesting about the multimedia projects, which we prefer to put on in non-traditional venues, is the combination of different artistic elements and an unconventional conception of space. The conventional concert pattern, with the audience on the

▼ "Let them hear this silence," Basilica of St. George, 1998



one side and the musicians on the other, no longer satisfies me. In today's world it's an inadequate way of using all the available opportunities and techniques. Many of our projects have been designed for particular interesting architectural spaces. The disadvantage, of course, is that they can't be transferred to other halls. For audiences it is also a certain "novelty" when they go to a concert in an unusual space and are confronted with non-traditional art. I think that to a certain extent it's easier and possibly more interesting for the public when they can watch dancers and projections as well as listening to music.

The world today is more "visual" than "acoustic" - it's a well-known fact. In ordinary life music plays only "second fiddle". It's used and sometimes even abused for various commercial purposes and in such quantities that people stop listening to it in the way it deserves.

As you've said before, you also play the music of past centuries. As a contemporary composer, what attracts you to classical music? Isn't it just another way of attracting audiences?

Of course it's a way of attracting audiences. If there were no audiences, there would be no concerts, and communication with the public would cease. And that communication is the main thing in music, in my view. What I try to avoid, on the other hand, is "sucking up" to the audience. I don't choose the kind of music that I know in advance will attract masses of people. I also like to hear the views of those people who come to me after a concert and say that such and such a piece was strange, and didn't have any melody, or was too difficult on the ear. I listen and I try to explain why we play these pieces. Some of the people come back, and are no longer so shocked, and sometimes even admit that they can now see something in the music. It's a pity that every musical genre has its own public that is rather fixated on a particular type of music. In my view what is important is to get to know as many different things as possible, be open to the unknown and have the broadest possible horizon. Classical and modern forms of music fascinate me equally. Even when conducting the classics I learn a great deal as a contemporary composer, whether in terms of perceiving the harmonies of certain chords, or simply in terms of working with the orchestra.

Is there anything special about the classical concerts you give?

We play pieces from every epoch at our classical concerts, but less well-known works take priority. We are also starting to collaborate with other ensembles. Recently, for example, we worked with Classicon XX, a small ensemble specialising in chamber repertoire of the earlier 20th Century, with whom we played Milhaud's "Agricultural Machines" (a cycle of operating instructions and descriptions of harvesters, combines and so on set to music), and we are also collaborating with groups from abroad. In the autumn of last year we organised a two-day festival in Prague presenting earlier projects of ARTⁿ and the German music theatre, "A rose is..." from Hannover. This collaboration should be continuing next year in Hannover.

Do you think that ARTⁿ's orientation makes it unique on the Czech scene? Is there is a group with a similar approach that inspires you? I don't know whether we are unique in the Czech Republic, but I think that something similar is definitely going on in videoart or the theatre of movement. I know choreographers who project film on live dance, and so are also creating a certain complexity of links and levels. When a work is created by a dancer, then it's dance that plays the most important part. Sometimes, however, the most important external element of non-verbal drama, and with our group the basic element is music, since I'm a composer. As far as inspiration is concerned, we are interested in what is happening in different artistic movements, mainly abroad. You learn most simply by getting to know new things.

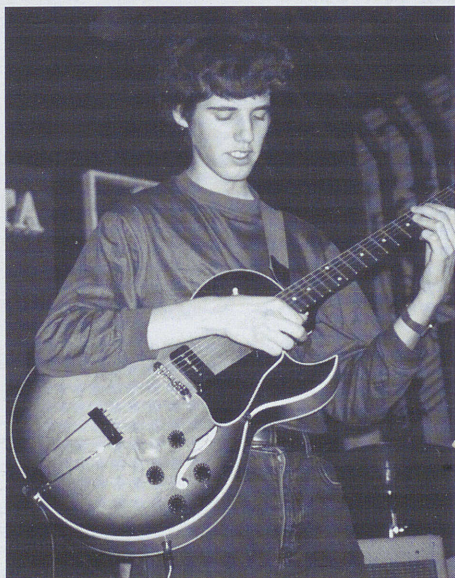
/Markéta Lajnerová/

David Dorůžka

JAZZ

- Youngest Talent on the Czech Jazz Scene

The Jazz guitarist and composer David Dorůžka was born in 1980 in to a family of music writers and journalists. The activities of his grandfather Lubomír and his father Petr are very well known in this country. Like most Czech children David attended a People's School of Art [outside ordinary school hours], where he took lessons in recorder from the age of six. From his tenth year he took private lessons in classical guitar, and at twelve discovered the electric guitar, for which he later also found a private teacher. At first he was primarily interested in blues and rock, but then he found his greatest love in jazz. At age fourteen he started taking an active part in the Prague professional jazz scene, and while still a teenager probably played with all the important Czech



jazzmen. In 1995-1999 he was a leading figure in the "Eye of the Hurricane" Quartet, with which he appeared at several major jazz festivals in the CR. In 1996 he was invited to the Montreal Jazz Festival together with drummer Pavel Zbořil and double bassist Jaromír Honzák, and in 1998 he made a guest appearance on Karel Růžicka's disk "You Know What I Mean" (Arta Records 1997), which was declared Disk of the Year 1997 by the Czech Jazz Association. After finishing secondary school in 1999 David left to study at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. After only two semesters at this prestigious school he was ranked among the best instrumentalists and composers, having won the Jimi Hendrix Prize for the best guitarist at the school, the Wayne Shorter Prize for a talented composer at the school, and the John La-Porte award for all-round musical personality at the school. It is thanks to these three awards that David now has almost a full scholarship at the school. His latest success was to win the competition for a place on the prestigious two-week jazz workshop held by the Thelonius Monk Institute in Aspen, Colorado in late July and early August. Dorůžka was the only guitarist chosen.

David, who has taught you most?

My grandfather, especially. He not only lent me important records, but also explained a

lot about jazz harmony, told me something about standards and improvisation, and advised me to do several listening exercises. I would say that I learned a kind of "jazz basics" from him.

How old were you when your grandfather "initiated" you?

Maybe thirteen.

Since then you've come a vast distance. Now you're studying at one of the most prestigious jazz schools in the world, "Berklee College of Music" in Boston. How do studies work there?

The course for the Bachelor degree is divided into four basic sections. 1. "core music" - basic music education, harmony and listening exercises, basic arranging and music technology, 2. a specific "major" - an instrument or composition, 3. basic classical music education: classical harmony, counterpoint, conducting and the history of music, 4. general education.

At the moment I'm studying an instrument (the guitar) and composition, but I'll probably take my Bachelor's just in guitar. But Berklee isn't just a purely jazz school today. It offers course in classical composition, music therapy, sound techniques, world music or writing film scores as well. The school also has what is probably the best scholarship programme in American universities that teach jazz, and so it manages to attract plenty of talents from Europe, Japan or Asia. It's altogether a very beneficial experience. It's priceless experience.

What are your future plans? Are you coming back to Prague?

I'd like at least to try and make a career for myself somewhere else than Prague, since while there are a few brilliant musicians here, I think I've already achieved most of things I could ever achieve here. I've played with all the best musicians we have, and I don't know how I would be able to develop further here. There's no motivation, and nothing much to learn from anyone... I believe I have a certain talent that could get me a bit further than would be possible here, although I don't want to sound conceited. Another problem is that here a jazz musician can't really hope to make a decent living. There's no interest in jazz here. The Prague clubs are mostly full of tourists. And in most of our jazz clubs the main idea isn't high quality music and an effort to attract people to that music, but something completely different, such as drawing tourists and making sure they drink

a lot of beer... I resent the fact that most of the managers and owners of clubs aren't at all interested in having high-quality music there, and often they wouldn't even recognise quality music if they heard it. Not even the audiences recognise it. There's no feedback here, no distinction made between good and bad musicians, and no difference in fees either. The attitude of some club-owners to musicians and the organisation of the club itself is often downright shocking. In one club, for example, they rudely throw the audience and musicians out onto the street at midnight, and in the winter they don't heat the place, quite deliberately, so that people won't want to stay long. With one or two rare exceptions the attitude to the musicians themselves is arrogant, and managers aren't prepared to meet the musicians half-way on any issue... Of course, I don't think it's easy anywhere, since jazz is a very marginal part of culture.

Are you aware of any European scene that might be important for jazz?

I can't give you a direct answer, since I don't yet know much about the European scenes, but as far as I can judge from the quality of the players from Europe at the Berklee College of Music, I would say that Spain, Sweden and England probably have a very interesting scene.

Can one talk about "European jazz", or only about "Jazz in Europe"?

One can talk about some sort of European approach, but its borders are vague. The music published by the ECM company represents a certain "European face of jazz", but plenty of Americans who are sometimes clearly influenced by European music (such as Keith Jarrett or Peter Erskine) record with them as well. In musicians like Jan Garbarek, Miroslav Vitouš, John Taylor or Palle Danielsson we can clearly see European roots in their individual forms of musical expression.

Are you interested in contemporary classical music?

Yes. I like Arvo Pärt, for example his *Litany*. I don't listen to most of the composers whose music is more like mathematics.

What is your view of the dichotomy between serious music and entertainment music?

I don't like using the phrase "serious music". There's "eternal" music, by which I mean the music that survives the period in which it was created, and then there's fashionable music. I don't know whether the music of the Beatles is entertainment music. Somebody could think so, but in a certain sense it's serious music. It contains more than just the entertainment element.

/Jaroslav Pašmík/

The Bohuslav Martinů Festival 2000

The Sixth Annual

Bohuslav Martinů Foundation's Violin and Violoncello Competition

In collaboration with the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Friday - Saturday, December 1 - 2, 2000
Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Malostranské náměstí 13, Prague 1

Concert of Laureates of the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation's Violin and Violoncello Competition

In collaboration with the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Sunday, December 3, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Malostranské náměstí 13, Prague 1
(Laureates shall be announced on December 2, 2000)
Ticket price 100 Kc

Martinů and German Music

Friday, December 8, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Malostranské náměstí 13, Prague 1

Bohuslav Martinů: Four Madrigals for oboe, clarinet and bassoon, H. 266
Johann Sebastian Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 (for string sextet), BWV 1051
Paul Hindemith: Kleine Kammermusik for flute, oboe, clarinet, french horn and bassoon No. 2, op. 24
Ervin Schulhoff: Sextet for two violins, two violas and two violoncellos
Bohuslav Martinů: Sextet for two violins, two violas and two violoncellos, H. 224

Bohuslav Martinů International Chamber Music Academy

Ticket price 200 Kc

Martinů and Concerto Grosso

In collaboration with the French Institute Prague
Sunday, December 10, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum,
Náměstí Jana Palacha, Prague 1

Johann Sebastian Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.2, BWV 1047
Bohuslav Martinů: Sinfonietta giocosa, H. 282
Bohuslav Martinů: Concerto da camera for violin, piano and orchestra, H. 285
Bohuslav Martinů: Sinfonietta La Jolla, H. 328

Avner Arad - piano

Regis Pasquier - violin

Ondřej Kukal - conductor

Prague Chamber Orchestra

Ticket prices 140-180 Kc

Martinů and Hungarian Music

Monday, December 11, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
Martinů Hall, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Malostranské náměstí 13, Prague 1

Bohuslav Martinů: Sonata for piano, H. 350
Béla Bartók: Improvisations for piano, op. 20
Bohuslav Martinů: Sonata No. 2 for violoncello and piano, H. 286
Bohuslav Martinů: Variations on a Slovak Folk Song for violoncello and piano, H. 378
Zoltán Kodály: Sonata for violoncello solo, op. 8
Béla Bartók: Rhapsody No. 1 for violoncello and piano

Denes Varjon - piano

Miklos Perenyi - cello

Ticket price 200 Kc

Film Performances

Thursday, December 12, 2000, 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Cinema MAT, Karlovo náměstí 19, Prague 2

Bohuslav Martinů: The Voice of the Forest, H. 243 (movie presentation)
Martinů in the USA (documentary movie)

Stage works by Bohuslav Martinů in context of their time

International symposium
Friday - Sunday, December 15-17, 2000
Zdeňka Podhajska Hall, Náměstí Kinských 3, Prague 5

Opera Voják a tanečnice (Soldier and the Dancer)

Organized by the State Opera Prague in collaboration with the Bohuslav Martinů Foundation
Friday, December 15, 2000, 7:00 p.m.
State Opera Prague
Wilsonova 4, Prague 2

David Pountney - director

Vojtěch Spurný - conductor

State Opera Prague Orchestra

Closing Concert

In collaboration with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra
Tuesday, December 21, 2000, 7:30 p.m.
Dvořák Hall, Rudolfinum,
Náměstí Jana Palacha, Prague 1

Bohuslav Martinů: Half-Time, H. 142
Bohuslav Martinů: Concert for violoncello and orchestra No. 2, H. 304
Bohuslav Martinů: Symphony No. 3, H. 299

Christopher Richter - cello

Ulf Schirmer - conductor

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra

The Editor would like to request all our friends who reprint material contained in Czech Music 2000 kindly to send him either the respective copy of their publication or otherwise to inform him about the reprinting of our texts, and thanks them in advance for their courtesy in this matter.



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