



GLASNIK

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Sigmund Freud:

Ponovo u Beču

In Vienna again

Urednik /editor: Darko Fischer

*VOICE OF B'nai B'rith
„Gavro Schwartz“
Croatia*

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Darko Fischer, President of BB Loge "Gavro Schwartz"



Uz jedanaesti broj BB glasnika

Poštovane čitateljice i čitatelji,

Značajan događaj vezan za Beč i židovskog kipara Oskara Nemona rođenog u Hrvatskoj odigrao se početkom lipnja. U Beču je otkriven spomenik Sigmundu Freudu, rad Oskara Nemona, kipara – Židova- rođenog u Hrvatskoj. U ovom broju javljamo o tom događaju kojem je prisustvovala i kipareva kći lady Aurelia Young. Naša Sanda Pavić bila je također tom prilikom u Beču i napravila intervju s Lady Aurelijom. Donosimo taj razgovor

Istaknuti zagrebački kompozitor židovskog porijekla Alfi Kabiljo dobio je nedavno nagradu za životno djelo. U svojoj 84. godini života ovaj umjetnik još je uvijek aktivan i vjerojatno je najuspješniji i najpopularniji umjetnik Židov u Hrvatskoj. Glasnik u ovom broju donosi razgovor s ovim izvanrednim glazbenikom.

Predsjednik Izraela Rouven Rivlin posjetio je koncem srpnja Hrvatsku i Srbiju. Židovske zajednice Hrvatske i Srbije gotovo su nestale u Holokaustu u toku Drugog svjetskog rata kada je stradalo oko 85% članova tih zajednica. U Hrvatskoj je predsjednik Rivlin zajedno s hrvatskom predsjednicom Kolindom Grabar Kitarović posjetio spomen područje Jasenovac na mjestu gdje od 1941. do 1945. djelovao zloglasni koncentracioni logor "Auschwitz Balkana" kako je to Rivlin nazvao, u kojem su smrt našli mnogi Židovi. Tom prilikom Rivlin je izjavio da je moralna obaveza Hrvatske suočiti se sa svojom prošlošću, kada je u Holokaustu stradao veliki broj Židov.

Rouven Rivlin je nakon Hrvatske posjetio i susjednu Srbiju. On je prvi predsjednik Izraela u posjeti Srbiji. Sastao se s predsjednikom Srbije Aleksandrom Vučićem, koji je izrazio zadovoljstvo Rivlinovom izjavom u Jasenovcu. Predsjednik Rivlin prisustvovao je imenovanju jedne ulice u Zemunu. Ulica je dobila ime po Theodoru Herzlu čiji djed i baka su živjeli i sahranjeni su u Zemunu. U ovom broju donosimo nekoliko fotografija o ovim posjetama predsjednika Rivlina.

U ovom broju donosimo opet književni prilog. Nastavljamo donositi sjećanja Vlaste Diamant. iz njene knjige "Živa sam". Vlasta Diamant je umjetnica koja je iz Hrvatske 1970. otišla u Kaliforniju. Bila je član Židovske općine Zagreb a po odlasku u Californiju bavi se umjetnošću, pisanjem knjiga i izradom nakita. Svoja sjećanja na vrijeme provedeno u Hrvatskoj – tada socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji-, opisala je u knjizi *Socialism v. Santa (Socijalizam protiv svetog Nikole)*. Donosimo drugi nastavak iz ove njene knjige.



Editorial to the eleventh issue of The Voice of BB

Dear readers,

A significant event related to Vienna and the Jewish sculptor Oskar Nemon born in Croatia happened in early June. In Vienna, a monument to Sigmund Freud, the work of Oscar Nemon, a sculptor - a Jew born in Croatia-, was revealed. In this issue we write about this event attended by sculptor's daughter Lady Aurelia Young. Our Sandra Pavić was also in Vienna at that occasion. She made an intervju with Lady Aurelia which we present in this issue

The prominent Zagreb composer of Jewish origin, Alfi Kabiljo, has recently received a lifetime achievement award. At the age of 84, this artist is still active and is probably the most successful and most popular Jewish artist in Croatia. Our "Voice" in this issue brings an interview with this outstanding musician.

Israeli president Ruvven Rivlin visited Croatia and Serbia at the end of July. The Jewish Communities of Croatia and Serbia almost disappeared in the Holocaust during the Second World War when about 85% of the members of these communities were killed. In Croatia, President Rivlin and Croatian president Kolinda Grabar Kitarović visited the memorial area of Jasenovac, where 1941-1945 the place of notorious concentration camp "Auschwitz of Balkan" as Rivlin said, where many Jews found their death. On that occasion, Rivlin stated that it is Croatia's moral obligation to face its past when during Holocaust a large number of Jews were killed.

Ruvven Rivlin, after his visit to Croatia also visited neighboring Serbia. He was the first Israeli president to visit Serbia. He met with Serbian president Aleksandar Vučić, who expressed satisfaction with Rivlin's statement in Jasenovac. President Rivlin attended the a ceremony of renaming of a street in Zemun. The street was named after Theodor Herzl, whose grandparents lived and were buried in Zemun. In this issue we bring few photos of these visits by president Rivlin.

In this issue we continue to bring a literary supplement. We continue to bring memories to Vlasta Diamant from her book "I'm alive". Vlasta Diamant is an artist from Croatia who left for California in 1970. She was a member of the Jewish Community of Zagreb and, after leaving for California, she deals with art, writing books, and making jewelry. Her memories on days spent in Croatia - then the Socialist Yugoslavia - have been described in the book Socialism v. Santa. In this issue there is another sequel from her book "I'm alive".

Sigmund Freud's sculpture by Oscar Nemon unveiled in Vienna



Sigmund Freud's statue at Vienna Medical University

80 years after Sigmund Freud was forced to leave Vienna on 4th June 1938, the Medical University of Vienna unveils an over life-sized sculpture of Freud created by Oscar Nemon in 1936.

As the successor to Freud's academic workplace throughout his time in Vienna, the Medical University of Vienna is honoured to preserve the memory of one of its most significant thinkers, Sigmund Freud.

Until he was forced into exile in London in 1938, founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), was a member of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Vienna. Oscar Nemon (1906-1985) first sculpted Freud in 1931 for his 75th birthday, creating the carved wooden bust now on display in the Freud Museum in London. Freud found this "an astonishingly life-like impression."

A friendship developed, and five years later, in 1936, Nemon was commissioned to create a full-length, seated portrait for Freud's eightieth birthday. Originally intended for the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, this was never installed in Austria due to the Anschluss. Nemon's 1936 Freud portrait, which stands 70cm high, was however unveiled at the New York Psychoanalytic Society in 1947. Nemon enlarged his portrait to create an over life-size, 1.7m high, seated Freud. Following heroic efforts by Donald Winnicott, this was cast in bronze in 1970 and sited near Freud's final home in Hampstead in London.

Spomenik Sigmundu Freudu, rad Oscara Nemona otkriven je u Beču

80 godina nakon što je Sigmund Freud morao 4. lipnja 1938 napustiti Beč, Medicinski fakultet u Beču postavio je njegov spomenik u veličini većoj od prirodne. Spomenik je napravio kipar Oscar Nemon i to 1936. godine.

Medicinski fakultet u Beču, Freudov akademski nasljednik kroz sve ove godine, imao je čast da održi sjećanje na svog najvećeg mislioca, Sigmunda Freuda.

Sve dok nije morao napustiti beč 1938. godine, osnivač psihoanalize Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) bio je član Medicinskog fakulteta u Beču. Oscar Nemon (1906-1985) prvi je put portretirao Freuda 1931. za njegov 75. rođendan. Tada je načinio njegovu bistu u drvetu koja je danas izložena u Freudovom muzeju u Londonu. Freud je tu bistu označio kao "Čudesno životnu impresiju".

Između kipara i Freuda razvilo se prijateljstvo i Nemon je nakon pet godina dobio narudžbu da načini Freudov sjedeći portret za njegov 80. rođendan. Namijenjen prvotno za bečko Psihoanalitičko društvo, zbog Anshlusa ovaj rad nije nikada postavljen u Austriji. Taj 70 cm visok portret postavljen je u Psihoanalitičkom društvu u New Yorku u 1947. godini. Nemon je uvećao ovu skulpturu na 170 cm visoki sjedeći portret Freuda. Zahvaljujući izuzetnim naporima Donalda Winnicotta, spomenik je odliven u bronzi 1970. i postavljen pored Freudovog posljednjeg doma u Hampsteadu u Londonu.

Sandra Pavić:

Vienna: In Memory of Sigmund Freud

Oscar Nemon's sculpture Unveiling Ceremony and Symposium

Freud is finally back in Vienna, eighty years after he left.

On June 4th, I attended a special event of the unveiling Sigmund Freud's statue. This finally found an appropriate place at the Medical University Campus in Vienna, where the famous psychoanalyst studied and did so much important research.



Unveiling th statue at Medical University

University and many others interested in arts and science.

The event was hosted by Markus Mueller (Rector of the Medical University), Heinz Fassman, (Federal Minister of Education, Science and Research), Lord David Freud (great-grandson of Sigmund Freud, Member of the House of Lords) ,Dr Vesna Cvjetković (Croatian Ambassador in Austria), members of Oscar Nemon's family, Professors of the

I was touched by the emotions that overcame everybody at that special event; it seemed to me that we all reconnected to Sigmund Freud and Oscar Nemon in some invisible way.

I was specially moved by the gracious appearance of Oscar Nemon's daughter, Lady Aurelia Young. She was the driving force behind the event and whom we have to thank for the hitherto undisclosed details of the life of this great artist, Oscar Nemon, her father, in her book which is shortly to be published..

I asked her for an interview to find out more about her collaboration with the Medical University and how actually her father met Sigmund Freud.

When did your father meet Sigmund Freud?

Well, my father was born in Osijek 1906 and his family was Jewish. His father, Mavro Neumann was from Hungary, his mother Eugenie Adler was from Osijek. As a young boy, Oscar, who was a very talented teenage sculptor, was sent to Vienna to develop his skills. When he was 18, he met one of Freud's disciples, Paul Federn. He wanted a bust of Freud, but Freud always refused to sit for a sculptor. Federn said that if ever Freud changes his mind Oscar Nemon would be the sculptor. Freud later changed his mind and in 1936 my father sculpted Freud. The small statue of Freud was made for the Viennese Psychoanalytical Society. It was planned to place the big statue of Freud in Vienna, but because of the Nazi invasion of Austria and Hitler this was impossible.

But Vienna was where it was always meant to be and where my father Oscar Nemon always wanted it to be.

Nemon studied in Vienna and then in Brussels. While he was studying, he often went to see his mother in Croatia. He could not earn enough in his home country, so he continued to study and live in Belgium. He emigrated to England before the war. Unfortunately, all his family were caught and killed in the Holocaust: his mother, brother and other members of the family.

How come the first sculpture of Freud was placed in London ?

In 1969, a Child Psychoanalyst *Donald Winnicot* said: "If the statue cannot be in Vienna let's have it in London!" So the money was raised to have the statue made and cast in bronze. It was put near Sigmund's Freud home in London, where Sigmund Freud moved to from Vienna in 1938. There is still that statue in London, but I always wanted to place a copy of the statue in Vienna, as my father wished.

What about the plaster cast ?

My family still had the plaster cast so it was possible to have a second statue, exactly the same as the one in London. But nobody in Vienna seemed to want it. About 18 months ago, I was interviewed about the biography of Donald Winnicot and I told the people who wrote about him how I really wanted the statue to be in Vienna. So they said: "Well, let's try and get it in Vienna as now somebody in Vienna might like it!" We raised the money but we couldn't find anyone who wanted it.

Luckily Prof Dr Stephan Doering of the Medical University was very enthusiastic, and said: "Let's have a statue of Sigmund Freud here on the campus of the Medical University of Vienna, as Sigmund Freud was one of the most famous medical students who studied here." The Rector of the Medical University was enthusiastic about the idea and Dr Stephan Doering masterminded the whole event, a symposium that was held in honour of Freud after the unveiling of the statue on June 4th.

The Medical University of Vienna paid for half of the cost of casting the statue in bronze; the Psychoanalytical Society of Vienna were also very generous, as were many kind people who contributed with their donations. The statue was cast in England and brought to Vienna and placed on the Campus of the Medical University of Vienna. It was unveiled by David Freud, one of Freud's great grandsons.



The unveiling of the statue was attended by Dr Vesna Cvjetkovic, the Croatian Ambassador in Vienna and many members of Oscar Nemon's family. The next day we had an evening in the Croatian Embassy, where I presented the life and work of my father.

Why 4. of June?

It was exactly on June 4th 80 years ago when Freud was forced to leave Vienna for the safety in England because of anti-Semitism in Austria.

Lord David Freud was visibly touched when he unveiled the statue. At the end of his speech, he said: "Welcome home, great grandfather!"

Lady Aurelia presenting Nemon's work

How did your father manage to meet all these famous people?

Nemon was invited to stay in Marrakesh in Morocco at the same hotel as Winston Churchill in 1951. Nemon sketched Churchill at meal times and made a small head of him. When Churchill's wife saw the little head, she asked if she could buy it. She told Nemon ' your little bust represents my husband as I see him'. In 1952, the young Queen wanted a large bust of Churchill for Windsor Castle and Winston Churchill recommended Oscar Nemon to be the sculptor. Nemon sculpted further famous English people, including Queen Elizabeth II. The English sculptors didn't like it when a Jew from Croatia won these commissions, but luckily Winston Churchill was very supportive. Queen Elizabeth gave Nemon a studio to work in in St. James Palace in 1970. Nemon never made a lot of money. I am still looking for my father's missing sculptures in Croatia, Vienna and Belgium.

It seems that you father knew very well how to express the character of his models and probably that is where is where his magic came from. We can read their characters from his sculptures.

Yes; somebody said that Nemon portrayed the inside of the person on the outside of the sculpture. One of his models was the child analyst, Melanie Klein, who destroyed the bust because she did not like the expression she saw on it.

Knowing so much about the people I presume that he was very good communicator?

Yes; everybody loved him and he was very good listener. He had a quiet voice and he liked to listen. The women loved him and he loved women. He had a joyful character although he had a very difficult and complicated life, but a fulfilled one.

Svečano otkrivanja spomenika Oscara Nemona i simpozij

Freud je konačno opet u Beču, tako na neki način možemo reći.

Četvrtog lipnja mogli smo prisustvovati posebnom događaju, otkrivanju spomenika Sigmundu Freudu, koji je našao svoje mjesto u kampusu Medicinskog fakulteta u Beču gdje je znameniti psihoanalitičar studirao i uradio mnoga važna istraživanja.

Na svečanosti su bili prisutni Markus Mueller (rektor Medicinskog fakulteta) Heinz Fassman (savezni ministar obrazovanja, znanosti i istraživanja) lord David Freud (praunuk Sigmunda Freuda, član Gornjeg doma britanskog parlamenta), Vesna Cvjetković (hrvatska veleposlanica u Austriji), članovi obitelji Oscara Nemona, profesori Sveučilišta kao i mnoge osobe koje se zanimaju za znanost i umjetnost.

Bila sam dirnuta osjećajima koji su prevladavali kod svih prisutnih, kao da smo svi bili povezani sa Sigmundom Freudom i Oscarom Nemonom na neki nevidljivi način.

Posebno me dirnula šarmantna prisutnost Lady Aurelije Young, kćeri Oscara Nemona, pokretača svih ovih događaja i kojoj možemo zahvaliti saznanja o nepoznatim detaljima života velikog umjetnika Oscara Nemona, njenog oca.

Odlučila sam ju zamoliti za intervju kako bi saznala o njenoj suradnji s Medicinskim fakultetom i kako je njen otac susreo Sigmunda Freuda.

Kada je vaš otac sreo Sigmunda Freuda?

Moj je otac rođen u Osijeku 1906 godine u židovskoj porodici. Njegov je otac bio mađarski Židov, zvao se Neumann. Oscar, kako je bio talentirani mladi kipar, poslali su ga u Beč da nauči kipariti. S 18 godina u Beču je susreo Paula Fiedena, Freudovog učenika, koji je želio imati Freudovu bistu, no Freud je odbijao da pozira. Frieden je izjavio da ako Freud ikada promijeni mišljenje, Nemon će biti njegov kipar. I Freud se predomislio. 1936 moj otac je portretirao Freuda i njegov mali spomenik je poklonjen bečkom Društvu psihoanalitičara. Vjerojatno je bilo u planu da se ovaj spomenik zamijeni velikim spomenikom Freudu u Beču, no zbog nacista i Hitlera to je bilo nemoguće. No Beč je bio uvijek tu i gdje je moj otac želio da bude.

Nemon je studirao u Beču i u Bruxellesu i za vrijeme studija često je odlazio u posjetu svojoj majci u Hrvatsku. Očito nije mogao zarađivati u svojoj rodnoj zemlji pa je nastavio živjeti u Belgiji. Otišao je u Englesku 1936. Nažalost, u Holokaustu su stradali svi članovi njegove porodice: majka, brat i ostali članovi... Došao je u Hrvatsku (Jugoslaviju) u 60-im godinama da posjeti neke prijatelje. Nažalost u Hrvatskoj mu nitko nije ponudio da napravi nekakvu izložbu.

Kako se njegova prva skulptura pojavila u Londonu?

1969. godine dječji psihoanalitičar Donald Winnicot je rekao: "Ako kip ne može biti u Beču, postavimo ga u Londonu". Sakupljen je novac za spomenik u bronci koji je postavljen u blizini Freudovog doma u Londonu kako se Sigmund Freud doselio 1938. Taj je spomenik još uvijek tamo no i ja i moj otac smo željeli da ga se premjesti u Beč.

Što se dogodilo s gipsanim odljevom?

Naša obitelj posjedovala je gipsani odljev pa je bilo moguće napraviti još je spomenik identičan onom u Londonu, no u Beču nitko nije bio zainteresiran za njega. Pred oko 18 mjeseci mene su intervjuirali vezano

za biografiju Donalda Winnicota pa sam ljudima koji su o njemu pisali rekla, kako želim da spomenik bude u Beču. oni su rekli "Pokušajmo ga odnijeti u Beč, možda ga sada netko želi tamo imati." Sakupili smo novac no trebalo je naći nekoga u Beču.

Tko bi htio spomenik Freudu? Na sreću, prof. dr. Stephan Doering s Medicinskog fakulteta bio je oduševljen i rekao je: "Postavimo skulpturu Sigmunda Freuda ovdje, na kampusu Medicinskog fakulteta". Otišao je rektoru i osmislio cijeli događaj zajedno sa simpozijem koji je održan četvrtog lipnja u čast Freuda.

Freud je studirao na Medicinskom fakultetu u Beču, pa se fakultet prihvatio troška izrade njegovog spomenika u bronci. I Medicinski fakultet i Psihoanalitičko društvo dali su mnogo novaca a također je mnogo dobrih ljudi dalo svoj prilog. Tako je spomenik odliven u Engleskoj, donesen u Beč i smješten u kampusu Medicinskog fakulteta. Otkrio ga je David Freud jedan od Freudovih praunuka.

Na svim događajima i proslavama bila je prisutna veleposlanica Hrvatske, dok sam slijedeću večer ja u Hrvatskom veleposlanstvu prikazala život i rad svog oca.

Zašto baš četvrti lipanj?

Bili je baš četvrtog lipnja kada je pred 80 godina Freud morao napustiti Beč zbog anti-semitizma i otići u sigurnu Englesku. David Freud bio je vidljivo dirnut i svoj je govor završio s "Dobro došao djede kući".

Kako je Vašem ocu uspjelo upoznati sve te slavne ljude?

Nemona je njegov prijatelj, psihoanalitičar, pozvalo u Marakeš, Maroko gdje je boravio u istom hotelu s W. Churchilom 1951. godine. Pri zajedničkim obrocima Nemon je skicirao glavu Winstona Churchilla a to se svidjelo Churchillovoj ženi i sestričnici, pa je Nemon naknadno napravio bistu. Godine 1952. mlada kraljica htjela je za palaču Winsor Churchilovu bistu na što je Churchill zaželio da to Nemon napravi. Zatim je napravio i kraljičinu bistu a iza toga je portretirao mnoge ugledne Engleze. Engleskim kiparima nije se svidjelo da Židov iz Hrvatske radi takve portrete, no na sreću, Churchill ga je podržavao i mnogo pomogao. Kraljica mu je poklonila studio u St. James palači da u njemu radi do 1970. Ipak nikada nije mnogo zaradio. Još uvijek tražim njegove skulpture. Očito mu je trebalo novaca pa je prodavao te portrete.

Čini se, da je Vaš otac znao dobro izraziti osobine svojih modela i da je to bila tajna njegovih uspjeha. Možemo iščitati njihove osobine iz njegovih skulptura.

Da, netko je čudesno rekao da je on izrazio unutrašnjost ličnosti na vanjskoj strani. Jedan od modela, Melanie Klein uništila je bistu jer joj se nije svidio izraz koji je ona na njoj vidjela.

Znajući toliko mnogo o ljudima, pretpostavljam da je on bio vrlo komunikativan

Da, svi su ga voljeli, bio je vrlo dobar kao slušatelj, posebno su ga žene voljele. Imao je miran glas a volio je slušati. Žene su ga voljele i on je volio žene. Bio je veseo čovjek iako je imao težak i kompliciran život. Imao je zanimljiv život i bio je krasna osoba.

In memoriam Zlatku Boureku

Zlatko Bourek, istaknuti hrvatski umjetnik židovskog porijekla umro je u svibnju ove godine u 89. godini u Zagrebu. Bio je kipar, slikar, scenograf, režiser, autor crtanih filmova i lutkar koji je gotovo do svoje smrti bio aktivan.

Rođen je u Požegi 1929. godine. Njegova baka po majci bila je iz sefardske porodice Abelcani. Iako u njegovim radovima ne prevladavaju židovske teme, izjašnjavao se po nacionalnosti kao Židov (što je rijetkost kod Židova Hrvatske) i to je često isticao



Zlatko Bourek 1929 - 2018

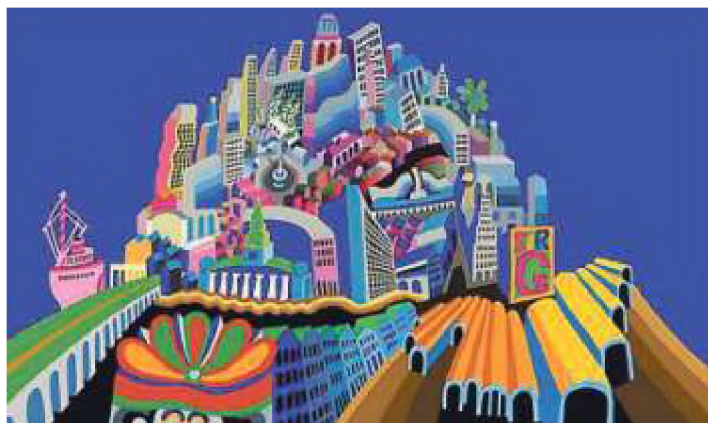
na njemu svojstven i groteskan način kakva su bila i njegova djela. Holokaust je preživio tako da je zajedno s majkom dvije godine proveo po šumama Slavonije s partizanima. Srednju školu završio je u Osijeku a Akademiju likovnih umjetnosti u Zagrebu. Slavonija u kojoj je odrastao ostavila je trajan trag u njegovim slikarskim djelima. Bio je član HAZU.

Njegove veze sa židovskom zajednicom u Hrvatskoj izrazile su se kroz učestvovanja na

kulturnoj sceni Bejahad, i sudjelovanju u kulturnim događajima društva "Miroslav Šalom Freiburger" u okviru kojeg je prikazivano i njegovo posljednje scensko djelo "Veliki neuspjeh Adolfa H". U ovom djelu, lutkarskoj predstavi za odrasle s temom Holokausta, Bourek je na sebi svojstven groteskni način na scenu stavio djelo mađarskog pisca Georgesa Taborija. Djelo je ne samo osuda nacizma već i optimistička vjera u bolju budućnost židovskog narod koji je uspio preživjeti čak i Holokaust

Vezan za svoje slavonsko porijeklo i slavonske rijeke, Dunav, Dravu i Savu, to su česti motiv njegovih djela, naročito prelasci preko rijeke, dok su mostovi napadani avionima i bombama, očita njegova sjećanja na doživljaje iz Drugog svjetskog rata i boravka među partizanima. Njegove slike i figure, kako je nazivao svoje lutke i kiparska djela, puna su grotesknih oblika, bitnog obilježja Bourekovog stvaralaštva.

Veliki uspjeh doživio je s predstavom „Hamlet“, u kojoj je ujedinio lutku i glumca-animatora, novost u lutkarstvu, što ga je lansiralo u svijet.



Bourek: Scenografija za Profesora Baltazara

Njegov Baltazargrad, scenografiju za crtane filmove o profesoru Baltazaru, poznaju sve generacije širom svijeta.

O tom svestranom i vrlo plodnom umjetniku predsjednik HAZU akademik Zoran Kusić rekao je: "Bourek pripada među nacionalne velikane koji su zadužili hrvatsku likovnu, kazališnu i filmsku umjetnost", dok hrvatski književnik Miljenko Jergović napominje: "erotika i rodna Slavonija bile su mu nadahnuće za slikarski i kiparski rad".

Naša udruga B'nai B'rith, u spomen na preminulog Zlatka Boureka, organizirala je predavanje o njemu. Na predavanju je trebao učestvovati i njegov prijatelj iz Slavonije i iz školskih dana akademik Viktor Žmegač. Kako je g. Žmegač u posljednjem trenutku otkazao svoj dolazak, predavanje o njemu održao je pisac ovih redova.

Darko Fischer

In memoriam Zlatko Bourek

Zlatko Bourek, a celebrated Croatian artist of Jewish origin, died in Zagreb in May, aged 88. He was a sculptor, painter, stage designer, director, cartoonist and puppeteer, active to the very end.

He was born in Požega in 1929. His maternal grandmother belonged to the Sephardic family Abelcani. Although his work does not show many Jewish issues, he declared himself of Jewish nationality (not many



Zlatko Bourek: Two Personalities

Croatian Jews do the same) and he often emphasized that in his peculiar, rather grotesque way, characteristic throughout his art. He survived the Holocaust hidden for two years with the partisans in Slavonian forests, along with his mother. Upon finishing the high school in Osijek he graduated on the Academy of Arts in Zagreb. Slavonia of his childhood influenced his paintings to the end of his life. He was a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences (HAZU).

Through his connections with the Croatian

Jewish community he often accepted to participate in cultural events such as

Bejihad and activities of the „Miroslav Šalom Freiburger“ society. Recently this society staged his last performance, „The Big Failure of Adolf H.“ It was a puppet-show for adults, based on the text of the Hungarian writer Georges Tabori. In this performance Bourek tackles the Holocaust in his well-known grotesque manner. Apart from condemning Nazism, this performance offers optimism and faith in the bright future of Jewish people who managed to survive horrors such as the Holocaust.

Bourek's everlasting memory of his Slavonian childhood is most often connected to three rivers, Dunav, Drava and Sava and many of his paintings show river crossing and bridges under air raids – obviously reflecting his memories of WWII and staying with partisans. His paintings and puppets, figures as called by him, are of very grotesque features and this became key attributes of his entire work.

One of his very successful performances was the staging of Hamlet, where he united the puppet and the actor in a very peculiar way which made him famous throughout the world.

His fantasy city named Baltazargrad, the set for the well-known cartoon series about Professor Balthazar, will always stay in the hearts of many generations.

Mr. Zoran Kusić, president of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences gave a speech upon the death of this exceptional artist: „Bourek is one of the pillars forming our nation, giving immense contribution to Croatian art in the fields of theatre, visual arts and film.

The journalist Miljenko Jergović points out: „He drew inspiration for his paintings and sculptures from erotic thoughts and his native Slavonia.“

Tehnologijom protiv terorista

Izrael je postavio novi sustav kojim može neutralizirati glavninu od tisuća zapaljivih zmajeva i balona koje su palestinski prosvjednici iz Gaze poslali u Izrael posljednjih tjedana.

Početkom lipnja Izrael je duž granice s Gazom postavio sustav **Sky Spotter** koji je dizajniran za otkrivanje dronova. Time je omogućeno otkriti i pratiti višestruke ciljeve prilikom najintenzivnijih napada zapaljivim objektima na izraelski teritorij, objavio je Channel 2.



Sky Spotter

Sustav, koji se temelji na snažnoj optici, pruža interaktivnu 3-D sliku graničnog područja s velikom razlučivošću. Označeni objekti prikazuju se kao crvene crte iznad topografske karte. Sustav prati objekte dok idu prema istoku od Gaze nošeni vjetrom koji puše u unutrašnjosti s Mediterana. Na temelju toga operatori sustava tada napadaju objekte dronovima na daljinsko upravljanje.

Sustav također može izračunati predviđenu točku djelovanja zapaljivog objekta sa ili bez presretanja

te uputiti vatrogasnu opremu na očekivano područje kako bi ugasi plamen prije nego što se proširi ili čak u zraku ugasi zapaljeni objekt, navodi se u izvješću. U izvješću se navodi da sustav, razvijen u tvrtki Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, otkriva i prati 100% svih zapaljivih objekata poslanih prema Izraelu, čak i kada se istodobno uputi desetak takvih objekata. Prije ovog sustava, izraelske obrambene snage presretale su zapaljive predmete pomoću dronova.

Pri izradi ovog sustava, obrambene snage iz Izraela koristile su iskustva operatera u zrakoplovima koji su presrestali zapaljive predmete. Upotreba zapaljivih predmeta kao taktike nanošenja štete Izraelu započela je ovog proljeća. Stotine hektara poljoprivrednog zemljišta i prirodne šume su uništeni tada u plamenu.

Technology against terrorists

Israel has deployed a new system that it says can neutralize much of the threat from the thousands of incendiary kites and balloons that Gazans have been sending into Israel in recent weeks.

The Sky Spotter system, which was designed to deal with drones, was deployed around Israel's border with Gaza earlier this month and has been able to pinpoint and track multiple targets during peaks of activity by dispatchers of incendiary objects, Channel 2 reported.

The system, which is based on powerful optics, provides an interactive 3-D image of the border area at great resolution. Flagged objects appear as red lines suspended above the topography. The system tracks the objects as they drift eastward from Gaza on breeze blowing inland from the Mediterranean.

Operators can then engage the objects with remote-operated drones.

The system can also calculate the projected point of impact with or without interception, allowing operators to dispatch firefighters to the expected area to extinguish the flames before they spread or even when they are still in the air, the report said.

The report said the system, which was developed by the Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, detects and tracks 100 percent of all incendiary objects sent Israel's way even when dozens are launched almost simultaneously.

Before the system's deployment, the Israel Defense Forces recruited drone operators to intercept the incendiary objects.

The use of incendiary objects as a tactic began this spring. Hundreds of acres of farming land and natural forest have been consumed in the flames.

Posjet predsjednika Izraela Hrvatskoj i Srbiji



Predsjednik Izraela i predsjednica Hrvatske na ceremoniji dobrodošlice
Presidents of Israel and Croatia in a welcome ceremony



Susret predsjednika Izraela i hrvatske predsjednice
President of Israel meets Croatian President



Rivlin i Grabar Kitarović u Jasenovcu
Rivlin and Grabar Kitarović in Jasenovac



Predsjednici Izraela i Srbije na ceremoniji dobrodošlice
Presidents of Israel and Serbia in a welcome ceremony



Predsjednici Izraela i Srbije, Rivlin i Vučić
Presidents of Israel and Serbia, Rivlin and Vučić



Predsjednici Izraela i Srbije u ulici Herzl
Presidents of Israel and Serbia in Herzl Street

Alfi Kabiljo

Vrlo poznati i priznati zagrebački kompozitor, Alfi Kabiljo, nedavno je, uz mnoge razne nagrade, dobio i nagradu za životno djelo povodom 65. filmskog festivala u Puli. Tim povodom razgovarali smo s autorom.



Alfi Kabiljo

Kabiljo je sefardsko prezime. Tvoji su preci vjerojatno nakon izгона iz Španjolske, preko Turske došli u Bosnu. Tvoj je otac zatim stigao u Zagreb. Što nam možeš reći o svojim precima?

Moji preci su preko Španjolske došli u Bosnu. Navodno u bijegu odnosno u progonstvu su se zadržali neko vrijeme u Kabiliji današnjem Alžiru. Sjajna je priča o turskom sultanu Bajazitu koji je poslao brod da dovede Židove u tursko carstvo.

S roditeljima si kao dijete preživio Holokaust i to u Zagrebu. To je malo kojoj židovskoj obitelji uspjelo. Što nam o tome možeš reći, bilo iz vlastitog sjećanja, bilo iz pričanja svojih roditelja?

Preživio sam holokaust u Zagrebu zahvaljujući vezama mog oca s nekim hrvatskim organizacijama kojima je on pomagao prije stvaranja NDH, među kojima je bio i šef ustaške policije Pecnikara. Bio sam u tri ustaška zatvora što baš nije bilo ugodno. O tome sam pričao u jednom filmu koji su snimili o meni i sad pričam opet mnogo u novom dokumentarcu koji HRT radi o meni. Mi čak nismo morali nositi niti povez sa slovom Ž a ja ga ne bih htio nositi i da smo ga dobili Uglavnom, to su bila vrlo teška vremena. Ustaše su dolazile u našu kuću s pozdravom "Za dom spremni" i vrlo često su pljačkali. Kada se uhapsili moju baku i tetu i vodili ih u Jadovno, moja teta je telefonirala s kolodvora tražeći pomoć. Mama i ja smo otišli do Stepenica jer je moja mama poznavala neke crkvene dostojanstvenike. Stepinac ju je primio. Dok sam čekao čuo sam Stepinca kako govori: "To su sve sami farizeji i teško da možemo nešto napraviti." Uglavnom moja teta se izvukla iz tog transporta, otišla je u partizane. Ima jako mnogo tih raznih detalja ali to su grozne stvari. Ali ipak o tome treba govoriti. 76 članova moje obitelji je ubijeno, najviše u Jasenovcu.

Moja tri strica bili su u Jasenovcu i učestvovali u probou. Samo je jedan preživio. Kod nas je najprije stanovao talijanski oficir s obitelji, a poslije njemački oficir, tako da ustaše nisu mogle dolaziti.

Bio si na popisu židovske djece koja su drugim "kindertransportom" 1943. trebala otići u tadašnju Palestinu – današnji Izrael. Ta se akcije uopće nije ostvarila. Možeš li nam o tome nešto reći?

Vidio sam da sam bio na popisu za Kindertransport ali to sam tek saznao iz Goldsteinove knjige i ne bih ništa znao reći o tome. Srećom sve se dobro završilo i kad je rat prestao taj dan, 8. svibnja, je za mene bio jedan od najsretnijih dana u mom životu.

Kako je započelo tvoje školovanje u Zagrebu i kako je teklo opće i glazbeno školovanje?

Normalno da se nisam mogao upisati u osnovnu školu ali vrlo brzo je jedna učiteljica koja je stanovala nedaleko od nas uspjela nagovoriti direktora kaptolske škole da i mene upiše tako da sam ja za vrijeme rata išao u školu na Kaptolu. Moram reći da su svi bili jako dobri uključivši katehetu koji je rekao da ja ne moram ići na vjeronauk jer sam Mojsijeve vjere. Paralelno me moja mama upisala u privatnu muzičku školu poznatog kompozitora Rudolfa Maca i počeo sam se vrlo intenzivno baviti glazbom. Klavir sam učio kod njegove supruge poznate pijanistice i čembalistice gospođe Margite Mac koja je isto bila Židovka. Jako mnogo mi je koristilo biti s ovako sjajni profesorima. Mislim da je to baza mojeg životnog zanimanja za glazbu kao profesionalca.

Već kao srednjoškolac bio si aktivni glazbenik. Osnovao si svoj sastav. Kako to, da si se opredijelio na zahtjevan studij arhitekture? Da li si za vrijeme studija imao vremena za glazbu?

Sa 16 godina imao sam svoj band i nastupali smo vrlo često po raznim gimnazijama i plesnim večerima. Svirao sam klavir, ako je trebalo i bubnjeve kad nije došao bubnjar. Billi smo zapravo skoro na svim zagrebačkim takozvanim plesnjacima. Kad sam upisao arhitekturu već sam imao nešto kompozicija Ali 1960 sam imao svoj prvi veliki uspjeh s dječjom pjesmom "Zekini jadi" na zagrebačkom festivalu 1961. Dobio sam dvije velike nagrade, moje pjesme su pjevali veliki pjevači: Gabi Novak, Ivo Robić, Ivica Šerfezi i Zdenka Vučković. Od tada je počela moja karijera hitmejnera, aranžera i producenta. Nakon diplome tražio sam posao kao arhitekt no to nisam mogao dobiti. Počeo sam se aktivno baviti glazbom. Trebalo je zarađivati kruh za moju obitelj, tako da sam za Hrvatsku Radio televiziju onda Radio Zagreb i Televiziju Zagreb radio mnoge aranžmane. Pisao sam i dalje pjesme za razne festivale. Dobio sam jako puno nagrada. Pogotovo sam imao sreću da idem na festivale zabavne glazbe po svijetu. Mislim da nema nijednog skladatelja koji je osvojio toliko nagrada od Tokija, Rio de Janeiro-a, Curaçao-a, Los Angeles-a, Tel Aviva, Malte, Aleksandrije i tako dalje.

Kako je započela tvoja profesionalna karijera glazbenika i kompozitora, koji su bili prvi uspjesi?

1971. počeo sam pisati filmsku glazbu, pišem čitav život dobio sam dosta nagrada imao sam sreću da ti radim u Los Angelesu na nekim filmovima i u Londonu, Beču a najviše sam radio sa simfonijskim orkestrom HRT-a pa čak i nedavno kad sam radio glazbu o Evi Schwarz jednoj Međimurska židovski koja je prošla Auschwitz.

Stvarao si u vrlo mnogo glazbenih oblika: zabavne pjesme, mjuzikli, operete, filmska glazba pa čak i opera. Što te je od toga najviše privlačilo?

Pišem razne glazbene oblike a u zadnje vrijeme najviše takozvanu ozbiljnu glazbu i to komornu glazbu. Zato jednostavno nisam mogao doći u Komediju gdje ne igraju moj mjuzikl "Madame Hamlet" za koji sam ja napisao libreto. Fantastični Mate Maras je napisao tekstove pjesama. Radi se o najvećoj glumici u povijesti kazališta Sarah Bernardt koja je čak bila u Zagrebu i igrala je Hamleta kao žena. Momentalno radim na mjuzikl koji se zove Krađa Mona Lise i to s najizvođenijim hrvatskim piscem Mirom Gavranom.

Stvorio si nevjerojatno veliki broj glazbenih djela. Kako ti je to uspjelo? Kako je izgledao ili još uvijek izgleda tvoj radni dan?

Kako mi je to sve uspjelo? Ja sam uvijek bio profesionalac i nikad nisam bio u radnom odnosu osim mjesec dana u Parizu u ediciji Salabert. To jedna od najpoznatijih svjetskih edicija za ozbiljnu glazbu. Napisao sam, poslije Ivana Zajca, najviše djela u Hrvatskoj. Tako kaže Jagoda Martinčević, vrsna muzikologinja. Napisala je u knjigu o meni s popisom svih mojih djela. Vjerojatno sam toliko napisao zato što volim skladati. Uvijek sam imao sjajne izvođače kako za ozbiljnu glazbu tako i u zabavnoj glazbi. Radio sam ali sam radio sa svim najvećim pjevačima Hrvatske a dobrim dijelom i iz drugih zemalja.

Dobitnik si mnogih prestižnih nagrada. Koju od njih smatraš najvrednijom, koja ti je najmilija?

Teško je reći koja mi je najdraža i najvrjednija nagrada. Možda ipak nagrada na najvećem svjetskom festivalu zabavne muzike uopće 1971. u Rio de Janeiru kada sam trebao dobiti prvu nagradu. No onda je ministar kulture zvao direktora festivala i rekao mu da država koja na zastavi ima crvenu zvijezdu ne može biti prvak na festivalu. Tako sam dobio drugo mjesto ali je moja pjevačica Radojka Šverko ipak dobila prvu nagradu kao najbolje interpret.

Među Židovima ima znatan broj poznati glazbenika: Mendelson, Offenbach, Gershwin, Bernstein... Da li su Židovi narod posebno nadaren za glazbu?

Kod Židova je jako izražen i veliki smisao za glazbu. Nadareni su zato jer se u njihovim obiteljima pjeva i pleše i mnogo čita. Osim ovih kompozitora koje si napomenuo, moram reći i za interprete specijalno ozbiljne glazbe koji su vrhunski. I dalje nadolaze dolaze novi židovski glazbenici koji su najbolji na svijetu.

U svojoj 83. godini još si uvijek aktivan i vrlo vitalan. Koja je "tajna" tvoje dugovječnosti?

Naravno da sam i dalje vrlo aktivan i vitalan. Tajna moja dugovječnosti je dobrim dijelom u genima, dobrim dijelom u mojoj sportskoj aktivnosti. Ja se bavim sportom i to vrlo intenzivno od svoje pete godine. A i dan danas igram dva do tri puta tjedno tenis i to pojedinačne igre. Bio sam čak član reprezentacije Hrvatske na svjetskom veteranskom prvenstvu u Umagu. Mnogo plivam, jedem najbolju hranu, puno voća i povrća, kozji sir i tako dalje i tako dalje.

Ima li još nešto što bi htio poručiti čitateljima "Glasnika"?

Evo poručujem čitateljima Glasnika neka slušaju dobru glazbu, neka čitaju knjige pogotovo knjige koje su povezana sa židovskom poviješću, neka gimnasticiraju svaki dan, neka šeću svaki dan i neka misle pozitivno jer na sreću, današnje vrijeme je relativno jedno od najboljih perioda, barem u ovom dijelu svijeta u povijesti čovječanstva.

Alfi Kabiljo

The well-known and acclaimed Zagreb composer, Alfi Kabiljo, has recently received, after many other awards, a life achievement award at the 65th Pula Film Festival. On that occasion, we talked with the author.

Kabiljo is a Sefardic last name. Your ancestors, after escaping from Spain, probably through Turkey, came to Bosnia. Your father then arrived to Zagreb. What can you tell us about your ancestors?

My ancestors came to Bosnia through Spain. Allegedly, on the run or persecution, they stayed for some time in Kabilia today's Algiers. It's a great story about Turkish Sultan Bajazit who sent a ship to bring Jews into Turkish Empire.

As a child, with your parents, you survived Holocaust in Zagreb. There were very few Jewish who made it. What can you tell us, from your own remembering or from your parents' sayings.

I survived the Holocaust in Zagreb thanks to my father's connections with some of the Croatian organizations he helped before the creation of the NDH (Croatian Nazi state during WW II), including the head of the Ustasha police Pećnikar. I was in three Ustasha prisons and that was not nice at all. That's what I was talking about in a movie about me and now I'm talking a lot in the new documentary that Croatian TV is making about me. We did not even have to wear a tie with the letter Ž (Jew) and I would not want to carry it even if we got it. Basically, it was a very difficult time. Ustashes came to our house with the notorious Nazi greeting but at the same time they often robbed our house. When they arrested my grandmother and aunt and tried to take them to Jadovno death camp, my aunt telephoned from the station asking for help. Mom and I went to Stepenic (archbishop of Croatia) because my mom knew some church dignitaries. Stepinac received her. As I waited, I thought that they were all Pharisees themselves and it would be hard to do anything. Fortunately my aunt was taken out from that convoy, she later joined partisans. There were lot of these terrible details, but we still have to talk about them. At first in our house, an Italian officer dwelled, later a German officer was there, so Ustashes could not enter our home.

You were on a list of Jewish children who had to go to, what at that time was Palestine now Israel, it was in 1943 with second kindertransport from Zagreb. But that transport never happened. Can you tell us something about it?

I did not know I was on that list, I only learned this from Goldstein's book much later. I don't know anything about it. Fortunately, everything ended well and when the war was finished on May 8, it was one of the happiest days of my life.

How did your education start in Zagreb and what was the process of both your general and musical education?

Normally I could not enroll in elementary school but very soon a teacher who lived near us managed to persuade the director of the Kapitol (nearby part of Zagreb) school to enroll me so that during the war I went to Kaptol school. I have to say that everyone was very good, including a catechist who said that I did not have to go to catechism because I was Jewish. Parallel to this, my mom I enrolled me in the private music school of the well-known composer Rudolf Mac and I started intensively to learn music. I started playing piano with his wife, the famous pianist and harpsichordist Margita Mac, who was also Jewish. It was very useful for me to have so excellent professors. I think this was the basis of my life's interest in music as a professional.

Already as a high school student you were an active musician. You have formed your own band. Why did you opt for a demanding study of architecture? Did you have time for music during the study?

At age 16 I had my own band and we performed very often at various gymnasiums and dance evenings. I played the piano, if it needed drums when the drummer did not come. We were present at almost all Zagreb's so-called dancing evenings. When I started my architecture studies, I already had some composed some songs. But in 1960 I had my first great success with the children's song "Bunny's troubles" at the Zagreb Festival in 1961. I got two great awards, my songs were sung by great singers: Gabi Novak, Ivo Robić, Ivica Šerfezi and Zdenka Vučković. Since then my career as a composer, arranger and producer has begun. After graduation I was looking for a job as an architect but I could not get it. I started to engage in music actively. It was necessary to make for living for my family. I worked Radio Television Croatia, then Radio Zagreb and Television Zagreb making many arrangements. I still wrote songs for various festivals. I got a lot of rewards. Especially I was fortunate to go to festivals of entertaining music around the world. I do not think there was any composer who had won so many awards from Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, Curaçao, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv, Malt, Alexandria ... as me.

How did your professional career as a musician and composer have begun, which were the first successes?

In 1971 I began to write film music, and I wrote it all my life. I got a lot of rewards. I was fortunate enough to work in Los Angeles on some films also in London and Vienna. In most cases I worked with the Symphony Orchestra of Croatian TV and even recently when I was doing music about Eva Schwarz a Jewish lady from Medjimurje region who survived Auschwitz.

You composed many different musical forms: entertaining songs, musicals, film music and even opera. Which were your favorites?

I write various musical forms and lately the most so-called serious music and chamber music. That's why I just could not come to the Comedy theatre where my last musical is to be played for which I wrote a libretto. Fantastic Mate Maras wrote lyrics to songs. It is about Sara Bernard, the greatest theater actress that was even in Zagreb and played the role of Hamlet as a woman. I'm currently working on a musical called Theft of Mona Lisa with the most influential Croatian writer Miro Gavran.

You have created an incredible number of musical works. How did you do that? What was or what is still your everyday work like?

How did all this work out? I've always been a professional and I have never been in a engaged with any company except one month in Paris with Salabert's. It was one of the world's most famous music production company. Besides Ivan Zajc, I wrote the largest number of musical works in Croatia. Jagoda Martinčević, a well known musicologist, wrote about it in a book about me with a list of all my works. I probably wrote so much because I like to compose. I've always had great performers for both serious music and entertaining music. I worked alone, but I cooperated with all the greatest singers of Croatia and any of them from other countries as well.

You've won many prestigious awards. Which of them are you most valued, the most dear to you?



Alfi Kabiljo with in Pula with his award

today I play tennis two to three times a week, and I play singles. I was even a member of Croatia's national team at the World Veterans Championship in Umag. I swim quite a lot, I eat the best food, lots of fruits and vegetables, goat cheese and so on and so on.

Is there anything else you would like to say to the readers of our "Voice"?

Well, I can propose to readers of "Voice" to listen to good music, read books, especially books related to Jewish history, make physical exercise every day, walk each day and think positive. We are fortunate enough to live in times, relatively good, at least in this part of the world and in the history of mankind.

Vlasta Diamant



Vlasta Diamant

It is difficult to say which is my favorite and most rewarding prize. It may be a prize at the biggest world music entertainment festival in 1971 in Rio de Janeiro when I was supposed to get the first prize. But then the Minister for culture called the festival director instructing him that the first prize cannot be given to state which has a red star on its flag. So I got second place, but my singer Radojka Šverko still received the first prize as best interpreter.

Among the Jews there are a large number of famous musicians: Mendelson, Offenbach, Gershwin, Bernstein ... Are Jewish people especially gifted to music?

Jews are very gifted for music. It is because in their families they sing and dance and read. Apart from these composers you have mentioned, I must also stress the performers, particularly of serious music, that are superb. New and new Jewish musicians appear and they are the best in the world.

At the age of 83 you are still active and very vital. What is the "secret" of your longevity?

Of course I'm still very active and vital. The mystery of my longevity is largely in the genes, mostly in my sporting activity. I've been doing sports very intensively since my fifth year. And

Counter-aging

“Jeanne Moreau, the famous French actress, aged 74 in 2002 (on YouTube), was interviewed by Charlie Rose, a veteran interviewer of noted guests, from statesmen, neuroscientists, writers to top-artists. Moreau countered his cliché questions about her film career with truthful, surprising answers. Smartly avoiding his aim – her acting experience, she parried in their skillful duel

with a triumphant statement about what matters in life: “It is beautiful to be alive!” She died in July 2017.

Sometimes at dawn I wake up from the birds chirping their hearts out and I wonder, what are they saying with such vigor and intensity. Is it just affirming themselves, their species: I’m alive too.

4.6.2012

“Happy Birthday, Mama!” I chirped over the phone on her 92 birthday. After an uncertain pause-delay came a strained, muffled whisper:

–I’m Alive – uttering what was essential on the occasion.

–I can hear it – I tried to be funny.

How inappropriately! Mama didn’t respond, catching on the joke. She was fighting for this sentence as she was for the life itself in those days, while I tried to be funny... I could not imagine then, and didn’t that next year – no, that in the next 15 days this lifeline between us would be just slack silence.

Looking in the mirror, I see the person with whom I have lived all my life – the smile, the gestures, the certainty and indecision – my mother. We have blended together and I cannot tell us apart.

Aging

In a few months I will enter a new decade. I cannot believe I could get ‘so old,’ yet I live like I have always lived, an ‘improvised’ student-like life. So, I’m disturbed when in the news yet another contemporary in the public eye dies.

A flash on the nonagenarian comedian George Burns joking: “First thing in the morning newspapers, I lookup the Obituaries, if I’m there ...”

People have grappled with aging as long as with living. Billions and billions of dollars are spent around the world to disguise – if not to stop – aging, as temporarily as it might be. Different means bear different results. Often practiced–taking a younger lover, (if that’s a possibility) invites trouble sooner or later, unless you’re a film-star or a ‘celebrity.’ At public appearances, they sport a much younger looking partner on their arm, especially elderly men showing off their younger women. (A reverse and a unique case is a current presidential couple in Europe.) Yet others have children at the age, when they should naturally only have grand- and great-grand children. I knew a man who in his third marriage in his mid-sixties had two children, only to marry again in his eighties to a girl who could have been his great-grand daughter. He considered it the pinnacle achievement of his life, but it did not save it. Ah, yes, money had something to do with it, too.

Some take to other physical bravados to prove they’re still “in the game,” until perhaps, nature teaches them humility. What is aging, besides cells stopping to reproduce themselves and dying. How is it that in our mind, we are still young, regardless what time it is in our bodies – we ask like the Marschalin in “Der Rosenkavalier” does. She may have been in her early forties, but in the 18th century that was “getting older”; sometimes at night, she tried to deceive time by stopping all the clocks in the palace. But then she reminded herself that aging is also God’s creation and should not be feared, but accepted. We too might accept being old as natural as being young, just on the other side of it.

"Mama's voice – Mama's way

I experienced the transformation in Mama's voice, which called "Vlastica" with possessive anxiety, ready to break through the boundaries to me, if there were any. On two occasions it broke through its time-frame.

In 1974, I flew back home for the first time after emigrating to US. The plane had landed in Zurich and I was to continue by train to Zagreb. The immediate reason for the visit was to support my recently widowed Mother – me fleeing my marriage and my life-struggle in the US. Mama was anxiously awaiting me, when I called from Zurich to tell her of a slight delay, because Jürgen, my ex-boyfriend from Munich, was in Zurich doing some post-doctoral work in a hospital. We hadn't been in touch, since we broke up a decade ago. I was in a bad shape after three years of existential struggle, which brought down the marriage. So a bit of male reassurance on a few ambers of past affection or at least his interest – was welcome. On hearing of my delay, Mama's voice swung for a split second into a parentheses of pain, so unfamiliar and so short that I wondered whether I had heard it, before it morphed into her all-understanding motherly "Ok, see you then!"

It was one of those hurtful reminders of children's typical ego-centeredness. Even worse, I was so hurting myself that I was of no help to her.

The other time in her last stage at the skilled facility on the fourth floor– their "Stationary;" it must have been soon after she was wheeled in there. Previously, while still in her room in the Senior Home brother had hired a physical therapist to once a week walk with Mama in the corridor outside the room. Her arthritic knee gave her trouble, so exercise was necessary and walking with a younger man might have had additional benefits. It was supposed to be for half an hour, but Mama confided, it seemed to her "shorter than that."

A week after her coming to the Stationary, they took out her dentures, in order not to choke on them. Everybody in the room underwent that treatment which, if it really prevented choking, was the last giving up the dignity as an individual; it reduced a person's voice and speech to a hoarse muffled mumbling. But that afternoon, I was with Mama on the phone, when all at once she broke out in her normal "dentured" voice: "Rudi" – there was commotion on the phone, a pause and her standard mumbling explanation – her former walking escort had just passed by, which for a second transformed Mama into a full-voiced self. But the moment was gone sooner than he disappeared from the room. It was so short that it dwelled between the real and unreal, for me to wonder if I really heard it.

In Berlin, in the Kreuzberg area there is a bar "Prinzpal", which by its decor and atmosphere evokes the Berlin's "Roaring twenties" atmosphere. While this is a quaint idea to give guests an illusion of different times, era, scientists have experimented with it – as a method of rejuvenation – immersing a small group of people in a simulated milieu of an earlier decade by its décor, newspapers, music – resulting over a few weeks in measurable rejuvenation of certain physical markers. Mama's voice, although for a lightening-short instant, also transformed–just when a younger man walked by.

What scientists experiment with as a method of rejuvenation – when a group is set in a simulated milieu of an earlier decade – its décor, newspapers, music – producing over a few weeks measurable rejuvenation results of the whole body, – Mama accomplished for a lightening-short instant, just when a younger man walked by.

My own method takes me a step out of a glass wall onto my balcony – among burgeoning plant life to offset the dying one; Infusing myself with the infinite energy of renewal in the shapes and colors of flowers and plants. Little sorrows and great joys evoke deep, absolute feelings for a moment, for a day. Do they erase wrinkles? Perhaps, the ones of the soul.

I'm not waiting for the Garden of Eden; like everything else, I'm creating it here and now – on my balcony.

Vlasta Diamant

Protu-starenje

Jeanne Moreau, slavnu francusku glumicu, 2002 kada je imala 74 godine, intervjuirao je Charles Rose, veteran intervjuer prominentnih gostiju, od državnika, znanstvenika, književnika do vrhunskih umjetnika.

Moreau je protusloвила cliché pitanjima o svojoj filmskoj karijeri istinskim i iznenađujućim odgovorima. Pametno izbjegavajući njegov cilj - o njenom glumačkom iskustvu, ona je vješto parirala u tom dvoboju, s pobjedničkom izjavom o tome što je važno u životu: "Lijepo je biti živ!" Umrla je u lipnju 2017.

Katkad pred zoru probudim se od ptica koje cvrkuću iz sveg srca, i pitam se, sto to one kažu s takvom snagom i intenzitetom. Da li samo potvrđuju svoju vrstu i sebe: I ja sam živa.

4.6. 2012

"Sretan rođendan, Mama!" zacvrkutala sam na telefonu na njezin 92. rođendan. Nakon neizvjesne pauze:

- Živa sam – samo napregnut, mrmljavi šapat.
- Čujem – pokušala sam se šaliti.

Kako neprilično! Mama nije odgovorila na šalu. Ona se borila za tu rečenicu, kao što se tih dana borila za sam život, – a ja sam se pokušala šaliti... Nisam mogla zamisliti tada, pa niti iduće godine – ne, da će za 15 dana ta životna linija među nama biti samo opuštena šutnja.

Gledajući u zrcalo vidim osobu, s kojom sam živjela cijeli život, osmjeh, geste, izvjesnost i neodlučnost – moja majka. Mi smo se stopile zajedno i ne vidim tko je tko.

Starenje

Za nekoliko mjeseci ući ću u novi decenij. Ne mogu vjerovati, da sam postala "tako stara" – pa živim, kao što sam uvijek živjela, improviziranim, quasi studentskim životom. Trznem se na svaku vijest, da je još jedan suvremenik u javnom životu umro.

Prisjećam se devedeset-godišnjeg komičara, George Burnsa, koji bi se šalio:

"U jutarnjim novinama prvo pogledam osmrtnice, ako nisam tamo ...

Ljudi se bakću sa starenjem jednako kao i sa življenjem. Milijarde dolara se troše po cijelom svijetu, da se ono preruši, ako ne i zaustavi, ma bilo kako privremeno. Različita sredstva donose različite rezultate. Često prakticirano – uzeti mlađeg partnera, ako je to moguće, što prije ili kasnije doziva neprilike, osim ako ste filmska zvijezda ili inače slavna ličnost. One vode mnogo mlađe partnere ispod ruke, naročito se stariji muškarci ponose s mladim ženama. (Jedinstveni obratni slučaj je sadašnji predsjednički par u Evropi). Drugi, opet, imaju djecu u doba, kad bi prirodno trebali imati samo unuke i praunuke. Znala sam čovjeka od 65 godina, koji je u svom trećem braku imao dvoje djece, da bi kao osamdeset-godišnjak oženio

djevojku, koja bi mu mogla biti praunuka. On je to smatrao vrhunskim dostignućem svog života, ali ga to nije spasilo. Ah, da, novac je tu isto igrao izvjesnu ulogu.

Neki se drugi prihvate fizičkih podviga, da bi dokazali, kako su još uvijek “u igri”, dok ih, možda, priroda ne nauči skromnosti. Što je starenje – osim ne-reproduciranje, umiranje stanica. Kako to, da smo u našoj svijesti još uvijek mladi, bez obzira, koje je vrijeme u našem tijelu – pitamo se kao i Marschalin u “Rosenkavaliru”. Ona je vjerojatno bila u četrdesetim godinama, ali u 18. stoljeću, to je bilo već “starenje”; katkad u noći, ona se zavaravala zaustavljajući sve satove u palači, ali bi se onda podsjetila, da je starost božja tvorevina, pa se nje ne treba bojati, već ju prihvatiti. I mi trebamo prihvatiti, da je starenje isto tako prirodno kao i mladost, samo na njenoj drugoj strani.

Mamin glas – mamin način

Ja sam iskusila tu promjenu kroz Mamin glas, koji je zvao “Vlastica” s tom posesivnom neizvjesnošću, spreman da se probije kroz granice, kad bi ih bilo. U dva navrata on se probio kroz vremensku ogradu.

1974. sam letjela kući po prvi puta, nakon što sam emigrirala u SAD. Avion je sletio u Zürichu i trebala sam nastaviti vlakom do Zagreba. Neposredni razlog za posjetu bio je, da pomognem majci, koja je nedavno postala udovica. Sama sam bježala iz svog braka i životne borbe u SAD. Mama me je nestrpljivo očekivala, kad sam ju nazvala iz Zürichu, da odgodim svoj dolazak za dva dana, jer je Jürgen, moj bivši prijatelj iz Münchena, upravo bio u Zürichu na nekom post-doktorskom radu u bolnici. Nismo bili u vezi, otkad smo prekinuli, pred deset godina. I sama sam bila u lošem stanju, nakon tri godine borbe za egzistenciju, što je i dovelo do raspada braka. Tako bi mi malo potvrđivanja na ugarcima prošlih emocija, i već sam njegov interes, dobro došli. Kad je čula o mom odgađanju, Mamin se glas za tren vinuo u parentezu bola, ali tako kratko i neobično, da nisam znala, da li sam ga pravo čula, kad se već pretvorio u njezin požrtvovni majčinski ton. “Pa, dobro, onda se vidimo!”

Bio je to bolni primjer dječje sebične egocentričnosti. Što je bilo još gore, bila sam tako skrhana, da nisam uopće mogla biti Mami od pomoći.

Drugi puta sam iskusila tu metamorfozu glasa u njenom zadnjem stadiju u stacionaru. Mora da je to bilo ubrzo nakon što su je dovezli tamo. Prije toga, dok je još bila u svojoj sobi, brat je unajmio fizioterapeuta, kako bi se jednom tjedno šetao s Mamom po hodniku.

Njeno ju je artritično koljeno sprečavalo u kretanju, tako da je hodanje s mlađim čovjekom imalo dodatne prednosti. To je trebalo trajati pola sata, ali mi je Mama rekla, da joj se činilo ‘da to on skraćuje’.

Tjedan nakon što je Mama došla u stacionar, uzeli su joj zubne proteze, da se ne bi zadavila. Svatko u sobi prošao je taj tretman, koji reducira starački govor na hrapavo mumljanje. Baš sam to poslije podne bila s Mamom na telefonu, kad je odjednom uzviknula normalnim glasom zubala “Rudi”; na telefonu se čula zbrka, pa pauza i onda njen standardni mumljajući glas i objašnjenje – njen fizioterapeut je upravo prošao kroz sobu – što je na čas preobrazilo Mamin glas u mlađu sebe. Ali taj je tren prošao prije nego što je čovjek nestao iz sobe. Bio je tako kratak, da je bivao između stvarnog i nestvarnog događaja, tako da sam se pitala, da li sam ga zbilja čula.

U Berlinu, u Kreuzberg predjelu postoji bar “Prinzipal”, čiji dekor i ambijent evociraju atmosferu Berlina burnih dvadesetih godina. Dok je posebna ideja pružiti gostima iluziju drugih vremena, znanstvenici su

time eksperimentirali kao s metodom pomlađivanja, tako da se kontrolnu grupu “uroni” u okolinu, koja dekorom, novinama i muzikom simulira prijašnji decenij – s rezultatom izvjesnog pomlađivanja cijelog tijela. Mama je to glasom postigla za munjevito kratki čas, kad je mlađi čovjek samo mimo nje prošao.

Moja vlastita metoda je da izađem na balkon, među biljno bujanje, što se suprotstavlja umirućem. Nadahnjujem se neumornom energijom obnavljanja, oblija boja cvijeća i biljki. Male žalosti umiranja i velike radosti uspijevanja izazivaju duboke, apsolutne osjećaje na trenutak, za dan. Da li to briše bore? Možda, one na duši.

Ne čekam na Rajski Vrt: kao u svemu drugom, stvaram ga ovdje, sada – na svom balkonu.