

AUTOPSIA INTERVIEW 2007

Questions: Maurizio Pustianz for Chain DLK

1) Your previous full length album before "The Berlin requiem" has been released into 1996 by Hyperium. What made you wait so long to do something new?

Autopsia does not fit into the category of 'album-production'. It is not necessary for albums to appear in some annual rhythm, or in any other kind of rhythm. There is no foreseeable schedule of producing a foreseeable number of compositions. Since Autopsia has a complete control over its own production, there are no obligations which might come outside of authorial interest, which might require any foreseeable terms of issuing new materials. Autopsia is not the part of music business.

Status of Autopsia is not supposed to be understood in terms of music production, but in terms of art, meaning that the relation of the work and the time of its appearance is measured according to completely different principles. Artist stands open for the emergence of the work of art, he is the one who listens, who has the ability to hear the call out of which the work appears. Artist is the one who follows this call. It is not a foreseeable or a predictable process, and a year or a decade do not mean a lot when it comes to the inception of the idea which leads towards the work of art itself. I do not want at all to get into the situation in which terminal requirements will be posed to Autopsia outside of its own motifs.

2) During these eleven years you released two compilations: "Colonia" and "Le chant de la nuit". We already talked about "Colonia" on our previous interview so let's focus on the latter one. "Le chant de la nuit" is a CD with a rich Cd-rom multimedia section where people can find visuals, writings, interviews, etc. What was your intent with that release?

"Le chant de la nuit" was a rather demanding project. It was not just the matter of collecting different materials from previous production of Autopsia. I didn't want any kind of „backward gaze“. I wanted to explore a new form of production, in which sound and image could appear together, but in a very special way. The project itself was not retrospective but exploratory one. Digital technology enabled such direction of exploration. New relations between different materials were installed, and a possibility of not moving linearly through the material, as in printed media, was established. An ambience of different „chambers“ was created, which have their own particular keys, and which are connected in the manner of wandering, which means - of exploring. This „architecture“ of the project is essential for the understanding of it. Like in panopticon - there are new images opening, new ways of looking at things which appear familiar, but now they are in unfamiliar places. It is not the matter of the collection of old

things, but of designing of a network which becomes the new event. There emerged new generations that read already issued materials in a different way. Thus "Le chant de la nuit" was for a part of the audience some kind of the end, and for the other part - it was the beginning.

3) Music is only a little part of your project, can you talk about your other activities?

Autopsia is not a multi-media project, but its involvements in music, poetry and art are linked in a special way. Text and image have their relevance for an extended reading of music production. In a certain way they provide the historicity for the sound which is bodyless and placeless. Text and image embody music production, they are not external supplements, but they arise along with musical ideas. Thus, appliance of text and image is not some "other activity" of Autopsia, but an integral element of the project itself. There is a certain network of crossings, passages, between sound, text and image, which rests in their essential framework, their underlying structure. I make use of three media to the extent that this framework is sustainable and comprehensible, that the meaning of intertwining is preserved, or maintained.

4) Each of your releases has a concept behind them, so they aren't a simple collection of tracks. Your latest one "The Berlin requiem" has been inspired by Bertold Brecht. What made you chose that author and that poem?

Different aspects of 20th century avant-garde became, after 2000, a main interest of Autopsia. Avant-garde today is not only an experience of the past and from the past but also the subject, that is, the object, of history. Thus avant-garde is classified into same containers of culture in which other historical phenomena dwell. General notion of the progressiveness and innovativeness of the avant-garde is not sustainable today. It may be said for many Central-European avant-garde authors that they have been supporting some "regressive" ideas which were manifested in relation towards the world as totality. That was in opposition with modernistic rationalism, subjectivism and particularism of the West. This is why reaching for the heritage of the avant-garde can be understood as "new reading".

Historical patterns are one of the elements of the methodology of operative processes of Autopsia. In this sense no difference is made regarding historical sources. Genuine processes of avant-garde are completed operations. Renewal of their patterns and exploration of inspiring samples are the part of new creative cycle which is not in direct connivance with messages and aims of the avant-garde. With matrix of history in mind the avant-garde is just one of the possible resources in which the beginning of a new creative process is placed.

Bertold Brecht is unavoidable figure of the 20th century avant-garde. The choice is not accidental and it is not only

because of the theme of the title song. Rather, the choice was made because of the spirit of Brecht's avant-garde orchestrations in which a particular junction of sound, text and image occurred, and the result was the project of the new spectacle. Essentially it is the matter of a baroque idea with changed poles of perception. Scenes were not shown to a single person but to the populace, which assigned a political connotation to entire production. Project of Autopsia reverts the perception to the original state because it addresses the individual and not the collective. The same direction is visible in Brecht's poem which was chosen. You cannot sing to the collective without it being the agitation, the propaganda. Poetizing is no longer addressed to particular individual, but to the person who is capable of receiving the message.

5) "The Berlin Requiem deals with what can scarcely be discerned by the senses, be heard, in the realm of the gelid nothingness". Listening to the tracks I felt a sort of isolationist atmosphere as the tracks were tending to avoid rhythm and melody. Can you tell something about what you wanted to reach musically?

"Just as the electricity was always there, before it was discovered, and just as everything undiscovered exists from the beginning, therefore, also now, so the universe itself is entirely fulfilled with forms, motifs and combinations of past and future musics. The composer seems to me as a gardener who was given to cultivate a smaller or larger part of land; his task is to harvest, to order, and to bind, in short, to transform that which grows on that part of land and the land itself into the garden". This was written by Ferruccio Busoni in the text "On the essence of music", which was published in 1924. At the beginning of 20th century, music experienced a fundamental change of its language, and from tonal it turned into atonal music, and it found its strongpoint in the ideas of avant-gardes. This is the area in which Autopsia "cultivates the garden" and draws ideas for current production. This interest is already indicated in several limited editions, and in "Berlin Requiem" it was realized completely. Impulses were looked for within the legacies of Schoenberg, Stockhausen and other avant-garde artists. I've experimented with dodecaphonic technique and particular, specific rhythmic structures. There is no change in Autopsia's method of composing, but the new sample, new pattern was chosen.

6) Who the Dammerung Orchestra is?

Sometimes projects of Autopsia involve collaborators from various domains. Dammerung Orchestra is a common title for different forms of their activities. They are "beings-performers". The title Dammerung Orchestra is added to the notion of "the performers". Their role is sometimes entirely concrete and defined and sometimes it is virtual, in some cases both. The title itself is what brings them together in one form of unstable community which

constantly appears and disappears, as beings whom you cannot get acquainted with entirely nor give them a certain, defined place. You must "imagine" them.

7) Can you talk about Illuminating Technologies and about its projects/releases?

Illuminating Technologies is the label already used for projects which were supposed to extend the operative domain of Autopsia. Now it became a label which will publish Autopsia in the future. Due to new digital media and Internet it is possible, in a very simple way, to start the new authorial label which shall support only its own projects. Some authors are already within such practice and it gives excellent results. Several limited editions, such as CD "Le Chant de la Nuit" and the single record "Radical Machine" were issued on the label Illuminating Technologies. The single "Silently the Wolves are Watching" is the first unlimited edition on my own label.

8) You sent me a 10 minutes video which is part of Autopsia's "Non-spectacular videos". What kind of series is that?

It is an experimental film. It is not a video project, I was never interested in music-video projects. "The Winter" originated as an experiment with the medium of film. Although there appear the sound, the text and the image together, the basic, supporting structure of the project is film and that is why I speak about film experiment. Source material is film, and the ordering of the new structure is digital. I think that this experiment has the potential, and that it is possible to think about "the series".

9) On that video the shootings were showing natural seeings (rivers, snowy trees, etc). That "Non-spectacular video" made me think that nowadays people is used to being surprised by things they see on TV and nature is no more spectacular for them...but, what is your interpretation?

"The Winter" explores the possibilities of cutting "within the frame". The perception of trivial sample is being changed - of the winter landscape, as we all know it. But, is this quite so? Do we know what is really happening here? "Reframing" has as its effect the new gaze at the same thing. Text and music take us additionally into an adventure whose initial point is a trivial realistic representation. Present-day people can look at the same thing, which they saw for thousand times, but in an absolutely transformed relation to the object of viewing. The perception of "nature" was changed, and the object remained the same.

10) Are you preparing new releases (audio or video)?

Two 12" vinyl records for Illuminating Technologies.

11) What do you think you achieved with Autopsia during these 20 years? There was something you had to achieve or you just followed the creative flow?

There is no “achievement”, nothing that could be kept for oneself, and that one can say: “this is the object of my achievement”. Certainly, there is a creative flow, I have said something about it in response to your first question. But the true achievement is peacefulness, stillness, it is mine only, and one cannot dispossess nor trade with it. Peace and presence of mind are the real results of creative work which is controlled by the author.

12) Something more to add?

This is the time in which Autopsia renovates, re-establishes itself. When you work for a long time then the creative motivation restores itself in cycles, as seasons of the year. When you say “I”, it seems it is something stable and permanent, but nonetheless you change along with what you do. It seems it is the same, but it changes.