

In memoriam Szabados György

Interview with György Szabados (part 2.)

“The living music joins Heaven with Earth
Man with God, man with man.
Because it is related to Creation, to God’s otium.”

György Szabados, the pianist, composer, founder and most important representative of Hungarian improvisative Jazz, awarded with the Kossuth price, died on the 10th June 2011 at the age of 71 due to a long and grave sickness. We pay homage to him with a detailed, deep conversation with Csaba Molnár, made for his collection of interviews with the title *Time for idleness*. The interview has been published in the August 2007 issue of the magazine Forrás. Each interlocutor participating in the project had to write a text inspired by a photo given to him by Szellemkép*. The interview, the photo and the text written appeared together. The photo above, taken by György Bernácz, accompanies the György Szabados’ poem he wrote relating to the image.

*Szellemkép – free school for visual arts like photo and film

Time for leisure – part 2.

- ***Albert Ayler is one of the figures with a profound effect on free jazz. He gave the following title to one of his latest records: Music is the Healing Power of the Universe. What can you say to this?***
- Some members of the Academy of Sciences in Russia decided – and I have learned about it there – to communicate with each other in future only by hand-writing because if they write everything with a computer, there is the danger that a huge part of their brains, our brains, becomes void or at least dwindle away. This would be the consequence of the deterioration of the brain’s function in charge of controlling handwriting. We know nothing concrete about the effective implications of this possible “vacuum” – although we have an idea about it. In an era of the languishing of things immanent in man and originating from the divine relationship, the music – like the handwriting – represents such a link to the home, the origin of the highest qualities, without which this certain “timeless time” in us would be finally unconceivable.
Film is such a powerful art that it has overpowered everything in the last century. I have the impression however that here, visuality has reached its peak. This art begins to empty out and one of the reasons is its almost exclusive attachment to this civilization. Compared to the sound, image is more this-worldly, more concrete – as even poetry is such when compared to music. Accordingly, importance and actuality of music are different too. I say that music will be the art of the future, already emerging.
- ***Is music nearer to the „timeless time“ compared to other, more concrete creations? Is a series of sounds more durable than a text?***

- Research of musical motifs is a huge area in science, which is not practiced with the appropriate relevance, as its importance would deserve it; considering it as a science in the sense Bartók called music science, I would add that a science, which is not an art, is no real science. And vice versa. A motif can tell more than an artifact. Musical motifs are living imprints of man's timeless time. That is why today's absence of tunes is so horrible. About the relationship between healing and music I can tell that besides being artist, I used to practice as a doctor for 40 years and this implies a lot. Art must heal too. It implied also that my father had a hard fate. He had excellent capacities but history had overpowered him. He was a doctor and wanted me to become a doctor too. I made him this pleasure to make him a bit happy. Anyway, there was in me and still is in me a strong atavism for healing (there were quite a number of doctors in the family) and of course, the consciousness that healing is art and an indestructible vocation. I suspected earlier that I was a forbidden music artist. (Recently I received documents from the Broadcasting corporation, which proves this in black and white.) In conclusion I could muddle through this music-prohibiting era only thanks to my profession as a doctor. My father, of course, had been aware of the obvious artistic tendency in me. As a child I used to sing before I was able to say words and I used to improvise before I was taught music. It was there earlier. Interesting that in us, sound precedes images and objects.
- Babies are able to hear before they can see.***
- Dying persons can still hear when they are no more able to see. Coming back to art, I want to add that it did not happen accidentally that visuality has become an artistic instrument of key-importance in modernity. Man is mainly a visual creature and can be best manipulated through these means. Furthermore, certain intentions – as a consequence and thanks to the highly developed technique and the general presence of the technique – are able to evoke visually anything they wish to for a selected target audience. A relation, an excellent IT-professional who came back to live in Hungary from Switzerland showed me yesterday a DVD. The American author spent 10 years to create this DVD. Both the images and sound are artificial. Only complex music for percussion instruments can be heard but this music has been composed by and with a computer. We see a fictive room filled with fictive percussion instruments. Drumsticks, balls and all sorts of objects make sounds and even their shadows can be seen. The drumstick moves in such a way as if a man would sit behind it. It starts going around and when reaching an instrument, at that moment, it has to beat it, as if it would hit a man. An amazing spectacle but totally uninteresting from musical point of view. This is an example of the manipulation. Here even the music is manipulated because it does not say anything about anything; it is merely very pleasant however lacking any emotional or world-view related content. It is no more than an artificial sound based on binarity, constructed from metal waste, an artificial world. Here the image manipulates the music. Visuality is a very appropriate ground in a world where "God is dead". The music, intended to be a deception, is accepted only by those who join this world voluntarily, it seems however that the world surrenders to this process. Although we find a few people accepting this in a naive way, this attitude is basically less characteristic. There is no stance and no autonomous thinking. Sociography should describe and clearly analyse this phenomenon but today this is also not

duly possible. Why? Because sociology doesn't know a concept of God and therefore doesn't consider that the world is not created in a materialistic and horizontal manner. It ignores the truth hidden behind, namely that this objectual world (with its ephemeral powers) is not the truth. The truth is rather the fundament, which created the laws hidden behind as every great philosophy says.

Whatever is born, lives and dies. It has its time and it is only his time. Everything is provisory. This is why the holy books say that God is what it IS. They don't describe how He looks, as if He would look like our objects. They say only that he is. The only what IS and won't be consumed like my pencil or the paper I write my music upon or eroded like even the pyramids one day. We can only understand those basic laws, following which the universe is functioning, when we understand and comprehend their "mechanism". The permanent interaction of birth and death. The field of total insecurity. But under the cloak of the Maintainer. This is ignored by the doubting, the rebelling, the expropriating man. He considers all this as rubbish while he does not even understand how the world is functioning. What arrogance, what haughtiness, to what an extent uninitiated. Today's civilization shirks the only worthy order of the Creation's splendour: the order and truthfulness of sacrality.

Now, we landed in the „darkness“. Let us go back to the "non-darkness". Perhaps an unusual music conception has unfolded in me. It is following: everything existing will raise its voice acoustically. We are not able to hear all because it is too faint or our perception ability is not fine enough. Thus, there is no silence. Silence is man's fiction. Man calls something silence – an area, which is beyond the acoustic perceptivity of his own existence. The world is a field of collisions and this collision mechanism in its totality happens in a harmonic way. This world functioning according to the laws behind has a harmony. Whatever exists collides with other existing creatures, while he carries his inherent destruction. Everything becomes an event, space and time through the death, the "collision". The lifeless provides and bears the existence's form and the living part provides its functioning, its movement. This collision has acoustic consequences, therefore it is a question of view, what I consider as music and what I consider as noise. When I approach nature's sounds in such a way as it is best illustrated by a folk song: "give some rain and a good pasture for the cattle", then I behave myself towards the sounds with the same love and deep compassion as the shepherd does towards his grazing flock. The shepherd, the cowboy, the cowherd and all who look after animals, treat them as they were their children and they know that animals feel similarly to them. I hear fates out of nature's sounds. Even out of the noise. Recently I attended the lecture of a member of the scientific academy who has engaged himself in the nanotechnology. This technology is almost a devilish thing. The nano world is the micro world of the micro world. It is a level where man "can exchange" almost everything. He can meddle in the characteristics of the existing "objectual" world. During the talk after the lecture I suggested the following: there where everything can be exchanged, even identity can be exchanged; identity being one of the most important parameters of the world. Even I can be exchanged, even the creatures' characteristics, etc. etc. Nano-technology deals with such a small dimension of the functioning world that the question of human morality is raised here in the universal sense. The expropriating attitude, the manipulative will of the power's egoism is opposed to the total helplessness. The unworthy knowingness opposed to the dignity of the unknowingness. Here man's

world doesn't simply "live" any more, it has rather become abusive, which attitude is deeply immoral. It is so when I see the world as I do and when I hear the world's sound as I do – it is a metaphor – who can rob me of that? This is a principal question. For the world's musicality is something completely different – different for me - opposed to whatever is considered as trendy and to the existing manipulations. Also morally, something different. Different from the destroying repetition the six hundredth time of the same musical motif with I don't know how many decibels, stuffed in the people in a deafening way as brainwashing, because some individuals want it that way. And it comprises neither delicacy, nor understanding, neither measure nor the tragedy or the joy of the unhappy listener, not even his own music and his state of mind. Nothing is in it. Total intolerance. Only the inorganic matter and the perversion, the lack of self-identity and rampant stupidity. Opposite to what they believe, this is no cosmic view but haunting ghosts and cosmic littering. See, everything disintegrates while we eat up the Earth. Seeing these processes, the question is justified: what will happen to our descendents? What will remain from all that? And of that what has been preserved – what can we do with that? There won't be any spiritual Marshall aid to offer a foundation for the construction of something worthy, something grand.

- ***Provided, someone would offer this spiritual Marshall aid, what could the remaining human population do with it? Would it be a similar situation as if we give today a CD with plenty of information to a Bedouin?***
- Don't forget that this world is made in such a way that there are always people whose brains and souls potentially contain this whole problem. They know that what is presently happening, that is also part of the Creation. This shift is one of the episodes of Creation. That is why I consider improvisation in music something of extraordinary importance, because of its presentness and because it joins Heaven with Earth. It looks under and above the erroneous rationality, and invites again the secret and holy powers. The nature of improvisation impregnates new artistic creations, new happenings in every art form which is performed in time. Music has always been leading this process. There is only one problem: one should grow up to this spiritually and mentally. Improvisation has two joinable prerequisites. One is that one has to be born for this, like for anything in the world. (I mention here that the improvisative capability is one of the fundamental conditions of viability. Often we have to make a decision however we have no time for it.) On the other hand, we could tell how Bartók was forbidden to improvise; how he used to compose his works and why he didn't allow anyone to glance into his "workshop". Or it is simply incomprehensible and unbelievable the extent and quantity of Bach's works if we were unaware that he used to "improvise" throughout his life. He was a man of such talent and such faith that his improvisations emerged in a ready shape. He simply wrote down the basics of inner sounds he listened to, only the most important elements because the music had to be performed the next weekend with other musicians and singers following sufficient rehearsal. If we knew these stories in their total deepness, we would approach everything differently.

- ***Did Mozart improvise too or did he „receive“ music from somewhere else?***

- Before Mozart there was Haydn. I consider Haydn an enormous, unavoidable phenomenon with his hundred symphonies and all that he composed. He is the great Pannon musician of Life. The harmonizing attitude and musical evoking of the Classicism in the music – which begins with him and ends more or less with Beethoven – lights up with him. This harmonizing attitude finds its similarity in the architecture of the period, in the style of the Hungarian country houses and manors. This attitude of the Classicism will be suddenly blown up by Beethoven by creating and determining Romanticism. Beethoven became aware of the fact that it was not possible to go further with “emotionally feeling”, to continue on that path. God cannot be reached so that I can start building and creating more and more artificial, stable, however more cumbersome constructions. Music shouldn’t be treated on the basis of European music history but on cosmic basis, approaching from the direction of Creation. When we do so, we realize that whatever happened in the European music history is merely a beautiful episode with its polyphony, which is otherwise an unbelievably interesting field of human thinking. There is hardly any polyphony outside the European music. There is at the most parallelism but no polyphony. For me monophony is of higher rank. There I don’t make something out of the Many but I realize the unbelievable complexity, grandeur and qualitative self-inclusiveness of the “One” and I experience it, I fine-tune and unfurl it. Then I come nearer to the principle of how God keeps the world going, and not that I compose artificially a more and more complicated world, which can be at best only a trial – always lacking the original, secret, undivided and invigorating experience of the universal love. That is why I say that the European thinking is the path of mavericks. I will tell you one more nice example. It happened 30 years ago. One of my musician friends, a hard-core Marxist-thinking boy was a viola player in the orchestra of the Matthias Church. One Sunday he told me about what they had played and suddenly he asked me, “How is that possible that pieces of sacral music are always of higher rank compared to others?”

“You are still too young”, was my reply.

Because it is his path that twenty years later he suddenly becomes aware of this “path of maverick” as well as the fact that every great composer, like Beethoven, will compose sooner or later his *Missa Solemnis*.

Bach is the authentic example of the statement that knowing and not knowing are the same. Certainly, he also made many calculations and used to think a lot about music while composing. He knew that he had to go on learning and also what he had to learn. He was trained by the examples of such paragons like Palestrina, Vivaldi and Buxtehude. But music sounded in him at the level of not-knowing as being a level of initiation. Coming from the timeless. That is why music flew from him as completed compositions. This is the position of not-knowing: when music comes down complete and perfect. Kodály referred to this when he told about Bach’s music - that it was a pity that it included sometimes fermata and it came to an end. His whole music is however continuous; an almost unbroken stream lives through all his works.

We can look at it from where we wish to – from the art, the science or the history – we come to the

conclusion that existence does not determine consciousness provided it is the existence of the divine dimension. It means that this arrogant, revolting world-power-game – now already it is obvious - will not really succeed. It suggests superiority: I will show you, we will show you what you have to do, how you have to think and who is the almighty. God is not dead. This is nonsense. Things probably happen simultaneously. Existence probably influences consciousness but also consciousness influences existence. Beyond the statement that spirit is above all – although I tend to say so – I have to say now that spirit and moral have to come to a governing position. This is the topicality of János Vitéz (John the Valiant, an epic poem written by Sándor Petőfi) too. We live in the time of the den of thieves (reference to a scene in the poem). Today I can orientate myself only following the traditional Indian caste system. I don't consider it as a field of class struggle but as an excellent symbol for all that is capable to articulate the world in its hidden context, to keep it going and to make it in me understandable. I realize for example when the working caste believes that it is made for ruling then the consequence is what the Veda say: *such an empire will not live to see the third generation*. The sacred task of the working caste (the shudras) is to maintain the world by work. But its task is not ruling. And this should be respected by them too and not disdained, like the "ruling class" had disdained its own class in socialism. Therefore it couldn't govern properly. When the working caste rises to power, it is also a consequence of a failure, of a wrong way of thinking of the other castes. None of them has understood what his sacred unavoidable task is. And here, the circle is closed. When someone has to carry out his task, first he has to know what his task is. And if he does not carry out this work it might cost him his life. It might mainly cost the lives of others, a great number of useless deaths and a big world subversion. But who is willing today to die for someone or something grand and just? This civilization is right to be afraid of Islam. Yes, it is justified because there are those who are willing to sacrifice their lives within seconds. In our culture, however, who is willing to die for his spouse, his love, his child, the honour of the fatherland, the own honour or anything? And moreover: does the fundamental notion of 'character' mean anything today for a multinational company or for a party? Or does a great idea mean anything?

- ***Our culture is really frightened and this increasing angst and this simple system of solutions based on aggression are the reasons we give our confidence to paid mercenaries who release us for the time being, because they would die instead of the representatives of our culture in the moment when needed. But first, a mercenary can be bought, second, after termination of his contract, he can go any time. Furthermore, he has kept his cool head and should he loose, he prefers to run away. Third, terrorist don't fight against mercenaries face to face. The time of 'The seven Samurai' is in every respect over.***
- The soldiers' tragedies in the Vietnam war and the whole psychological madness, which turned up there, is about that for America. The patriots won and they avoided madness. The dispossessors, the invaders, the hired soldiers and mercenaries lost and became mad as a consequence. This is the world of materialism, of incredibility, of slow decay. Those times we experienced and even now we are experiencing the subversion, the deflating of the sacral hierarchy, which is the base of the world's

functioning. Here too we can recognize the attitude of dispossession. The story is always about whether the human spirit, the thinking, is worthy or declining. We have chaos today because human thinking is decaying. It stands on false, provisory foundation. It stands only on the moment void of aura. The process of decaying didn't begin now – it began a long time ago. The process has a huge literature. One of these important books is Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. Man likes musing at different spiritual levels, sometimes arbitrary, generally charged with bias. I could mention the writings of Mo-ti who lived in the old Chinese empire and considered music as something sinful. Even Buddha told about the music that along a path of delights music fixes men in an earthly, material existence, in hedonism. In my opinion, Buddha's view refers only to a narrow dimension of the grandeur of music. It refers only to the erotic in music but not to another aspect: when a coffee cup drops in the next room and breaks, then I hear the information that it has died. I don't hear that it has broken but I hear that it told me that it has died. He was singing that. Today's ice-cold world of mercenaries – how far it has come from that!

A reason why I love the catholic mass, why it delights me – especially when the priest celebrates it accordingly – is that I feel in it the natural order, devotion and the pagan sacrality of thousands of years. The timeless sacrality. And I don't listen when the theology of the Roman Catholicism pronounces a hard judgment about paganism. It has no right to talk like this while its own Church has created such a magnificent, beautiful mass order, which includes even archaic pagan sacrality. That is great about it: that the archaic sacrality is contained in the mass and as a consequence, it opens the mass's sublimity, timelessness, intimacy and security towards an unconceivable breadth and width. Hamvas sees it the same way.

- ***When for the listener improvisation in music means sacrality, initiation, broadening of consciousness and of spirit, than it is for the audience a mass bursting from inside.***
- This question has become in me an overtly personal matter. I have been improvising since my childhood and in this respect my life has several important periods, depending how I considered my music in each period. I was told sometimes: keep away from this. Occupy yourself rather with sheet music. My music is improvisation with composer-attitude. I don't calculate and consequently, I don't involve death (the rule) in it as a giver of shape. I let music stream and still, it will be structured and it will create shape as far as necessary. And here is the second condition needed for this improvisative musicality. It is nothing else than the requirement that the omniscience regarding the music and glimmering in the music be innate in the man. It is possible to bang and slam on an instrument – the result will be mere cacophony if the underlying enigma is missing: *"amazing about what this banging tells!"* This year I will be 67 years old and recently I experienced again the moment of my first communion. Only now did I understand what happened to me in those days. Since then – since that night and early morning – everything is working in me. I was not able to sleep, early in the morning I stood shivering in front of the window. So did I experience the first communion. I know that the capability for improvisation is meaningless without a similar initiation. It would stand still at the level, which Buddha disapproved, because it is lacking omniscience, the not only encyclopaedic knowledge.

We talk here not about quantity but about omniscience, about the purpose that man should experience something from the time when everything was still a complete "One" and everything was inconceivable, delightful, grand and initiating. That is good. Only the feeling that it is good is here justified. After that anything might happen but one knows already what it is which is really not good – but there is no more scorn in him. What remains is the knowledge how one can be on good terms with everything, how to be sensitive and understand everything. I don't know the life of Albert Ayler because I never investigated it. I don't know what he studied and what not because this doesn't interest me. Because if he hadn't studied anything then it is so. But listen today to the artful tinkering of some educated contemporary composer; to the amazing polishing, grinding, graving, to the arrogance of gap-filling, which he is using for selling and transmitting as modernity the coolness, the nihil, the problem of the no-man's-land vacuum – and which is finally played by an excellently prepared, ingenious performing musician. And only thanks to the performing artist – because geniality and omniscience live in him – does this work appear as being something. When I hear Ayler, I know, I feel that here sounds the same that Werner Heisenberg wrote about in his book *The Part and the Whole*. I often referred to this. The protagonists cannot agree in a discussion and then they listen to Bach's Chaconne. They stay mum and they know that this is the answer. Hamvas called this elementary generosity. I feel sorry for those who don't understand this. Those who understand this, we hug. With our arms or heart. There are such countries too. That is why I love Norway, where I have never been. Some years ago I watched accidentally the wedding of the Norwegian crown prince on the television. The festivities of the whole afternoon were broadcasted. The ceremony, the procession on the street, etc. I switched on the television by chance and stayed with this program (it happens often to me that I find something accidentally, like Thelonious Monk playing. This happened once in three years, 10 minutes before midnight that Monk appeared in one of the programs. To come across it just then, is a miracle.) Well, I come back to the feast: the church ceremony was not in a cathedral for a public of 30,000 where the happy event should take place and sound with 650 thousand kW. No, it was a cathedral that had space for a family gathering. No small village church and no huge cathedral, it was just the good size. The music to accompany the ceremony was composed by Jan Garbarek for this occasion for choir, saxophone and orchestra; an unbelievably fine, sacral and community music. When the ceremony was finished and the people left, we could see real joy on their faces. And they looked at their king, at his Majesty in a way as the crowd should look at a good king, at an authentic representative of the Unity, of the greatness, with a confidence to their king, who doesn't represent an ego-kingdom.

- ***Because he was aware of his task. They were all aware of their tasks.***
- His task – which is not gaining profit. Long ago, in the times of prohibition (he was a prohibited composer – editor's note) to ease my shortness of breath, I wrote a volume of poems. I gave the title to a short poem "*Reply to Heisenberg and Parmenides*":
"My soul is noble, but take it to pieces and you will see in the pieces how evil I am."
Heisenberg discovered that at certain points the electrons behave in an illogical way; that in terms of

energy, the world is nourished and kept going by something and it is “open” at the end of its objectual, materialistic border and it is certain that the world is influenced by the universal One. This explanation or conclusion born from an observed practical physical phenomenon is similar to the example with the Bach-Chaconne, which is described in the chapters of *The Part and the Whole* – one of the key books of the 20th century. Actually, it is about God.

Parmenides analysed the relationship between the One and the Many in 12 formallogical deductions. He tries to prove that there is no real connection between the two. My little poem is therefore a reply to them because only then is there no explanation, when we eliminate the qualitative, organic and even moral relation. But when we understand that in the world, in the creation everything is connected to everything – as Hermes Trismegistos teaches – and we comprehend that this relatedness is living in the above-mentioned relations then we can notice what the relationship between the One and the Many is. We notice that there is hierarchy in the universality as it is present in the carnal, mental, spiritual man as well. For this reason I advocate kingdom and consider our constitution based on the Holy Crown’s doctrine as the most perfect constitution in the world – because its well-interpreted sacrality and clear and appropriate hierarchy offers a solution for the problem of power abuse, which is, I emphasize, the essence of dispossession. This totally homogenous world is being disassembled today. Of course, the world has become and is going to be more and more chaotic, errant, unhappy and even easily evil. And when I see an event like the wedding in Norway, I say that I had a nice afternoon. Happiness is when I am touched by the dimension, which is the source of Creation, of the world. This should be kept and maintained. That would be reassuring. The Christian world-view is focusing on suffering. Buddha too talks mainly about suffering. Each big revelation talks about suffering. But how is suffering linked to timelessness?

So that we suffer in every moment. We experience this in our entire life; we permanently clash with something, we permanently suffer. And we try to relieve the pain permanently. When we meet something making us suddenly happy, then we experience our existence before the suffering. The sense of home, of nearness. The safety of timelessness.

There is a film which I recommend to my musicians as “obligatory lecture”, whenever I meet a young artist with qualities, he must see the film „*All the Mornings of the World*“ (*Tous les matins du monde*) made by Alain Corneau in 1991. It is the story of Sainte-Colombe and Marin Marais. Sainte-Colombe (Jean-Pierre Marielle) a master of viola de gamba – who can be seen as the fountainhead of Baroque music - has always been leading a withdrawn life. His disciple was Marin Marais (G rard D pardieu – Guillaume D pardieu), the Sun King’s court composer. This is one of the most deeply spiritual historic and artistic films ever made, and which every creative artist should watch in my opinion. The film was shown in those days in the Pushkin Cinema, and I watched it several times. I remember that at the end the audience stayed seated, spellbound.

Sainte-Colombe treated the young Marais in a horrible way. He broke his viola de gamba to show him how idiotic he considered him. In his garden he built a hut on stilts where he used to play music for his deceased wife. Later Marais had become an appreciated court composer and came secretly back to the master’s house. Lying under the hut he listened to what was happening above in the hut. Nothing

was happening. Sometimes he could hear how the old master was talking to himself. Sainte-Colombe felt death approaching and one day noticed the hiding Marais and let him in. A slow, meditative conversation began. Sainte-Colombe wanted to know from his disciple what music was about. Marais got onto several wrong tracks, he often failed in giving the correct answer, until he found the correct answer: music is about the time before the birth. Then the master took out his viola and both started playing music. The master initiated the disciple and accepted him.

Every important thing in life sprouts from the seed, the core, the centre; from the time before birth. Sainte-Colombe was such a seed where Baroque music originates. After the rather worldly music of the Renaissance, Baroque has returned to sacrality. But this is not a sacrality differing from nature's laws and nature's basic functioning, it is sacrality in perfect union with nature. The sacrality working through nature. We see in the film the most beautiful and clear example for this. Sainte-Colombe and Marais pay a visit to a painter. When walking home, they see someone stopping to pee. The master asks the young disciple: "Do you hear the music?"

When we look at it from this angle, then peeing is music too. Everything is music. A new style is born from the universality, the spaciousness, the identification – from the core.

It was good to see that what this film suggests has a correlation with my improvising music too: my music consists not only of improvisation, but it consists rather of the fact that a world sounds forth from the nothing, originating from the core. This desire has emerged without models, in the sphere of my childhood's experiences but I was no more a child, not even a youngster, when I had the courage to present it to the public in a concert. A music aesthete, himself musician, published a very negative article about this "chaotic" music. Three or four years ago, when one of my records with piano solo won the prize "The Year's Jazz Record", he apologized in his laudation. I respect him because he revised in public his earlier opinion.

When I started playing music, I had never heard anything similar before. As a child, when I was sad, I sat down to the piano and improvised – this was my solace. My parents didn't like it, they scolded me. Later, after several decades had passed, many youngsters acquired a taste for this, which led to the foundation of the Kortárs Zenei Műhely (Contemporary Music Workshop) in the Kassák Club and then of the MAKUZ (Magyar Királyi Udvari Zenekar – Hungarian Royal Court Orchestra). The approach and view – as I described with the example of the Norwegian wedding - was present in me from the beginning: to see how things live in unity, in monophony, in entirety. To see what the natural structure is and that everything has to happen in this framework. Almost each of those young musicians has successfully evolved and has become an appreciated member of the Hungarian music scene. This kind of improvisative music however has been forced to live in a strange situation up until now, the consequences of which I have always accepted consciously. This is not a complaint but a true, experienced life story. While I was confronted with Sainte-Colombe's person in the film, I gained force from it. Jean-Pierre Marialle's acting shows the amazing depth of all the problems, which are not only Sainte-Colombe's problems. A well-known Hungarian musician told me honestly that he wanted to change over to this kind of musicality because this helps him, this lifts him up, even if he used to follow different ways before. Presently he is in a situation that he has official appreciation. In such a situation

I become aware of the fact that God has plans with a person, and these plans might be different from those he would imagine for himself. After I created this musicality in myself, I see the musical form in a different way. The starting point in me wasn't the teaching of the European music history. And not even jazz has initiated me in the music but the spirit of the folk songs and that is exactly European music. At the age of nine-ten I was present at rehearsals conducted by Erich Kleiber or László Somogyi. My mother used to sing in a choir and since this time I know the *Psalmus Hungaricus* (of Zoltán Kodály). When I was listening as a child to the rehearsals of the Ninth Symphony, its world and form penetrated me. At home we regularly sang with my mother and sister three-voice songs full of love. It was during the Rákosi regime (beginning fifties) when I got to know jazz music. I could listen to such records – the Olympic champion Antal Bolvári brought them from abroad because he was allowed to travel – which triggered my predisposition for improvising, my imagination, my pleasure. Before my playing followed Chopin-moods, Liszt-motives. Jazz carried me into freedom, spaciousness and openness, into a kind of glorious poverty, orphanhood.

For me, the moral of all this is that a completely different music pedagogy should be implemented. We should return to the basis starting from improvisation; instead of academic snobbism, return to the natural and personal basis, the play. For a long time I have been making notes about the subject. There were times when I carefully tried to open up towards politics, only with the hope and for the purpose to open such a school and someone would understand what it is all about and would support these efforts. And that it would be possible to go ahead in the world. But unfortunately it was not possible. Culture is today of secondary importance and such a small part of it, even if fundamental, is considered as completely negligible. Kodály was absolutely right when he said that a whole country can be built up or ruined depending on the state of the music. Living music joins Heaven with Earth; Man with God; man with man because it is related to Creation, to God's Otium.

Csaba Molnár (Translated by Marianne Tharan)