

Vid Jeraj, XXII Century Musicx, 12. 4. 2023

Lubiana's (Ne)poslušno – Sound (Dis)obedience 2023, took its annual turn on April 6th, at the Španski borci Cultural Center, situated not so far from the colorful chimneys of the Moste heating plant that seem to echo the Hundertwasser's strategies over architecture at Spittelau.

And just like the Berlin's Au Topsis Pohl's closing last September, the festival's final eve on April 8th was fittingly signed off by the Banquet of Consequences, with the double-bassist Antonio Borgini's ride on the Dutch swing and South-African jazz. The sextet consists of some of Berlin scene's usual suspects, and the audience could hardly hold back the gaping awes over Rieko Okuda's pianism.

Past the compositions referencing aforementioned styles written in odd meters, the third piece confronted the new chamber music structures with Ben-Webster-like-sound-layers finely executed by the tenor-reedman, Tobias Delius. The Borghini's four pieces drew for the concert's end and relief after 3 days of hearts beating as one...

Španski borci is primarily a dance venue, whose high ceilings and a wide stage remind one of The Stone in downtown Manhattan--nicht nur to its enthusiastic audience. The rehearsal spaces in the building's cellar had set the stage for the Wadada Leo Smith's "Jaya" (2010), a concert of five solos by a local flock of sound-makers, joined by the flutist, Hanan Hadžiajić from Sarajevo.

The project, founded by sociologist, writer and composer, Nina Dragičević from Lubiana, created a space for debate dealing with composition and methodology. And however risky this concept may be, the variety of performances on two sets of drums, an accordion, flute and voice, remind one of the long line of musicological reflections, born and bred in the Love City's traditions--namely, its Muska magazine.

The eve's opening saw a turnout of the ensemble workshop (see top photo), presented by Swiss double-bassist, Christian Weber. A sturdy combo of three double-basses, two pairs of electric basses and guitars, plus an electric organ/grand piano and a metal clarinet, that drew from both the middle-range timbre and asymmetrical magic. Its conclusion inspired by Grand Guignol of a punky guitar trio, spiked with zurna-clarinet, scraped the venue's ceilings with unexpected sine-waves.

The festival launched on Thursday with a female line-up of Lebanese exiles, in duo; Christine Abdelnour cycle-breathes abandon the attack-vogue of post-Zorn alto-sax, and Magda Mayas on prepared/inside piano gets away with disobedience in the post-Cagean idioms, such as the so-called 'dripping music'.

Bridging to "something completely different", the festival's impresario, Tomaž Grom of [#zavodsploh](#), presented a joint venture of a 112 artists whom he invited to record their own ventriloquism, with one leaking from the fudge. A literal symphony of farts, entitled "Na ta

veseli dan kulture”, brings together ideas composed during lockdown and beyond, projecting sarcastic commentary on the nature of the body-as-an-instrument-practice by artists themselves.

Weber’s solo, that concluded the first evening, started off as a sort of a Non-Wave soundtrack-- long atmospheric bowing lines interrupted by ‘deaf’ chords--reminding one of Lubiana's floral oases amidst its urban foley, and vice versa. Slowly stretching it over the intervals reminiscent of Bach’s sonatas for unaccompanied cello, though politely hidden under the textures, he plocks for a sequence of chops too-WTF-to-be-real: the manual hierarchy of double bass turned upside down, as if he somehow wanted to turn the upright piano on its head. And that on double bass. Though, if he had chosen to also just let go and set the instrument free, Weber would have sounded even more adventurous.

The Berliner trio Schnell, whose release popped up in 2018, at Clean Feed, played it hardstyle at the Friday night's closing of (Ne)poslušno - Sound (Dis)obedient Festival in Lubiana's Španski borci. The trio drives the velocity of bebop mores, like they were the Saturday-Sunday-mornings' lore...

The audience surrounding the Christian Lillinger's drumkit pulsated in their seats, as if attending a samba concert. The lively and merciless Pierre Borel on alto, provided the dough around the beat, referencing the era's repertory, even going for a touch of Trane's "Sun Ship".

The evening's opener fell on the shoulders of the violinist, Anja Kravanja and guitarist Vitja Balžalorsky (from Širom and Laibach, respectively), the most-touring bands of Slovenian 'alternativa', as announced by venerable Tomaž Grom. From fresh gymnastics of their release, "Spomini slane puščave", they stretched a long prologue in assessing the vocabulary-- though at times it seemed a bit washed-out, historically speaking.

The momentum of the Kravanja's strings unified with the Balžalorsky's textures drove to a Feldman-like gloom, and one might note it as a nice contribution to April 7th, the birthday of Billie Holiday.

The real kick of the festival, or its burly peak if you'd like, staged a solo of Emilie Škrijelj from Metz, right in the middle of the proceedings. Positioned among the vibrating objects connected to an accordeon by triangle of cables, she'd rock her rig resting on her left thigh, from beneath; breeding a hefty drone with a minor third, sounding quite acousmatic and electro-acoustic, as usual. Škrijelj makes Oliveiros and Riley melt into each others, while at the same time staying 'čru' to the millennial stance. A bout de suffle!