## Miroslav Tóth

## EYE FOR AN EYE

One act video opera for two solists, five employees, tv news reporter, soldier in a training tank TU-34, chamber ensemble: violoncello, baritone saxophone, trombone, cimbalom, drumset and extensive vocal choir


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Premiere: 14.1.2015, Kasárne Kulturpark Košice, Slovak republic

Music: Miroslav Tóth<br>Libreto: Marek Kundlák<br>Story: Marek Kundlák, Miroslav Tóth<br>Dramturgy: Marek Kundlák, Miroslav Tóth<br>Film Director, Script, Camera: Miroslav Tóth<br>Theather Director: Marek Kundlák<br>Costumes: Emma Korpová, Kristína Horníková<br>Production: Zuzana Kotiková, Lucia Potokárová<br>\section*{Parts}

1. Cemetery I.
2. Five beginnings
3. Ouvertura
4. Due recitative
5. Canzonetta
6. Meditativo
7. Balleto
8. Campagna - il ritmo del balleto
9. Offertorio, recitativo e coro
10. Don't let me be to good / Intermezzo
11. Aria with a Knight
12. Battaglia
13. La ditta - core e coda
14. Finale, per due voci e violoncello
15. Cemetery II.

## The plot

The story takes place in eastern-Slovakian town of Humenné. It depicts the struggle of an ex-soldier to fit in the civil shoes after leaving the army. He comes to Humenné with a plan to open a weapon factory. There's a significant tension between his civil present and his military past. This unnamed "Man" tries to benefit from the position of the town in "forgotten east" far from the capital, and also from the high unemplyment rate of the highly poluted region, nicknamed as "a triangle of death". The goal seems to be reachable and we witness the Man's green-suit cynicism that makes him successful in his path. How far does this attitude lead him?

## Darution

64 min.

## Personel from premiere

Man - Marek Kundlák (barytón, contratenor, extensive vocal)
Assistent - Samuel Szabo (falzet)
Five employees - Andrea Ľuptáková, Kristína Hanzenová, Kristína Horníková, Anna Čonková, Erik Pánči Broadcaster, Soldier in a tank

Musica falsa et ficte ensemble
Miroslav Tóth - conductor
Andrej Gál - cello, Kováts Gergő - barithon sax., Mikuláś Havrila - trombone, Michal Pal'ko - cimbalom, Gergely Kovács - drumset
Extensive singers : Andrea Ľuptáková, Kristína Hanzenová, Kristína Horníková, Anna Čonková, Erik Pánči

## EXPLANATORY

## Interpretation

Relation between interpretation / improvisation / composition in real time
The score that you are holding in your hand is a result of notation which condenses a number of interpretational traditions. It is a blend of traditional composing notation, composition in real time and meta-genre interferences. Meta-genre character of this piece is here the key constructional factor. Paradoxically, the diversity of styles and genres forms its compactness. With this piece, there is a need for flexible performers who are skilled in intrpretation of contemporary music, as well as old music (baroque, classicism), free improvisation and extensive vocal techniques (small choire). This opera is a proof that it is possible to combine the variety of performers into one unity.

We have also reevaluated the role of the conductor. He carries atributes of the originator of certain energy. Please, do not take this in transcendental or spiritual terms, but rather the pragmatic one (physical and intepretational). This is because the conductor watches over the interpretational aspects - the accuracy of cues for different voices and instruments, dynamics, phrasing, agogics and rhythm, but he is also the originator of the style. This separates him from an interprete of aleatoric scores, who only interpretes the written notes. The "energetic" aspect of conducting of different gestures (explained below) defines the seletcion of the character of interpretation. The conductor interpretes the score that includes the traditional writing as well as gesture symbols and aleatoric and free improvisational passages. Together with the musicians, the conductor, whilst following certain rules, have an opened range of changes that can result in different performational outcomes of the same piece, whenever played again. Why is it so? With my frame of work, I am following the tradition of "the coposer on-stage", hence the way of choosing the best musical material not only durng composing period, but also during the interpretation itself.

## Description of the conducting symbols/gestures and how to execute them

Symbols were carefully chosen to be clearly visible in the act of conducting in order to stimulate immediately the interpretational creativity of the musicians. Before I get to the characteristics of different symbols, I need to point out that, before every staging, there is a need for a sufficient training in interpretation of the symbols in different tempos, setups and dynamics. Symbol is a sign. Sign is a character and musicians are welcome to inerprete the charcter of music creatively, i.e. vary it. This is not anymore the aleatoric variation, but rather an improvisational one, as we know it from jazz tradition. This leads to "liveliness" of the piece.

- Symbol "ohm" - producing of ambient fields. Instruments or voices produce gentle, subtle, non-disturbing tones or sounds.

- Symbol "sforzato" - any/all instrument(s) choose a random tone and play the loudest possible sforzato

- Symbol "sumo" - playing fortissimo of random, most sonorous low note of the instrument

- Symbol "sacra" - playing melodies associated with sacral/church music

- Symbol "scratch" - producing of scratched tone in forte. Singers can choose from fonems such as "kŕríŕ", "szŕrí", "szzzz" and alikes.

- Symbol "x" - each instrument has an individualy assigned character for the smbol "x". The conductor can use these throughout the entire piece, according to momental sound of the music. It is adviced to use it in parts "Cemetary I." and "Cemetary II." for cymbalon, trombone and cello. In part "Cemetary II." the cello plays a special technique "old wood sound", where there is pressure applied on the bow, producing a screechy sound.

- Symbol "u" - for choire - singing of the vowel "u"


Symbol "a" - for choire - singing of the vowel "a"

- Symbol "metal" - very energetic playing, as known from metal music
- Symbol "free improvising" - in context of the 60 's - 70 's tradition of atonal, noise or free-jazz music in tempo 'presto'

- Symbol "romantic" - character of romantic balad sound, smooch, slow and sweet music
- Symbol " G " - playing of the note " G " on any instrument, on arbitrary position


## Conductor

The conductor determines the dynamics and tempo of the piece. Also, by movement of the hands, he can determine the character of glissando, or the immediate start or end of a phrase.

The conductor can change the pitch of the instruments tone by a given inerval by showing the number 1-8 on his fingers. When, for instance, he calls for an ambient field by the symbol "ohm", by showing an aditional " 2 " he can modulate the character higher by a second. This offers the possibility of creative changes.

## Score / notation of time, cues of different parts

The score contains snapshots of the projection, which serve as orientational starting points of each scene. Included is also the information on the duration of individual scenes ( $\mathrm{X}^{\prime} \mathrm{X}^{\prime \prime}-\mathrm{min} / \mathrm{sec}$ ).

## Musicians and actors layout

Actors are acting on the stage, tha musicians and the conductor are seated in front of the stage that is heightened enough to avoid musicians blocking the spectators view ( $80-100 \mathrm{~cm}$ ). Musicians are seated in a semicircular layout in following order (left to right): drums, trombone, barytone sax, cymbalon, cello, 5 choire singers amplified by microphones. The conductor is seated in front of them making sure he has a good view of all musicians, stage and 3 projections.

## Eye For an Eye - light design (see the lighting design sketch)

- the lighting is executed in a simple way, standard small theatre stage lighting equipment is required
- the red circled areas /table, cupboard and stat.bike/ are sharply "cut" with spots and front lights; overlaping too much the shown area can cause undesired interference with the 3 projection screeens
- the red circled area below the punching bag chould be lightened from above only
- on the front stage there is side spot, very thin and narrow from left, so that it lightens a standing man
- at least 4 contra lights
- the red circled areas on the sides of the stage are lightened by nrrow spots from above
- one searchlight is an advantage.


## Stage



## LIBRETTO

(translation to english from slovak lenguage)

## Part: Five beginnings

Man: Next year, The Ministry of Defence will raise their budget by $€ 50 \mathrm{mil}$. Well, $€ 50 \mathrm{mil}$., what can we supply for $€ 50 \mathrm{mil} .$. Well, maybe a few pairs of socks for each soldier, maybe 2 more bread rolls for breakfast, maybe a few night vision devices too. That's roughly the $€ 50 \mathrm{mil}$. (...) That's nothing. They need 10 times more... 20 times more. But, well... Ministry of Defence of Slovak Republic... (chuckles) It's a good place.
TV Broadcaster: We're back, you're watching the headline news. In 2015 we will spend $€ 50$ mil. more on defence than this year. It probably won't be a big deal, but still enough to avoid Slovakian army falling into shame. After the purchase of „Spartans", the Minister is bolt enough for another big modernization. This time it will be helicopters. But the analyst notices that this is still far away from our promises to NATO.
Man: The root of all evil: slavish morality of humility, chastity, non-egoism and absolute obedience has won. As I walked around the town, looking for a suiting residence for our company, immediately I fell in love with this place because of this animal. Because it represents the exact opposite of what I've just cited. It's an animal of force, an animal designed for survival, for enforcing it's existence.

## Part: Due recitativi

Man: People need order. Such as they need to clean up their rooms, flats, houses, streets, cities, offices, they also need to tidy up their lives. The nature has always had its self-cleaning mechanisms, the Earth can clean itself. And the reasoning people also need to clean themselves from time to time. That's what the war is for. Simply - the stronger one always eats the weaker one. It's not different among the people. We shouldn't take it like „the war is bad, the war is painful". Of course, maybe it's not anything desirable. But it's natural that way. The lion eats the lamb as the stronger eats the weaker. Does it sound cynical? Maybe. But that's how it is. The war is the dry cleaner of the mankind.

Man: Let's get this straight: where do these people work. In chemical plants. That's what we need, what we want? It's about the people's health. Recently, there were municipal elections - the politicians promise new roads, new parking places, new homes for young families etc. Are politicians capable of making it real? How? I want to give jobs to the people - a decent job for decent money. A decent standard of life. Can politicians supply this? No no. The people deserve a dignified life. And I can partialy give it to them. Or they would work in chemical plants that contaminate all the environment around? I saw a house, painted like 5 years ago. And all the rains, all the shit, the black, the smog that was leaking down the walls... Do the people really need to pollute their air themselves? While believing that they feed their families? Well thanks for that. People are prejudiced. They think "the weapons, the war"... It's a job just as any other. After all, they wouldn't even know what exactly they 're manufacturing. He works on this piece, he works on that one and when it's put together, we have a product that we sell for good money. There's nothing wrong about it. I pay the taxes.

## Part: Canzonetta

Man: Ďzingo bug éj... lubilut jambazut. Sibirut jachmin buz at! Ej ji-i-i-i-i! Mihihi-i-it! Ih-i-i-i-i-i-i-i-i... Azva ichomi-it t-t-t-t-t ááá..... a a a a a a .... Tkvan či si bomba tvisi ni mi to mombit tomba. Skep taku stil. Mihi hi hi hi.... Mi hi hi hi.... Aaaa! Miaua. Niaj. Iui-i-i-i-i. Mirikvisantčingi intgrisantihop... Ratanananana! Dananadadanana! Dada ú! Dada ú! Dansabidrub simbirut vechšim biz un net sim rim rrrrrrr.

## Part: Meditativo

Man: Effective defense - that's the keystone of every game. And the keystone of every state too. It's not just about our country, but any country that needs to buy technologies for their own defense. It's the keystone of survival. Therefore I'm glad that our company's activities in this town enable us to support these beautiful activities that lead young people to thirst for goal, energy, commitment, and... Philanthropy is still a young concept in our country and I think we should support these activities. After all, with my previous company we made business with rubber and we also produced hockey pucks, so my attitude to this sport is a matter of my heart and I'm really happy that this way I can continue to support this wonderful sport - these energetic young people who long for success, for victory.. And I think that this is also the keystone of achievements.

## Part: Campagnia

Man: Dear friends. I stand before you today for one simple reason. I'm not here by coincidence, I chose your town willingly, to give you one basic question than many of you are concerned with. The question is: how many of your kids, kids of Humenné, study or work away from this beautiful town? Ask this question yourselves and you will answer it too: Too many. I don't like that. I like this town because of its beautiful people who don't deserve their families getting torn apart just because their kids can't find work in this region. This country doesn't deserve such emigration as 100 years ago. We know what happened to our grandfathers who stayed in America, leaving their families behind forever. Do we want this to happen now, in the modern world? Surely not! That's why I stand here today, offering you jobs! I can solve this problem, partially at least. I stand here offering you jobs that are decent, well payed, and you don't need to feel ashamed of them. Jobs after which you can go to bed knowing that you've done something for your families. After all - we are doing this for our kids. We are doing this for our kids! Dear citizens, you are doing it for your kids!

## Part: Offertorium

Man: Sacrifice. Whatever we do in our lives, we all need to sacrifice something. OK, there are also war victims, sure, but we are talking about the defense. We are not talking about attacking. Really, this is about defending the nation, defending the state. You cannot compare it with an assault. After all, weapons don't kill people. People kill people. It's like you would say that pencils write novels. It's people.

## Part: Don't let me be to good

Man: Pakežuva čuvbo hi imžichvi čviršchmišli svi rachtirí tambeduchtichla givili ach mu zsigi hi gi mi hi ha gaturum dr-r-r-r-r-i jaba diba da dinda piki ški tunku miki šku bio bio rakitimi oij hách mikl mividrab mividrab áhm abadučima bataterméstnuna rakasamustap! Zimba paka. Pangá reziduma epesetuma. Rigabasanatrumanapana, labidanapastramanumpa, hach nabidusumatreme. Anima he-é-é ch by matruma. Hop minutrap himcvojk ik mi cví, cion ka - ka- ka - ka - ka igh ka - ka - ka- kaka igh ka - ka - ka- ka - ka - Kam idam šimu tschiuring lat! im óp kivrapat namtriump givirup lapamcá. Di vi dup lampacá! Lapa timcu tóá - hop!
(Vocal) Everytime you walk inside
It's your gun, I'm waiting for It's the bullets, it's the steel
Making my hart something to feel
Be my hero
Be my killer
Walk inside and turn me bitter
I step, you shoot
Don't let me be to good.

## Part: Intermezzo

Man: The employee is the alpha and omega of every company - of every well-working company. I think that if the boss doesn't value his employees and he cannot show it to them adequately, the employee cannot feel important, essential, appreciated and that the job is worth something. The relationship between boss and employee must be fair. It must be built on principles that are followed and if they are not, there must come a punishment.

## Part: La Ditta

Man: Loyalty is one of the greatest values in a job. There would be no good results without loyalty, because then you have no guarantee that the employee does what he's supposed to. It's not about telling him 3 times the same. Once said - it's saintly. A loyal employee doesn't set you up, doesn't steal from you, doesn't lie to you. A loyal employee is your gold in the company.

## Cemetery


(note "ES" is prepared with a rubber)





## Five beginnings



Man
(video)

Man (video)

## 

Well, $€ 50 \mathrm{mil} .$, what can we sup-ply for $€ 50 \mathrm{mil} .$. Well, may-be a few pairs of socks for each soldier, may-be more bread rolls for break-fast, maybe a few
 night vision devices too. Thats roughly the $€ 50 \mathrm{mil}$. Thats nothing. They need times more.. times more. But, well Ministry of Defence of Slovak Republic...

TV News report



Vc.


(video) enough for another big modernization. This time it will be helicopters. But the analyst notices that this is still far away from our promises to NATO

Vc.
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Ouverture

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Bari. Sax.




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$\square$


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## Due recitative








Can politicians supply this? | No, no, no. |
| :---: |
| even know what exactly they're manufacturing. He works on this piece, he works on that one and when it's put together, we have a product that we sell for good money. |
| There's nothing wrong about it. I pay the taxes. |

## Canzonetta





Balleto
A. $=100$


 Bari. Sax. b. $_{\text {\#\#\# }}^{\#}$



24





Bari. Sax.


Dr.







Bari. Sax.

Tb.

Dr.


Bari. Sax.

Tb.

Dr.


Vc.





just because their kids can't find work in this region. This country doesn't deserve such I chose your town willingly, to give you one basic question than many

(video)




## Offertorio, recitativo e coro







after shotting from gun stop playing...

Voice 1



givili ach mu zsigi hi gi mi hi ha gaturum dr-r-r-r-r-i jaba diba da dinda piki ški tunku miki šku bio bio rakitimi oij hách mikl mividrab mividrab áhm abadučima

Dr.


bataterméstnuna rakasamustap! Zimba paka. Pangá reziduma epesetuma. Rigabasanatrumanapana, labidanapastramanumpa, hach nabidusumatreme.










Man
(video)

The relationship between boss and employee must be fair. It must be built on principles that are followed and if they are not, there must come a punishment.


## Aria with a Knight





## Battaglia







$=$

 $\geqslant$

 Bari.
Sax.
$=$


 $=$


 Ton 2



A tempod $=60$
107 delicattisimo

accel.
poco accel.





## Cemetery II.

Bari. Sax.

Tbn.


Vc.
$\overbrace{3}^{\frac{\#_{4}^{*}}{4}}$
Grave estremo



