

# *Emil Biljarszki Interview*

*László Hortobágyi*

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*- In all of Your published materials You have been accompanied by India's music for about 20 years. Why?*

The “realized” socialism, where I was born, was an atomized and mind emaciating *Asian* type system. It was really simple to realize that it was identical with the everyday attitude of the historical tyrannical *Asian* regimes. In my opinion, in *Budapest*, in the years of 1964-65, the everyday attitude of a sensitive human being was not too far from the essence of an imaginary *Asian-Indian* way of life's attitude. And it also became evident, that most of the people travelled to the East with the intention to have their Western-misery cured. As for myself, I realized that there was even a bigger *Hell* in the East, although this *Hell* had been functioning for more thousands of years and it was a sophisticated *Hell* well worth studying.

Namely, this human-caused *Hell* had learned everything that we, living here in the West, wouldn't know even today. If we take a look at modern *Japanese buto*, or *Zeami's Zen*, or even the *Kathakali* or *Javanese* opera, we will see with great astonishment what an alienation ritual has evolved for symbolizing awareness of life and for psychodramatic self-therapy.

And we can also admire how sophisticated the human intelligence is, as it has always been able to create such and similar systems of symbols, just for the sake of the imaginary liberation of its own ruined existence. Well, that was the motive that made me go to *India*, because you could find there one of the most horrible – still precisely functioning – forms of social homeostasis and because that was the place, where the culture found a possible way that would lead out of this kind of existence, namely the positive leading-out methods and developed techniques for the art's original mal-consciousness. However, I was interested not in how to sneak out of this world, how to desert, but instead, how people could utilize their talent for turning the infernal moaning of their music into balm. Since, they are defeating the misunderstood but suffered reality by means of a system invented by themselves, and hereby they will turn a somersault. As for me, I was interested in what this system was in fact. I was able to defeat my own misery by understanding how others had succeeded to defeat

it.

At about this time, there occurred the “*white man’s*” last meeting, among others, with the *Indian* music, when from the second part of the 50ies this kind of music, in view of its entirety and origin, was identified by, among others, from *John Cage* to *Yehudi Menuhin* and *The Beatles* with a minority, but considering the performer, *Pandit Ravi Shankar*, ingenious slice of it.

Though the extinction of the traditional *Indian* schools (*gharana*) had already commenced around the turn of the century in parallel with the disappearance of the *maharaja* courts, this kind of misunderstanding of classical *Indian* music by “*white man’s*” consumption could also lead to the development of a consumable *Indian* music that was comparable with the global “conform-idiomatism” of the awful pop industry. And in this way, however, the very essence of the *Indian* music is fading away, that is nothing else, than a fantastically sophisticated, ancient and ecstatic human “*exodus*” being the mathematical purity and *Heaven* in itself, and if You allow me to tell my opinion, I would say, if the *Hell* exists, there is *Indian* music playing, for sure.

In the world, *Indian* and *Gamelan* music have the most stringent mathematics, where none of the notes are improvisative and in particular meditative. Here, every composition will be concreted into the repertoire by age-old repetitions, and still: the performer or the *Javan* orchestra will never be able to play the same music twice in the same way. This is the ocean of freedom, where all the participants, like engineers of the kingdom come, will build up the monumental, transcendent cathedral of *Indian* music of tiny little rational pavements and units. The whole *Schönberg* line (*reihe*) is a *Teuton* barbed wire *Walhalla* compared to the *Gamelan* structure. The “*white man’s*” ergonomic detachedness from the music’s original ecstatic factor, together with his/her alienated scream, would become evident, and at the same time naturally delicious, through the sounding of the 32” *Bombarde* pipes of *Cavaille Coll* organs.

**- Tell us some words about Your relations with India. Have You been influenced by other nations’ culture, too?**

All of the existing musics, that I have collected with great efforts, would make me feel the collective and underlying languages and misery of the World. In terms of collection, it is not the music that is important, but the processing of messages spreaded from different segments and cultures of time. Also important is, still playing a secondary role, the analisis of the musical superstructure and construction. Because it is only the wrapping, the rational way of learning, for example, what kind of bow-

handling techniques were used in *Baroque* to express everything by it, they wanted to express.

Globalization – although I always believed in a Global-State (*Earthstate*) – has been realized differently from how we used to imagine that. Namely, due to its spreading, the mine of information is finite and it lasts only for a certain period, because after that all of those sources of information will disappear.

The problem is, that a *Tanganyikan* or a *Javanese* will not come to study *Gregorian* chants, but it was the “*white man*” who went to observe what that black man was knocking on that drums or what the members of the *Gamelan* orchestra were beating. By the way, it could only happen simply on account of economic extension, as a by-product. Though, according to the estimations, the death of more than 30 million *Bangladeshis* was caused by the English industry, (*East-Indian Company*, 1620), we could read, as far back as 1794, about *Indian* music from the pen of *Sir William Jones*.

In this process, it is very strange, that there is an introductory part – just like, in those days, *Goethe*’s literary-intellectual revolution called “*Sturm und Drang*” – where you can still access to certain things, and there is an outgoing part, and that is where we live now. The latter will pass in 30-50 years, and in this way a dreary reality is going to be realized, that only those parts of the cultures are able to live on, which can be understood by the “*white man*”.

We can take over and understand so little from these vanishing cultures, that we are even not able to comprehend what has been lost.

Even the *Indian* music is an excellent example for this, because, as a matter of fact, we can say, that it died some 70 years ago. In spite of this fact, it has bigger and bigger renaissance, whilst it is degenerating into a more and more horrible direction. It used to be one of the most ecstatic kind of music, and now it is tending towards this “*beauty*”, this corny “*übergeil*” style.

I have been engaged in this kind of music, and I can see also here, that those people, who are approaching this matter with the greatest possible goodwill and desire for knowledge, with honest intention of archiving, musicological preparedness and professional knowledge, are somehow similar to the ants that are eating copiously of a philosopher’s corpse that is lying across the path. That means, we can utilize as

much from the *Indian* music, as the ants can utilize from the conceptual systems of the dead philosopher.

– ***Will You introduce the members of Gáyan Utteják Orchestra, please.***

*First of all, the core Guo Family members are, as follows:*

Nóra Hortobágyi – harmonium, cembalo, synths

László Hortobágyi – rudra-vina, sitar, surbahar, computed mémesis

Tibor Mótyán – tablá-tarang, tablá, jidaki

Zsolt Kosztyu – bass, samplers, effects

Tamás Nádházi – drums, gong, samplers, webguru

Zsolt Szulyovszky – sitar, tanpura

Haász Ferenc - Pintér Anita – stage-designs and light-acustics

János Stribik – webprogenitor

Tamás Littmann – live mixing and fixing

Márton Náray – management, booking

The roots of *Gáyan Utteják Orchestra (GUO)* date back to the end of the 19th Century, as the “*Gáyan Utteják Mandal*”, archetype of *GUO*’s establisher, the “*Gáyan Utteják Society*” (founded in Hungary, 1981), was operated by *Navraojji Kabraji* and *V.N. Bhatkhande*, between 1870 and 1917, in *Bombay* (today *Mumbai*) The *Society* was expanded in 1984 with the “*Archive of Oriental Music*”, to be considered unique and unrivalled in Eastern Europe, the “*Gáyan Utteják Studio*” and the “*Gáyan Utteják Orchestra*”, composed of musicians of the most diverse nationality and being the direct progenitor of the current *GUO*.

Music of *GUO* combines music of non-existing mythological worlds and *Extra-European* high music cultures with creative techniques aimed at a possible, global still virtual language of music that nevertheless differs fundamentally from the realized world music.

In concert, the traditional *Hindu-Islamic* and classical *Asian* musical textures are performed by *GUO* in the original orchestration, effectuating simultaneously a live-electronic sound synthesis controlled by the traditional instruments, in complete conformity with 21st Century traditions of *GUO*.

***- In the 80ies You were on tour a lot, but after that You discontinued giving concerts and it was only a few years ago, that You resumed GUO and the live***

*concerts. What was the reason for the stop and the restart?*

One of the reasons of taking a pause was a kind of a diagnosis:

The ones, who are understanding the language of European classical music, will find themselves in a social quarantine, and their situation is similar to the segregated order of *Indian* pillar saints or yogas: they are capable of standing on one leg for ten years as well. Some of them will compose pieces for an investment fund or insurance company, others will descend and change the composing technique magically into surviving technique, making time travels and opening private ways towards an other world, towards the world of desired freedom and survival. For today, it can be said, and this is true in case of each the so-called human arts, that practicing the arts is a kind of pottering in a crate full of pissy sand, that is enjoyable and important only for the creator.

At the same time, the youth's musical attitude has also changed fundamentally, here the so-called intellectual pleasure originating from the traditional practice of music is replaced with drugs, and the music of today will provide only the acoustic stimulus for that. As a matter of fact, we may hardly speak about music here: the main point is not the structure anymore, but representing it on a level of energy, an acoustic petting that will immediately invoke the collective, but for today only a conscious level, revolution during the fold-warm hangar parties, where all the participants will depart towards the dark inner spaces of the individual, and where there is only the chitin-shell of a smashed ego that is waiting for the ones wishing to be freed.

Their and our brains have already been smashed into shivers by these new chapters of the media and the consumer culture. It comes natural to this new generation to exit this world sometimes by the help of a pill, sometimes by the help of the volume of sound or a reincarnated philosophy. In terms of social presence it is almost the same. From the given alternatives, those kids will choose, otherwise for totally obvious reasons, the only possible one, since no kind of political, social, physical or artistic articulation has a chance against the power, the methods of profit-making and the multinational mechanisms. The asylum of the youth looking for a sensitive and habitable world, is the acid party, the hangar, where they could find a momentary human warmth and an ancient community, even if they won't touch the one who is writhing by his/her side.

They intensify this general feeling by means of pills, in order to join this big, common and ecstatic fold-warmth as easy as possible. Because, for some reason it is still the presence of the other people that would keep the human life on an acceptable temperature. And this is the reason why we need a kind of social ecstasy that

overcomes the daily reality, and this is the secret of the nowadays culture of the youth. Well then, this is our residual colloquial language, this radical way of refusal, since the real world will not be doubted, not for a second, and it would not even come up that something should be improved or done in a different way. Even if for a couple of hours, we begin to function as a human, and we will feel as if our stamina that have been tapped by day would regenerate during the night, how symbolic it is, but in fact it is also an enormous wasting of human lives.

The drugs, in fact, instead of connecting people to this meta-language will coagulate that. If we make intelligent observation and we are capable of grace of satori, then we will realize that in this world everything is true in an upside-down way.

*GUO*'s restart was driven by the perception, that on the eve of the globalization, the historical reality had become fissured, it would happen not too often, and we got a historical opportunity to compare and understand, with the help of the changed way of thinking and the modern technology, the co-existing and co-existed musical languages of the world. This opportunity applied not only to music. Still before the set-in of the postmodern, I would call it an *apo-capitalistic* consumer caste-system, right before the traditional cultures considered as the iridescent reflections of the past could have died out, and a deformed western world, becoming caste-like, built up: as a last psychedelic pushing of the 60ies, there was a period, when the big theory of comparative musical synthesis, worthy of the European musical culture, could have been born, similarly to the search for the *Universal Theory* of physical science. There was 25-30 years for this purpose. And never more. Before that, there had been the self-determining and impermeable world of traditional feudal cultures and the narrow-minded, Europe-centric world concept of the bourgeois society, then, after their decay, there came the similarly impermeable homogeneous, conformist-narrow world of the new global multi-culture. At that threshold point of the historical course, there appeared for the first and, at the same time, last time the chance for this synthesis, that was, otherwise, contradictory to the reality and true only in its possibilities. But nobody did even notice it.

***- In the last 10 years, almost all of Your compositions are based on dub. Why?***

The *dub* is, and no matter how we try to euphemize it, nothing else but one of the modern traditional musical distillations of collective human misery. It is the music of minds broken into pieces, wishing to leave this reality because of uninhabitableness of the World caused by human being and looking for another world where they will

establish a collective culture. The natural evolution of *dub* is synchronous with pauperization of the World's societies.

The whole *Rasta* movement has been nothing else but despairingness that has appeared after the happy and sunny reggae music, the dark side of the seized-up little local revolutions. Here, the sun-kissed mundane paradise no longer means the principal good and something to achieve, instead it has been replaced by the physical exode towards the feudal *Ethiopian* emperor's, *Haile Selassie*'s bygone world. The spreading of *ganja* implies only an interrelation with the very hopeless and blighted prospects, where *Jamaican* culture, rich in pigment, will meet high tech, and black people's polyrhythmic instinct will appear in a shifted, asymmetric bass-structure. The most crystal-clear outward form of *dub* is nothing else but a sequence of asymmetric bass progressions with a three or four part polyrhythmic accompaniment. The original *dub* with a static structure – besides all *sinsemilla* and other taking of drugs – requires a very precise rhythmic involvement, thus it will materialize and become an other-worldly music in a rational way that is similar to *Indian* music. The rotating rhythms of conga drums used in real *dub* are shifted by a sixteenth note compared to the ticks of a metronome, and the musicians are able to keep it constantly, during whole periods, and even to turn over by a whole rhythmic formula per each period, like *Indian tabla* players. This is the essence, a kind of opiate and levitation, being still an interpretation requiring a conscious involvement, that will lead to the most perfect *Garden of Eden*. Here, exactly in the same way as in *Indian* music, the polyrhythmic lift-off from the base rhythm will turn over in relation to the whole measure, and return to the first beat of the period after „x” measures. It is nothing else but overcoming the reality and levitation of the soul. *dub* is the rational language of the collective kingdom come, thus, it will transfer you to that other world.

**- Tell us some words about Your plans?**

The opinion-beam of our plans is limited and starts from the following evaluation:

The globalizing, prodigal and environment-destroying social system of our age has the unparalleled ability to deprave traditional cultures and human souls.

The attained civil development has an opposite side: the mass ideology, coming to life again, day by day, by means of “*culture*” of transnational ventures, the practice of which is going to teach that human beings and their different cultures should be considered as sources of profit-making and personal enrichment, and where the financial interests are able to swallow up any other human feeling, consequently the whole society looks like rag-fair of *Alien-s*' extorting passion.

There is no difference, even as regards classical *Indian* music, where contemporary social existence and consciousness are able to do the impossible, and will transform the original meaning of *Indian* music, that is nothing else but the metaphysical musical exode of the most ancient awareness of life and the refined distillate of this ancestral life-suffering, and for today it has become Tantric rectum cleaning and music of entertainment industry characterized by beauty-world and wellness-ambient. Here and now, there is something really shocking and historic taking place, indeed, that will affect not only the abovementioned areas.

Therefore, *GUO* are perhaps nothing else than a kind of *Greenpeace* of music, that is backed by (I would humbly take the liberty of hoping it) e.g. the *GUO*'s last triple material called "*Guonthology*", which is opposed to the aforesaid trends, not only on an ultimatum's level but also as a materialized counter-practice.

Consequently, all of the *GUO* concerts have a common recommendation:

### **Guology:**

*Gáyan Uttejak Orchestra* regrets to inform You: *GUO* doesn't have it in its power to guarantee the delightful experience of a conventional easy-listening, as the kind of participation demanded from You is not conform to what is habitual in average concerts.

*The Orchestra* will not apply means of musical stops, breaks and intermissions to create sensation and to bring down the house, and will not adopt the possibility of reiterating different movements and phrases, and, by way of illustration, will not even take a pause in the course of its performance. *GUO*'s music is not going to imitate the structure of traditional Western-European music, and will not provide a reference and encourage delicious adherence to concert-etiquette.

*GUO* desires to be a humble forerunner of the new Western-Amerasian Empire's musical mappings that are coming into existence in the caste-system of future society. In addition, *GUO* is opposed to the traditional music industry that will operate as one of the *Wellness-Neuronetics* subdivisions of *Wychi-Exonybm* corporation.

*GUO* has the intention to create a kind of a state of *Stoa*: its components reside in the periods of the polyrhythmic structure, and they are the ones that will lead to performer-listener levitation and to collective-luminiferous phosphorescence of the *Moebius*-mind memetized by the music.

The basis for it is the centuries-old hypno-static musical experience of *Asian* high cultures, where the music itself is nothing else but a sophisticated technique of *exode*, and that will, as a distillation of the diseased and uninhabitable socium, praise the

thousand years old art-techniques of imaginary and momentary escape of humanoid being from evolutionary and social captivity.

In the putrefied social existence, metaphysical prostheses that are existing, in place of a world livable by intellect, as *ectoplasm-s* grown on to human brain, are to be superseded by this sort of music, which is the rational language of the sole existing positive resistance of our days, the only bridge that could guide us, as a quasi *yoga* technique, to provisional dissolution of collective alienation, to a *sartori* state where self-correction of individual existence will contribute to the improvement of the World.”

*(11th September 2008)*