

A NEW AWAKEING

ARTS THEME – MORNING MOOD

Soundtrack: "The Morning Mood" by Edvard Grieg.

If I am right - which I usually am - you should know or have a slight remembrance of this tune. You may have heard it before - in a concert hall, on the cinema,- or may be you have recognized it as the small example played by Benedicte at Troidhaugen the other night.

It is The Morning Mood from the Peer Gynt music by Edvard Grieg - one of the most popular and well known themes by Grieg. In these surroundings the music is perfect. Some of you met the morning by diving into the fjord, or you have at least noticed that this music actually could have been composed for the purpose of promoting Solstrand.

But it was not. The music is the music to the opening of the 4th part of Ibsen/Grieg's play Peer Gynt, and it takes place at the coast of Marocco. What happens is: Peer Gynt had to leave Norway in his youth being an outlaw. Now he is a middle aged man, and he has made fortunes in the states by "selling bibles to China and negroes to Georgia". Now he is together with his companions - bad friends - on a "mission" to Balkan selling weapons. It was a good business in those days, and it still is.

On the shore of Marocco Peer Gynt is making a big party to celebrate himself. When his has finished the Balkan business he'll be rich enough to buy the whole world and become Emperor. The friends, Master Cotton, USA, Monseur Bollon, France, von Eberkopf, Germany and Hr. Trumpeterstraale, Sweden, are getting boarded of this lunitic Norwegian, and they set off to the ship while Peer Gynt is literally eating sand - deadly drunk. The ship however explodes, Peer Gynt wakes up and realizes that his fortune is gone. The only thing of obvious matter there and then is a terrible hangover. While Peer Gynt is there - on the lowest level physically, mentally and economically - pucing down into the orchestra pit - this music comes up from the pit. (Morning Mood).

How far off can a composer be? Or was he? Grieg has been accused to be only a pure romantic without sence of the dramatic. But we have all been wrong. What is the melody of the Morning Mood?

Yes, it is the melody Benedicte played on the withsounding, sympatethic strings on the Hardanger fiddle. They sound like this : singing the pentatone melody.

This melody pattern is called a pentatonic melody - black keys on the piano - and we'll find this pattern in all folk music from east to west. And in Norwegian folk music they are the withsounding vibrations that makes the special sound of the fiddle.

On Friday I called these strings the subcociousness of the fiddle - something that is there - independenty, nearly soundless sounding.

In Morning Mood Grieg is playing on the sympathetic strings in the prolonged spine of Peer Gynt. It is reminiscences of a memory - a memory of a woman who had promised to wait.

It is the sound of the slight memory that Grieg brings forward to us as a counterpoint to what happens on stage. He gives the drama an extra dimension.

He does the same with the music to Anitra - the beduin princess who is dancing her erotic dance to Peer Gynt. The music tells how Peer sees her in his phantasy. Ibsen has described the girl like this: "I must say she's gorgeous that bitch. Her feet are quick like drumsticks, her shape isn't according to our norms, but that is - may be not to a minus - rather a bonus. Her hands are not exactly clean like foam - especially the left one ". But Peer Gynt sees this. Music example: Anitra's dance.

In the Morning Mood Grieg used the pentatone mode from the folk music - known all over the world. He is also using an international pattern in the other hit of Peer Gynt - "In the hall of the mountain king". 'Singing the melody.' This is the same pattern as Smetana have used in Moldau. 'Singing the melody - minor in the beginning, major at the end.' Same melody as the children song: Lisa gikk til skolen.

This brings me into the question: What is it that artists can, that makes them able to produce art - art that can be perceived and experienced by everyone who open her/his mind?

From the examples already given it is obvious that composers know and are able to catch modes, motives and melodies which is in our common memory - in our common un/subconsciousness, and they can present it in an elevated or transformed version filled with a lot of information in addition to the "known" material. The known material is opening our minds and makes it ready to take the whole flow of artistic information into our mind.

The knowledge and insight of the artist enables them to concentrate enormous amount of significant information about inner and outer life of man, and present it in the form of music, pictures, sculptures, poetry, literature also, and when it is great art, we can come back and back again to the piece of art and every time we'll get even more and new information.

Art - and in this case music - is not expressing feelings or emotions, but the forms in the music is parallel or congruent to the forms of our feelings and emotions. And the tracks with such import will stay forever - despite any other conditions - age, health also.

Entering the St Peter Cathedral in Rome, turning to the right we can see this unbelievable sculpture Pieta made by Michelangelo. We can of course wonder how he knew that the sculpture was inside the block of marble he got from Carrara. But in addition, the sculpture is telling endless of stories about pain, suffer, but first and last the moving story of a mother's love for her son. We can see all this in a glimpse, just as we just need one glimpse of the Munch picture "Scream" to identify and make our own stories based on our own experience and emotional capacity. And in a

poem like this, the whole history is told in a dozen words. ("Ed e subito Séra." Quasimodo).

And we can ask - how much time, or how much of a piece of art do we need to see or hear to make our own concept of the total piece of art?

Let me do an experiment. Now you'll hear a bit of a piece of music. What is it, and how much of it do you recognize? 'First chord of the A-minor concerto by Grieg.'

Those of you familiar with classical music, will certainly recognize Grieg's a-minor concerto, and my postulate is that hearing the first cord, gives us the whole concert in a flash. The first cord is like a "zip-folder". Grieg is releasing the whole great idea in a compressed form in this cord. The next 29 minutes he is un-zipping the folder - like we are opening a x-mas calender. When we come to the end, all the details are there, and it is glued into our harddisk.

The concerto has a brave opening - playing out all the cards at once. Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" has a similar opening: "Peer! You are lying!" The whpole drama is there in these four words. It takes four hours to "un-zip"the whole piece. Similar openings: Beethoven's, 5th, Sæverud's Rondo Amoroso .etc.

Art experiences will allways be stored in our mind. We call it an art experience when it has meant somthing important to us. As Ibsen and Picasso have said - all art is just lies and damed stories, but it is about the truth. And man is seeking for truth and love from craddle to grave - especially when we are young and when we are getting towards the other end of life. It is often called to belive - which is nearly the oposite of knowing. (Knowing seemes to dominate the periode between.)

The import of art experiences are mostly non- kognitive. Therefore, our kognitive capacity is of little interrest when it comes to art. In the setting of this interesting conference it is also important to know that ability to perceive and the need to have art experiences is strong among all people. Age, physical, even mental state is of minor importance - anybody can have - and I think need - the access to art experiences.

My mother lost most of her language, sight, short and long memory at the age of 92, but even through the last two years of her life she had great pleasure in experiencing art - especially listening to classical music. She could imideately identify for instans the sound of Arve Tellefsen playing the violin among douzins of violinists, as she could recognize the sound of all people she knew when we were coming into her room. And she was not unique. During a visit to my mother I met a neighbour of her at the elderly home. He had been a very good accordeon player in his youth, but had becom a patient and heavenly dement from the age of 60. I had not seen him for nearly 20 years. I said "hello Arne, how are you. I am Little Erling". He looked up and saw through me and said:" Do you still play the cello?"

There was nothing wrong with their sympathehic strings, their subconsciousness. If the caretaking people at the institution was a little bit more trained/ aware of these sides of their guest's inner life, I think their own daily life would have been richer than just playing nonsens music on gramophone or present easy digest entertainment in

the name of culture. When I am getting old and may need to be at an institution, I have already told my children that I won't want to be carried down to the main room to listen to retired county and western artists.

I find a quote from the Swedish film star Ingrid Bergman very beautiful. She said about getting older: "It is like climbing to the top of a mountain. You are getting a little bit more short breathered, but the overview is getting much better."

Edvard Grieg said about getting old and sick. "Life and Blood is not flowing stormy and wild any more, but a Diminuendo can also be beautiful".

In our work - within the arts, in healthcare and all human relations - the main thing is to be aware of the fact that it is not enough to listen - we have to listen after.

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