



province. He experienced it most dramatically and even physically in the post-war chaos of the 1920s and 1950s, when his biography started to resemble the one of the Kosorov's or Nehajev's anti-heroes. To escape... not to sink... The twenty-year-old Matačić manages to escape with the power of his disbelief that the real surroundings is his own true destiny. The Kakanian Europeism had not yet been entirely forgotten, and its southeastern periphery still had a somewhat exotic, revitalizing appeal for the centre. About thirty years later, the same goal was more difficult to achieve: borders were multiplying, from the political and ideological ones to the generational ones. Energy invested in overcoming these boundaries is actually immense. Truly amazing. In many of the maestro's resumes, and at the time when this was not easy, Croatia was quoted as his country of birth (*žin Kroatien*). To him, both then and later, and exactly thanks to the people of his own mould, this meant - the world. In seemingly 'borderless' layout of today's global world, the issue of province acquires a new, poignant meaning and a new reality. To overcome it, there is always only one way - the Matačić's way.

The energy of self-realisation through music? What is so unique about that? We are dealing here with a superb musician, who cannot do otherwise... However, there are several charismatic points on the musical repertoire, when, each and every time I hear them, even when interpreted by the greatest, I never fail to think of Lovro Matačić. I will quote here just two of such instances, only superficially similar. The opening 19 bars of *Introitus* from Mozart's *Requiem (Adagio)* and the first 16 bars of the first movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. In the first case, we have a growth of dynamics from piano to forte and backwards. In the latter, there is a rise from pianissimo towards fortissimo. An enormous expansion of sound in a small fragment, and yet, what is especially fascinating is the very opening where highest concentration of the sound pulsation is present at the lower limit of audibility. Karajan, with his eyes closed and his arms slightly held out. Or Solti, somewhat not interested in the preparation for the big thing yet to come, carefully conducting because the *pianissimo* is such that only from the movement of his arms the audience can discern that the piece has already started. Or the smiling Abbado, in a kind of a gentle covenant with the secret unfolding before him... Nowhere else such pulsation of fear, maybe the only one in the entire Mozart's mass for the dead, and nowhere else such a Beethovenian miracle of genesis, the circular movement of time instead of the classical dialectic progression prevailing until then (*žHere the silence is not being broken but rather gradually replaced by the sound*, as noticed by Leo Treitler) - as with Matačić. I can recall the rehearsals and numerous nervous, gainly beating of the hand on the stand, again, not good, *psst* - as he hissed his musical "Esperanto", always with the Viennese accent, until he could perceive the fear or the emerging genesis resembling at least in some measure what he could hear with his inner ear..., which was enough to make one feel a chill down one's spine... Not metaphysically, not because of the 'message', but actually, physically.

Matačić's musicality was deeply ingrained in his constitution (or in less subtle terms - physically and erotically movable) and he was unmistakable on this level. It was the foundation underlying education, culture, mentality, taste, temper and all other things, which, of course, all can be discussed. However, this foundation gave him freedom but also provided a firm guidance. Free from the limits of particular styles and aesthetics, Matačić felt this inner musicality in Monteverdi and Gluck, as well as in Bruckner or Tchaikovsky but he did not feel it in Bach, for instance, and this is why, intimidated by his own respect, he did not dare to approach him. This musicality governed his idea of the soundscape, moulded the concept of the sound architecture, determined the positions and spans of peak loads, and managed the kinetics of the timeflow. Finally, this musicality was underlying Matačić's perception of the entire world, especially of literature. He would know Wagner's awkward verses by heart, not because of their metaphorical verbal chaos but most of all due to the rhythm and melody of the verse, and then by a childish game full of theatrical symbolism because, to be fair, Matačić was indeed a man of the theatre...

The intensity of Matačić's sound fantasy and intuition, actually, the intelligence of his ear set in motion the energy of the musicalisation as a positive approach to life, rejecting any redundant rational schemes, aesthetic relativity, let alone reflexive scepticism. This simple, serene and invigorating belief in what he was doing and the joy he felt about his achievements constituted the core of his interpretative magic, in which both his musicians and his audience unconditionally believed.

What about the others? Who cares...

