


27.1.2024 20.00 CET: Viktor Ullmann "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" on the 79th anniversary of the liberation of the deathcamps of Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II, Auschwitz III by the Red Army on January 27th 1945, **studio recording of the original score written by Viktor Ullmann (music and libretto) produced from the the legendary ARBOS-production with a commentary of Karel Berman.** This production was chosen by a jury of musical experts as the best opera performance of the year 1993 in the Czech Republic and is one of the ten most important events in the history of Czech music in the 20th century (Jan Vičar "Imprints - Essays on Czech Music and Aesthetics" Palacký University in Olomouc & Togga, Prague 2005). A Programme of the VIKTOR ULLMANN PROJECT .



*Dem ausgezeichneten Ensemble
von Klagenfurt mit freundlichen
Grüßen der erste Tod-Darsteller*

K. Berman

Praha, 29. 9. 93

Gratulations by Karel Berman to ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre after the Czech Premiere of the anti-war opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" by Viktor Ullmann (Music and Libretto).

Studio recording of the original version of the libretto of Viktor Ullmann's Anti-War Opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" in the original version of the composer based on research work together with Karel Berman, Paul Kling and Herbert Thomas Mandl. All three were involved in the proces of the finalization of Ullmann's Anti-War Opera as a part of the "Freizeitgestaltung" (Leisure Time Activities) at the Concentration Camp of Terezin. Karel Berman rehearsed the character of The Death at Terezin. Berman's rolebook of The Death of Ullmann's Anti-War Opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" was the most important source for the reconstruction of the original score. The concertmaster of the rehearsals at Terezin, the violinist Paul Kling explained the rehearsals of the orchestra, as Herbert Thomas Mandl explained the proces of all rehearsals, as Herbert Thomas Mandl was at all rehearsals of the Ullmann's Anti-War Opera in Terezin. Music and libretto of the Anti-War Opera are written by Viktor Ullmann, the opera is based on Ullmann's personal war experience in the First World War. Viktor Ullmann worked his whole lifetime on his opera from 1917 to 1944, in all 27 years. Together with Viktor Ullmann the grandfather of Herbert Gantschacher, Friedrich Eggarter, served in the theatre of war before the start of the 12th and last battle in the valley of the river Isonzo. As Viktor Ullmann remained as an artillery observer in the mountains, Friedrich Eggarter got the order to go through the gassed trenches of Italian troops. Equipped with gasmasks Eggarter had to go through the gassed trenches in search for Living and Dead. Eggarter survived this special mission on the edge of his life.

Viktor Ullmann personally met both regents of multiple monarchy of the archhouse of Hapsburg. During the visit of emperor Franz-Joseph at Teschen (today a divided city

between Poland and the Czech Republic, Cieszyn and Český Těšín) from 30th of August 1906 to 6th of September 1906. Viktor Ullmann's father Maximilian Ullmann served at this time as a captain of the k.u.k. Wehrmacht and got in touch with the emperor during the arrival ceremony at the central station of Teschen, there the emperor was welcomed with musical military signals. As commander-in-chief of the armed Wehrmacht, the monarch attended the so-called imperial manoeuvres. Viktor Ullmann himself saw the emperor Franz-Joseph at the City Hall of Teschen on 2nd of September 1906 at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the sound of the bells of the mechanical tower clock of City Hall opened the ceremony. The musical motif of the mechanical tower clock of the City Hall of Teschen Viktor Ullmann used later in his anti-war opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" as the central theme for the scene at the emperor's palace and battlefield "Nr. VIII. Rezitativ und Arie. L'istesso Tempo". The first instrumentation of the chamber orchestra is from 1917. In this year Viktor Ullmann served as an artillery observer in the theatre of war in the valley of the river Isonzo and met the emperor and king Charles from the archduke Hapsburg there as the commander-in-chief of the k.u.k. Wehrmacht at the battlefield. Here father Maximilian Ullmann served now as an officer of the k.u.k. Wehrmacht in the rank of a colonel general and saved with his brigade the monarch at the battlefield of the 12th battle at the Isonzo river. In 1918 Maximilian Ullmann received the patent of nobility for the service of the safety of the emperor on the battlefield. Musical themes of the opera Ullmann used in opus 7 from the year 1924 "Symphonic Fantasy", Solo Cantata for Tenor and Orchestra, and the Piano Sonata Nr. 7 from the year 1944. In Summer 1944 the opera was rehearsed for the very first time at the concentration camp of Terezin during the leisure time activities named as "Freizeitgestaltung" (leisure time activities). The singer Karel Berman rehearsed the character of the Death, Paul Kling was as a violinist the concertmaster of the chamber orchestra. And the violinist Herbert Thomas Mandl visited all rehearsals at Terezin as the secretary of the Jewish self-government of the concentration camp Terezin. Viktor Ullmann himself did not attend the rehearsals.

In the summer of 1944, the opera was rehearsed for the first time in the Theresienstadt concentration camp as a part of the "Freizeitgestaltung" (leisure time activities). Karel Berman rehearsed the character of Death, Paul Kling was the as the first violinist also the concertmaster of the chamber orchestra, and the violinist Herbert Thomas Mandl also took part in all rehearsals as secretary of the Jewish self-government of the concentration camp in Theresienstadt. Viktor Ullmann was not involved in these rehearsals. At Terezin the composer's original version was not rehearsed, but rather a version adapted to the conditions for performances in the so-called coffee house of Terezin. Ullmann's opera was too long for a performance in the coffee house, the music was shortened by the conductor Rafael Schächter and new texts for this version were added by the poet Peter Kien.

From a historical and musicological point of view, it is therefore necessary to speak of two existing versions of Ullmann's anti-war opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or the Denial of Death", namely Ullmann's own original version with the libretto written by him alone and an abridged version with additional texts created at Terezin, which were written by Peter Kien.

The rehearsal conditions at the Terezin concentration camp were extremely difficult. Although the musical and scenic rehearsals with the singers under conductor Rafael Schächter in the Theresienstadt coffee house in 1944 progressed very well, but there was not enough rehearsal time for the musical rehearsals of the chamber orchestra with Paul Kling as the concertmaster. In addition, these musical rehearsals were difficult to organize. There existed a professional string orchestra at Terezin with the conductor Karel Ančerl, which was organizationally assigned to Viktor Ullmann's "Collegium musicum" within the music department for the Freizeitgestaltung (leisure time activities) at Terezin led by the composer Hans Krása. In Ullmann's "Collegium musicum" mainly classical musical works that were composed up to the beginning of the 19th century were rehearsed and performed. As part of the official leisure activities, whose leader, Ing. Otto Zucker, was himself an excellent violinist, singers, conductors, pianists, theatre directors, stage and costume designers and the string orchestra were exempted from forced labor work. However, this did not apply to the musicians playing guitar, woodwind and brass instruments, which were required for rehearsals for Ullmann's opera. These musicians were not exempt from forced

labor. And rehearsals with these musicians could only be organized after 6 p.m. after the forced labor work has ended. Therefore, the musical rehearsals at Terezin scheduled for the summer of 1944 were not sufficient, and new additional rehearsals with the chamber orchestra led by the concertmaster Paul Kling were not scheduled. So for the singer Karel Berman this amounted to censorship, but for the violinist Paul Kling there were primarily artistic reasons because of the lack of rehearsal time for the chamber orchestra, and for Herbert Thomas Mandl, who was present at all rehearsals of Ullmann's anti-war opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" as the secretary of the Jewish self-government of Terezin, it was a case for organizational reasons.

After this first rehearsals of the opera it took decades till Ullmann's Anti-War opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or The Disobedience of Death" was rehearsed and performed again.

On 24th of September 1993 in the Czech Republic at the Národní památník in the district Žižkov in Prag the first performance was presented by ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre. The production was chosen as the opera performance of the year 1993 in the Czech Republic. On 23rd of May 1995 the first performance at Terezin took place again produced and presented by ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre, 51 years after the rehearsals in the concentration camp Terezin. The process of the authentical reconstruction of the original score of the opera started in January 1993 under commission and in cooperation with Herbert Gantschacher by the surviving eyewitnesses Karel Berman, Paul Kling, Herbert Thomas Mandl, and the musicologist Ingo Schultz was finished in June 1993, the last minor corrections happened in the beginning of May 1995.

These works were musically supervised by the conductor Alexander Drčar on behalf of the director and producer Herbert Gantschacher. Alexander Drčar conducted the studio recording of the original version of Ullmann's anti-war opera "The Emperor of Atlantis or the Disobedience of Death" and conducted also the first performance in Theresienstadt on May 23rd, 1995.

All scientific work carried out was commissioned by Herbert Gantschacher for ARBOS - Society for Music Theatre.



Karel Berman (centre) and Eva Herrmanová (left) on 24th of September 1993 at the Národní Památník in Prague during the Czech Premiere of the Anti-War Opera "The Emperor Of Atlantis or The Disobedience Of Death" libretto and music written by Viktor Ullmann performed in a production of ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre - Opera performance of the yeat 1993 in the Czech Republic ("Divadelní Noviny").