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Piotr Hertel as a Composer of Cartoons Soundtracks

Abstract

Piotr Hertel (1936–2010)—a composer of film, theatrical and stage music (among others the hit *Parasolka* to words of Janusz Słowikowski). He is the author of music for numerous cartoons made in the animation studio Se-Ma-For in Łódź, including soundtracks for legendary TV series *Miś Uszatek* and *Plastusiowy pamiętnik*. The aim of the article is to characterize music composed by Hertel for the above-mentioned as well as several other movies in the context of his views on the role of music in cartoons and his compositional technique. The broader knowledge on this topic was gained thanks to the interview made with the members of Hertel's family: his wife Jadwiga and son Michał.

Keywords

Piotr Hertel, music for cartoons, *Miś Uszatek*, *Plastusiowy pamiętnik*, Se-Ma-For

On 19th November 2017 there was a seventh anniversary of the death of Piotr Hertel—a composer of film and theatre music, a pianist and pedagogue, an author of music for, among others, popular song *Parasolki* (*Umbrellas*) with Janusz Słowikowski's text. As Aleksandra Nawe wrote, recalling the composer:

He was a hearty and sensitive man of a great charm and grace, he had a special sense of humour and the ability to keep friendships. It is why so many authors willingly gave Him their texts to write music for them.¹

Indeed, the magnitude and variety of Piotr Hertel's output is impressive: he wrote music for over two hundred theatre works and TV shows, dozens of feature films, TV series (among them episodes 13–24 of the famous *Dom—House*), documentaries and animations made in the animation studio Se-Ma-For in Łódź—including such important Polish children animation as *Miś Uszatek* (*Floppy Bear*) or *Plastusiowy Pamiętnik* (*Plastuś's Diary*).

Piotr Hertel was born on 19th May 1936 in Łódź. He studied at the State High Music School in his hometown: piano with Helena Ilcewicz and Zbigniew Szymonowicz and composition with Tadeusz Paciorkiewicz and Tomasz Kiesewetter; he received a diploma from the latter in 1972. He started being active as a composer at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s. He collaborated with Student's Satirical Theatre "Trout"²—he was its co-founder, and since 1967 held the functions of a composer, pianist and director there. During that time, he composed songs for texts written by Janusz Słowikowski (over 100 pieces), Ryszard Czubaczyński, Andrzej Wilczkowski, Wiesław Machejka, Robert Gluth and Stanisław Sułek. He also created music for the poetry of Julian Tuwim, Ludwik Jerzy Kern and Agnieszka Osiecka.³ He composed music for theatre plays in Łódź, Warsaw, Katowice, Szczecin, Zielona Góra, Opole and Płock, and also in former Yugoslavia (Zenica, Mostar, Sarajevo), as well as for

¹ Orig. "Był serdecznym i wrażliwym człowiekiem o nieodpartym uroku i wdzięku osobistym, miał wyjątkowe poczucie humoru i umiejętność kultywowania przyjaźni. Dlatego tak wielu autorów tak chętnie powierzało Mu swoje teksty do umuzycznienia." A. Nawe, *Ocalić od zapomnienia. Wspomnienie o Piotrze Hertlu*, "Notes Muzyczny" 2 (2015), p. 207.

² Vide: W. Machejko, *Pstrąg. Studencki Teatr Satyry*, Warszawa 2005.

³ A. Nawe, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

Polish Television Theatre. He cooperated with such directors as Jerzy Afanasjew, Jerzy Antczak and Józef Gruda.⁴ In 1960 he started being active as a composer of film music.⁵ He wrote music for, among others, *Akcja pod Arsenalem* (*The Operation Arsenal*, 1977, dir. Jan Łomnicki, on the motifs of *Kamienie na szaniec* by Aleksander Kamiński), *Tate* (1985, dir. Jan Rutkiewicz) and *Nowy Jork, czwarta rano* (*New York, Four in the Morning*, 1988, dir. Krzysztof Krauze). Since 1992 he was a lecturer at the Faculty of Composition, Theory of Music, Conducting, Eurhythmics and Art Education of the Academy of Music in Łódź—he was a co-founder, supervisor and pedagogue of Post-Diploma Computer Studies in the Field of Electronic Music. In the same city, until 1997 he held the function of the musical director of Stefan Jaracz's Theatre.

Piotr Hertel died on 19th November 2010 in Łódź. He is buried at the Old Cemetery on Ogrodowa Street. In 2010 the composer's name was commemorated in Łódź Walk of Fame on Piotrowska Street.

The compositional output of Piotr Hertel consists of: orchestral works, scenic works (including one of the first Polish musicals—*Leztern* written by Feridun Erol and Roman Gorzelski from 1970), chamber, solo, vocal-instrumental, choral, theatre, film and electronic music, as well as hundreds of stage songs. The experience gained through writing songs was used by the artist to compose music for children movies. The son of the composer, Michał Hertel, says as following: “the song is a good starting point to write for children—it is about the easy writing, characteristic instrumentation, expression”.⁶

Piotr Hertel composed music for almost fifty separate animations as well as for nine TV series.⁷ In the field of animation he collaborated with many different directors, among others, Jadwiga Kędzierzawska, Alina Kotowska, Jerzy Kotowski, Zenon Wasilewski, Edward Sturlis,

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁵ A. Bęben, *Hertel Piotr*, [in:] *idem*, E. Kowalska-Zajac, M. Szoka, *Łódzkie środowisko kompozytorskie 1945–2000. Leksykon*, Łódź 2001, p. 57.

⁶ Orig. “Piosenka jest dobrym punktem wyjścia, by zacząć pisać dla dzieci—chodzi o lekkość pisania, o pewne instrumentarium, o ekspresję”. The quotations without the bibliographical annotation come from the interview conducted by the author.

⁷ *Przygody Gapiszonia* (*Gapiszon's Adventures*), *Miś Uszatek* (*Floppy Bear*), *Wio, Leokadio!* (*Go, Leokadia!*), *Nowe przygody Misia Uszatka* (*Floppy Bear's New Adventures*), *Plastusiowy pamiętnik* (*Plastuś's Diary*), *Leśne skrzaty i kaczorek Feluś* (*Forest Gnomes and Feluś the Duck*), *Trzy misie* (*Three Little Bears*), *Jeż Kleofas* (*Kleofas the Hedgehog*), *Mały pingwin Pik-Pok* (*Little Penguin Pik-Pok*).

Janina Hartwig, Wadim Berestowski, Janusz Galewicz, Eugeniusz Ignaciuk and Tadeusz Wilkosz. Among animations for which he wrote music, there are films made using variable techniques: drawing, puppets, cut-outs, combined technique and others.

The first animated film, for which Piotr Hertel wrote music, was *Murzynek* (1960, dir. Jadwiga Kędzierzawska, Se-Ma-For). The title character was a rag doll, lost by a girl and luckily found by a dog.⁸ The composer himself recalled recording music for this film in the following way:

I realized that during the days of the Semafor's anniversary it will be 40 years since the day when I made a first recording of my own film music at the Dubbing Studio on Traugutt Street. In this historic recording the quartet played consisting of: Andrzej Rokicki—trumpet, Staś Zajęc—double bass, Mirek Oleszczak—clarinet and the composer, Piotr Hertel—piano. The film directed by Jadwiga Kędzierzawska and Jan Laskowski titled *Murzynek* with sound realized by Jan Radlicz was awarded during the Venice International Film Festival. At that time, I studied piano at the Academy of Music in Łódź (PWSM), I was active in the Student's Theatre ("Trout"), working as an accompanist at the State High Theatre School. That first film proposition and the next few (also theatrical) made me change my studies and as a result I graduated from composition with T. Kiesewetter because composition became my basic occupation, and Recording Studio my second home.⁹

⁸ Unfortunately, the author has failed at finding the recording of this short movie, or even the music for it, therefore there is the lack of information about the music. The similar situation takes place in the case of many animations, for which the composer wrote music, and which were not TV series.

⁹ Orig. "Uświadomiłem sobie, że w dniach jubileuszu Semafora minie 40 lat od dnia, w którym w Studio Dubbingowym przy ul. Traugutta dokonałem pierwszego nagrania własnej muzyki do filmu. W tym historycznym nagraniu zagrał kwartet w składzie: Andrzej Rokicki—trąbka, Staś Zajęc—kontrabas, Mirek Oleszczak na klarnecie i kompozytor—Piotr Hertel na pianinie. Film Jadwigi Kędzierzawskiej i Jana Laskowskiego nazywał się *Murzynek*, dźwięk realizował Jan Radlicz. Film został nagrodzony na Międzynarodowym Festiwalu Filmowym w Wenecji. Studiowałem wówczas pianistykę w łódzkiej Akademii Muzycznej (PWSM), działałem w Teatrze Studenckim ("Pstrąg"), pracując jako akompaniator w Państwowej Wyższej Szkole Teatralnej. Ta pierwsza propozycja filmowa i kilka następnych (również teatralnych), spowodowała zmianę kierunku studiów i w rezultacie skończyłem kompozycję w klasie prof. T. Kiesewettera, bowiem kompozycja stała się moim podstawowym zajęciem, a Studio Nagrań drugim domem". A. Bańkowski, S. Grabowski, *Semafor 1947-1997*, Łódź 1999, p. 75.

Gapiszon's Adventures

The first TV series for which the composer wrote music, was 10-episode TV series *Przygody Gapiszona* (*Gapiszon's Adventures*, 1964, dir. Jerzy Kotowski) with drawings made by Bohdan Butenko.¹⁰ The title character is a small person cut out from paper, always wearing stripped clothes. He goes to different places, where funny adventures happen to him, and their humour usually refers to the fact that not so clever, but friendly character did not understand something. His adventures are accompanied by humourous musical setting, fitting stylistically the drawings of the famous illustrator. Almost all the time the instrumental ensemble can be heard, in which wind instruments—especially the clarinet and trumpet—dominate, fitting in the atmosphere of pranks not only by the timbre, but also used cleverly to produce illustrative effects, such as the scream sound.¹¹ Flute's trills seem to highlight the details, which will be significant for the further development of a situation, as in the episode *Porządki Gapiszona* (*Gapiszon's cleaning*): they can be heard when the character has recently dealt with home flood and very soon is going to take the object, which will provoke the most radical changes in his flat—a vacuum cleaner). Frequently, a xylophone can be heard, and it is used in the similar contexts, i.e. when something happens, changes, the character is in the middle of realization of the project. Also the changes of solo instruments have rhetoric function (e.g. flute into more strongly sounding trumpet—when in the episode *Gapiszon wędkarzem* (*Gapiszon the fisherman*) the main character, proud of himself, starts realizing the plan: he does not observe bees flying anymore, but catches them and soon they will be used as fish bait).

Each of the episodes of Gapiszon's adventures begins and ends with a jester-like theme. It accompanies the scene in which the character is cut out from paper. The theme was divided into episodes performed by the subsequent solo instruments or as a duo (beginning with the cheerful electric guitar), what can mirror the following stages of the

¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that only first five episodes are the typical animated movies. In the episodes 6–9 the photo of the sky is visible in the background, and in the last, tenth episode only characters and their props are drawn—the characters are moving against the static background of the modest railway station's photos.

¹¹ In such moments on soundtracks, recordings of acoustic effects also appear—storm sounds, fire, truck siren etc.

person's constructing. Rhythm sometimes resembles the children's rhyme. The theme becomes the *leitmotif* of the character—it returns in the narration of the movies in its variations, sometimes linked to other themes. For instance, in the episode number one, *Gapiszon w cyrku* (*Gapiszon in the circus*) the atmosphere of waiting in the queue for the entrance to the huge tent is shown by the jazz-like theme—the motif of a watchman checking tickets. Double bass, drums and trumpets are used, and repetitiveness of the activities is shown in the accompaniment—the repetitive patter of drums. Gapiszon also joins the queue, so his theme is included in the sonic landscape. The character sees that the watchman breaks the ticket and throws them into trash bin. He decides to do the same—at this moment the theme is being chromaticised, the dialogue with “the watchman theme” is created, and the irritation of the watchman is shown by rhetoric upward progressions played by flute and seconds of bassoon.

In general, the musical course of this series is characterized by a huge variability. It is impossible to notice the tendency to create the themes, which are vocal-like and easy to memorize—similar to these ones, which the viewer can just sing after watching *Reksio*, a TV series produced in Bielsko-Biała. However, sometimes the musical stylizations appear—when in the circus, there is a bull fight, we can hear bolero-like accompaniment, and the magical show is combined with ragtime: the splendor of this show is accompanied by the brilliant sounds of piano and big band, which plays the multi-dimensional composition with overlapping solos (see *Gapiszon w cyrku*). In the TV series, many times we can find march-like stylizations, especially in the episode *Gapiszon kucharzem* (*Gapiszon the cook*); probably, the reason for this is the fact that the action takes place during the scout camp. The optimistic and humourous character is additionally underlined by the instrumentation: solo flute and then trumpet have the main melody, and pulsation is provided by snare drum, also visible on the screen. In the less obvious moment—when cleaning up (episode 3: *Porządki Gapiszona*), the dance rhythm appears. Although in the given episode the character incorrectly understood the vacuum cleaner's function, this modern device is shown as an useful amenity, and vacuuming as an action, which does not make a person tired, but cheers him up—as we can hear cha-cha (changing solo of flute and trumpet).

In the episode *Gapiszon ogrodnikiem* (*Gapiszon the Gardener*, episode 5), the dance appears in the context of gardening: a hose becomes alive (but only for Gapiszon) and performs oriental dance. The exotic character of the scene is enriched by typical elements of the oriental stylization—augmented second in configuration with minor second and ostinato of drums. The stylization, which appears closer to the Polish viewer can be heard in the sixth episode, *Na stacji* (*On the station*). In the variation, there is a fragment of a popular song *Jedzie pociąg z daleka* (*The train is coming from far away*), but what is interesting—in the highlander stylization (accompanied by empty fifths of violins). Is it because the travelers getting off the train come back from the mountains? Although the plot takes place in the everyday scenery, contemporary for the viewer, the musical stylization sometimes cherishes up the memory of the long-distance past. In the sixth episode (*Bycze przygody Gapiszona—Great adventures of Gapiszon*), when the character walks through the meadow with a sabre and a shield, the clarinet imitates the sound of court trumpets, performing a stylized melody, wherein the archaic sound is made by the use of specific rhythm and cadence type (fifths downwards).

In general, music for *Przygody Gapiszona* has features which would be indicated as basic by the composer asked for his pre-requisites when writing music for children:

Music must really follow the action, really mirror what is happening.
Music must really be illustrative. If we have, for example, a storm, it must be a storm. There must be simple signals and simple emotions.
If we have negative emotions, music must be negative.¹²

Goodnight—good evening...

The next, probably the most famous TV series with music written by Piotr Hertel—and also one of the most famous Polish animations for children—is *Miś Uszatek* (*Floppy Bear*). The TV series was produced in

¹² Orig. “Muzyka musi rzeczywiście podążać za akcją, rzeczywiście oddawać to, co się dzieje. Muzyka rzeczywiście musi być muzyką ilustracyjną. Jeśli mamy np. burzę, musi być burza. To muszą być proste przekazy i proste emocje. Jeżeli mamy negatywne emocje, muzyka musi być negatywna.”

years 1975–1987. During that time, as many as 104 episodes were made, directed by ten people (see *Annex*). The teddy bear had its literary prototype. Its creator was Czesław Janczarski (1911–1971),¹³ the author of poems and short stories for children, as well as editor of popular children journals: “Iskierki” and “Świerszczyk”. Uszatek debuted in the press, namely in “Miś” magazine, where his adventures, published every two weeks, were admired by young readers. Editorial staff even made a competition for the character’s name. Among numerous propositions sent by children (such as Podróżniczek, Kłębuszek, Wścibinosek) Uszatek was chosen.¹⁴ Besides the title character, in the series also other characters appear: Zajączek (*Little Hare*), Prosiaczek (*Little Piggy*), Pies Kruczek (*Kruczek the Doggy*), Króliczki (*Little Rabbits*), Ciocia Chrum-Chrum (*Aunt Oink-Oink*), Mama Króliczków (*Little Rabbits’ Mum*), three dolls... The TV series was popular not only in Poland, but also abroad: as Anna Gronczewska says, “*Miś Uszatek* was watched by children living across different continents. Among others, in Japan, Brasil. In Finland, *Miś Uszatek* is called *Nalle Luppakorva*, and in Slovenia *Medvedek Uhec*. In Japan, when the teddy bear is extremely popular—*Kuma-chan*”.¹⁵ The main character’s voice was dubbed by the Polish actor Mieczysław Czechowicz (1930–1991). He also sang famous songs: the beginning and ending of every episode (illustration 1). The author of the texts¹⁶ was Janusz Galewicz.

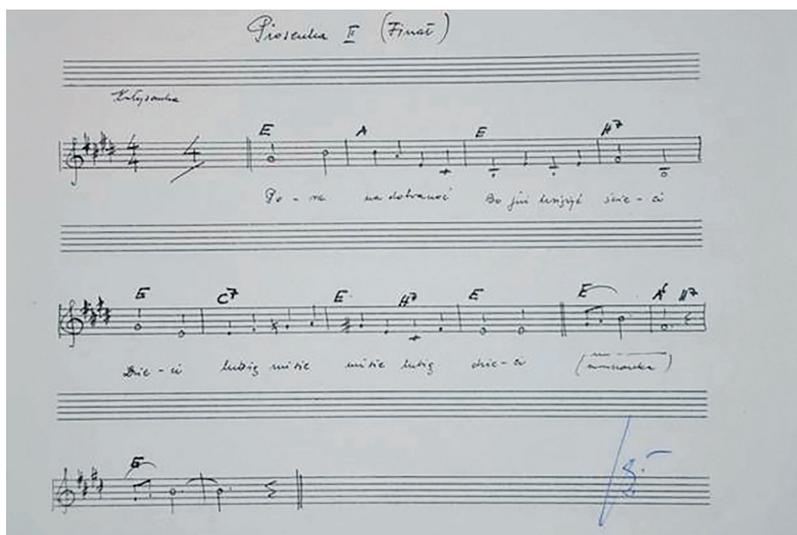
In the case of this TV series, it is noticeable again that the composer tended to give melodies to the wind instruments—this time woodwind instruments. The string instruments section is also used, although the full symphonic sound again does not appear, the texture is thin. There is a huge variability, the timbre is significant. The music is not shaped as the independent composition—the rule is to follow the animation, all nuances and emotions of the action are mirrored

¹³ The author of the graphic image of the character was Zbigniew Rychlicki, the graduate of Kraków’s Academy of Fine Arts.

¹⁴ A. Gronczewska, *Misia Uszatka z łódzkiego studia pokochały dzieci na całym świecie*, “Dziennik Łódzki” 21.03.2017, [online] <https://plus.dzienniklodzki.pl/magazyn/kocham-lodz/a/misia-uszatka-z-lodzkiego-studia-pokochaly-dzieci-na-calym-swiecie,11895962> [accessed: 17.12.2017].

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ The text was written first, and then the music for the text was composed. The information from the interview with the composer’s family conducted by the author.



Illus. 1: Lullaby from *Miś Uszatek*—the manuscript.

in music. Tone painting is dominant, there is no place for using the expressive themes or musical stylizations. It is perhaps connected with the fact that—contrary to Gapiszon—Miś’s adventures happen in the rural scenery, and the plot lacks the motives of journey, exotic travelers or extravagant, so there are no reasons to create stylizations. In this context, it is worth to remind the tricky title of the episode 83 *Piasek Sahary* (*Sahara’s Sand*)—it is about the colour of Fiat 126 bought by the aunt of Prosiaczek, so instead of “Arabic” music there is the theme, in which the trumpet imitates vehicle horn. What is characteristic is the fact that—contrary to many other animations from that time—the travel by car itself is not shown as something spectacular, but rather sentimental, what is highlighted by the music. In *Miś Uszatek* everything is a part of everyday life, and music helps in finding a specific poetry in it (what is especially adorable in *Kołysanka*—*Lullaby*). It happens, for example, at the beginning of the episode 92 *Podróż Uszatka* (*Floppy Bear’s Journey*), when the teddy bear returns home after visiting his aunt. This scene, thanks to music, is especially moving: a piano trio plays sentimental, emotional episode in the Romantic style.

At this moment, it is worth noticing that the sentimental character of the TV series is highlighted by the used construction of retrospection in every episode. Right after the theme song, we see Miś, who recalls what happened that day or gives result or instruction (e.g. milk is healthy), after which the events are presented. Sometimes, Uszatek in his opening, meditative monologue refers to the season—e.g. in episode 8, *Kołysanka*:

Eh, autumn... Leaves on the trees become golden, yellow and red... And then, when they are the prettiest, they start falling suddenly. If someone is a little thoughtful at this moment, he does not even notice until they all fall. And if he looks carefully, he can see that leaves can dance. Obviously, only when somebody plays them nicely.¹⁷

This meditation about the time flow is accompanied by long sounds of strings and piano; its passages downwards illustrate falling leaves. In this episode there is also diegetic music. The cricket-virtuoso performs there, playing the masterly solo fragment in the style of violin concerto, then playing to dance. As winter is coming, the cricket is going to live behind the oven—his warm connotations with this place are illustrated by cheerful sounds of the electric guitar. Late autumn is presented in the episode 52 *Parasol (Umbrella)*: the sound of falling raindrops is imitated by the piano in high register, and when the light rain becomes the downpour, the instrument is treated like percussion. Piano was used also to illustrate winter—in the episode 96 *Tajemnica (Mystery)* its figurations accompany the snow games.

Another string instrument, which presence was especially important in the TV series, was guitar. It appears in the title of the episode 44, what itself predicts diegetic music. Prosiaczek appears to be a talented guitarist. He walks through the forest dressed like a bohemian and, playing chords, he performs “serenade” resembling Italian aria. Friends admire both his talent and the guitar itself—Zajac claims that the guitar is better than a cabbage. However, neither he nor Uszatek can play it.

¹⁷ Orig. “Ech, jesień... Liście na drzewach stają się złote, żółte i czerwone... I właśnie wtedy, kiedy są najładniejsze, zaczynają nagle opadać. Jeżeli ktoś jest akurat troszkę zamyślony, to ani się spostrzeże, jak opadną wszystkie. A jeśli patrzeć uważnie, to można się przekonać, że liście potrafią tańczyć. Oczywiście tylko wtedy, gdy ktoś im ładnie zagra.”

It is worth noticing how specific is music in *Uszatek*—namely, the border between diegetic and non-diegetic music is fluent. As Michał Hertel noticed, “many acoustic effects are, still, performed on the instruments. [...] So there is playing with form, when clutter of hoofs is not heard «exactly», but it can be played.”¹⁸ Firstly, however, the masterly reconstruction of the children idiom in the music is fascinating, especially in the theme song, both in terms of its expression (simple, childish innocence) and means (the base of the melody are the main diatonic major scale degrees, melody going downwards, so according to the physiology of breath).

The ability to create pieces in the spirit of music for children, not so frequent for the composers writing music for such films, can be recognized as the characteristic feature of Piotr Hertel’s talent. The son of the composer connects it to the experience in songwriting: “dad had the ease to compose «hits», themes, which are catchy”.¹⁹ It should be added that *Miś Uszatek* started being realized in 1975, when the composer was a father of a 2-year-old boy. Michał Hertel recalls that he was several times in Se-Ma-For with his father. What is more, the studio was visited even by his whole class: children had the opportunity to see the process of producing the beloved TV series behind the scenes, they watched the mysterious interiors of the studio, saw how puppets are made and how their clothes are created.

The composer’s son cheerfully and extremely willingly recalls the another “fantastic” thing, which is—as it appears—the privilege of film creators’ children. In the case of older films, the specific screenplays were used—as Michał Hertel tells, today they would be called storyboards.²⁰ The storyboard was presented in the pictures.

These were such books, such albums that my dad would get in black and white, while I was colouring them. The producers’ children got

¹⁸ Orig. “bardzo wiele efektów akustycznych jest mimo wszystko wykonywanych na instrumentach. [...] Czyli to są już takie zabawy formą, gdzie stukot kopyt nie musi być «wprost», tylko można go zagrać”.

¹⁹ Orig. “tata miał łatwość w komponowaniu «przebojów», tematów, które zapadają w ucho”.

²⁰ *Storyboard* is, according to the online Dictionary of Polish Language, “graphic representation of the screenplay of the film or animation” (“graficzna prezentacja scenariusza filmu lub animacji”, *vide*: [online] <https://sjp.pl/storyboard> [accessed: 11.03.2018]).

these albums to colour and I remember [...] that I wanted to choose individual pictures, when Uszatek appeared, Zajączek, Króliczki... that every time [...] I would come up with a different outfit for a given character. The whole play is that of course it was totally pointless, because there really should be a certain consequence, because in every episode Uszatek should be dressed the same. What I realised only after the fact. However, it was very difficult, because having, let's assume, fifty pictures to colour, looking each time for something new was really a reason for deep thought and frustration.²¹ In any case, it was a very useful material and the writers did not give these books for the children of people involved in the film production without any reason, because they were also an inspiration for them to create costumes [...]. They observed how children see it, how children look at these characters.²²

When it comes to the way of work on music for the discussed TV series, Jadwiga Hertel explains that the composer did not have ready “silent” movies to use, but only screenplays. He composed at home, with the piano. Music was then recorded, probably in the Polish Radio, with orchestra of the Polish Radio in Łódź, and next, during setup, “cut” to fit the given episode. Besides screenplays, the composer sometimes had duration of the movies—there were lists with given precise time when music should be played. The composer's task was to fit in this

²¹ However, it did not all come to nothing: “Miś had a rich wardrobe. In each episode, he wore other clothes” (“Miś miał bardzo bogatą garderobę. W każdym odcinku występował w innym ubraniu”)—as we read in the anniversary article-interview with the directors, published in “Dziennik Łódzki”. *Vide*: A. Gronczewska, *op. cit.*

²² Orig. “To były takie książki, takie albumy, które tata dostawał czarno-białe, natomiast ja je kolorowałem. Dzieci realizatorów dostawały te albumy, żeby pokolorować i pamiętać [...], że za punkt honoru sobie obrałem, by poszczególne obrazki, jak Uszatek się pojawiał, Zajączek, Króliczki... żeby za każdym razem [...] wymyślić inny strój dla danej postaci. Cała zabawa polega na tym, że oczywiście to było totalnie bez sensu, bo tak naprawdę powinna być pewna konsekwencja, bo w każdym odcinku Uszatek powinien być ubrany tak samo. O czym zorientowałem się dopiero po fakcie. Natomiast to było bardzo trudne, bo mając, załóżmy, pięćdziesiąt obrazków do pokolorowania za każdym razem szukać czegoś nowego było naprawdę powodem do głębokiego zastanowienia i frustracji. W każdym razie to był bardzo użyteczny materiał i scenarzyści nie dawali bez powodu tych książek do malowania dzieciom osób zaangażowanych w produkcję filmu, ponieważ były one też dla nich inspiracją do tworzenia strojów [...]. Podpatrzyli, jak dzieci to widzą, jak dzieci patrzą na te postacie.”

time. How many director's indications was the composer given, how much autonomic was his music? Obviously, the music was consulted: at the stage of work on music, the composer contacted the directors, went to Se-Ma-For or the collaborators visited him at home to listen and discuss compositions together. One of such meetings is mentioned by Monika Brożyńska:

I met Hertel during work on the TV series *Bąblandia*. Hertel made the theme song for it and wrote music for fifteen episodes. He invited me home on Sienkiewicz Street (near High School No. 3). It was difficult to call it a typical work with an image—we talked a little, played a bit his electronics (in the early 90s it was probably new), presenting some new versions... He was really good at what he did, and he had great authority. I think it was often based on that he was getting along with the writer, the director as to the mood, and then he was creating himself [...].²³

Michał Hertel adds that his father was given two or three episodes at the same time and that he was decisive: “if he said something should look in the particular way—it did”.²⁴

In the case of animated movies, the relation between visual layer and sound depends on many elements, which are absent in actor movies. Because of that, it is so fascinating to observe the relation between the directors and a composer, or a lack of it. In the case of movies, for which Piotr Hertel wrote music, probably the representatives of these both fields were independent on each other. The composer's son claims that they did not consulted one another. He adds that with the experience of work on 104 episodes of *Miś Uszatek*, people who continued working together knew each other so well that it would be enough to make basic pre-requisites, a certain idea for the character—and further the contact was not necessary.

²³ Orig. “Poznałam Hertla przy okazji serialiku *Bąblandia*. Hertel zrobił do niego czołówkę i napisał muzykę do piętnastu odcinków. Mnie zaprosił do domu na Sienkiewicza (koło III LO). Trudno było nazwać to taką typową pracą z obrazem—trochę gadaliśmy, trochę przygrywał na tej swojej elektronice (na początku lat 90. to była chyba nowość), prezentując jakieś kolejne wersje... Naprawdę był dobry w tym, co robił, i miał wielki autorytet. Myślę, że często na tym to polegało, że dogadywał się ze scenarzystą, reżyserem co do charakteru, a potem już tworzył sam [...]”. Information from 26.01.2018.

²⁴ Orig. “jak stwierdził, że tak ma być—to tak wyglądało”.

Plastuś's diary

The literary prototype existed also for another Se-Ma-For's TV series, as popular as *Miś Uszatek*, namely *Plastusiowy pamiętnik* (*Plastuś's Diary*, 1980–1981, dir. Zofia Ołdak)—the original version written by Maria Kownacka was published for the first time in 1931 in "Płomyczek" under the same title. This time, it is a combined, actor-animated movie. The theme song is humorous: march-like, whistled, what is additionally highlighted by its optimistic character. The adventures of a character made from plasticine are accompanied by music, which changes very often. The instrument, which is used comparably frequently, is the piano. Its part, usually in chords, is harmonically clear—again, its base are simple tonal functions, associated with children music, in this case—school song, in the type of these appearing in school song-books. Electronic effects also take place—mainly sounds of synthesizer, making "magical" atmosphere; like when Plastuś is created by Tosia (episode 2: *Dlaczego nazywam się Plastuś—Why is my name Plastuś*). This timbre is harmonized with classical instruments, so it does not create abstractive or avant-garde effect, which would not be willingly seen in the atmosphere of school everyday routine. It does not mean, however, that style is monotonous. In the episode titled *O pamiętniku w czerwonym zeszytiku* (*About the diary in the red notebook*) we hear for example a fragment, which sounds quite grotesque—it appears when Plastuś, using scissors, constructs his own notebook. The solo of synthesizer resembles chromaticised polka, which is interrupted by different sound effects (produced by instruments), what creates the connotation with sonorism.

Among TV series, which Piotr Hertel co-created in 1980s, the main important are *Trzy misie* (*Three bears*) and *Mały pingwin Pik-Pok* (*Little Penguin Pik-Pok*). That time, new technological possibilities appeared, which influenced the evolution of Piotr Hertel's workshop, such as instruments used. Whilst earlier film compositions were created traditionally, working with the piano, since the 1980s the composer worked using electronics, quickly becoming a specialist in this field (as it was mentioned, he taught at the studies on electronic music at Academy of Music in Łódź). Also, the possibility to record music on a tape at home appeared. Working on *Trzy misie* and *Pik-Pok*, Hertel recorded some "traces" (as the composer's son

called them) at home, but the part of orchestra was recorded later. Michał Hertel mentions:

I remember the moment when the use of electronics came to a greater extent, i.e. the possibility of new sounds, new colours, new timbres, it was a big temptation for everyone. For composers, it was to discover quite new possibilities, on the other hand it was also a very practical idea, which certainly concerned the Semafor in a later period, related to the implementation of feature films... It sometimes allowed to [...] save money. I do not remember if it was with music for children, but if my dad composed for example for TV series, among others to *Dom*, the fact that my dad was recording all the music electronically did not even result from the fact that he wanted it, only because it was actually much cheaper in production—it was not necessary to involve performers, so the orchestra of dozens of people. A completely different type of cost.²⁵

Three bears and Pik-Pok

Trzy misie (*Three bears*, 1982–1986, dir. Jadwiga Kudrzycka), animation made by the Austrian (Apollo Film Wien) co-production, was based on the short stories by Margarete Thiele. The adventures of the main characters—Kuba, Misia and Bartek—take place in the forest scenery. Electronics is discreetly used here in order to extract magic and transience of mood, not to dazzle with available technological possibilities or to amaze with avant-garde style. First of all, the effects of prolonging the duration of the sound of instruments and various types

²⁵ Orig. “Pamiętam ten moment, że jak weszła w większym stopniu w użycie elektronika, czyli możliwość nowych dźwięków, nowych barw, była to duża pokusa dla wszystkich. Dla kompozytorów to było odkrywanie troszeczkę nowych możliwości, z drugiej strony to też był bardzo praktyczny pomysł, który na pewno dotyczył Semafora w późniejszym okresie, dotyczył chociażby realizacji filmów fabularnych... Niosło to czasem za sobą [...] oszczędności. Nie pamiętam, czy miało to miejsce przy muzyce dla dzieci, ale jeśli tata komponował np. do seriali, m.in. do *Domu*, to tak naprawdę to, że tata nagrywał całą muzykę elektronicznie, nie wynikało nawet często z tego, że chciał tak zrobić, tylko z tego, że *de facto* w produkcji było to dużo tańsze—nie trzeba było angażować wykonawców, czyli kilkudziesięciosobowej orkiestry. Zupełnie inny rodzaj kosztów.”

of echoes are used. Attention is drawn to the headline, which stands out from the songs opening the animated series in terms of style—there is a strong connotation with stage music here. On the one hand, it is clearly addressed to the youngest recipients (there are e.g. children's enthusiastic cheers during it), on the other—it brings some association with songs from the repertoire of Polish female vocal groups, such as Filipinki or Alibabki, in addition it is also performed by women. In the episode 10, *Przygoda z Franciszką* (*Adventure with Franciszka*, 1983), we probably have an allusion to the classical Polish stage song: the evening dance of a frog (decorated with a bow tie) is accompanied by the instrumental charleston *Dzisiaj, jutro, zawsze* (*Today, tomorrow, always*) from the repertoire of Bohdan Łazuka.

Based on the motifs of Adam Bahdaj's book, there was the series *Mały pingwin Pik-Pok* (*Little Penguin Pik-Pok*, 1989-1992, dir. Tadeusz Wilkosz, Jadwiga Kudrzycka et al.). The title character leaves the family snowy island to explore the world. The soundtracks for this production are filled with modern sounds. Instead of classical instruments, a synthesizer appears, the possibilities of which are used so that the music faithfully follows the action—thanks to the illustrative effects (such as *glissando* associated with the sound of a bird). The timbre itself also seems to be important, for example the “glass-like” timbre corresponds with the landscape in which ice dominates. This does not mean, however, that classical instruments are completely eliminated in favor of abstract-sounding electronic tones. On the contrary, and moreover, in the triumphant finale, episode 15 (*Parasol wujka—The uncle's umbrella*) we can even hear a reference to the piano concerto.

* * *

As it has been presented on the examples of a few from so many works of the composer, Piotr Hertel's music for animated movies is variable, what can be seen not only over the years, but also within the particular compositions. Music produced by studio Se-Ma-For enables us to see the artist as a versatile musician, able to compose in different styles, having no trouble with changes in the process of production of film music. Despite the fact that he left classical instruments for electronic

music, his composition remained not radical or avant-garde. In such an approach, the respect for a young recipient is visible—music has been adapted for his abilities to receive and perfectly linked to a synthetic work, which is film.

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Annex

Animated movies with music written by Piotr Hertel²⁶

- 1960 — *Murzynek* (dir. J. Kędzierzawska)
- Psozny kotek* (dir. J. Kędzierzawska)
- 1961 — *Ala ma kota* (dir. A. Kotowska)
- Hydrauliccy* (dir. Z. Ołdak)
- Wojtuś i Bacuś* (dir. J. Kotowski)
- 1962 — *Śląska ballada* (dir. J. Skrobiński)
- W 10 minut dookoła świata* (dir. J. Kotowski)
- 1963 — *Co wiemy o Popielu* (dir. J. Hartwig)
- Eskapada* (dir. J. Hartwig)

²⁶ Based on: A. Bęben, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–61. A list was updated.

- Klient nasz pan* (dir. Z. Ołdak)
Zaloty (dir. J. Skrobiński)
- 1964 — *Drewniany jeździec* (dir. Z. Wasilewski)
Hałas (dir. ?)
Smok z Banialuki (dir. Z. Wasilewski)
Wybryki w kredensie (dir. E. Sturlis)
Ucieczka (dir. L. Dembiński)
- 1964–1966 — *Przygody Gapiszona* (dir. J. Kotowski; TV series)
- 1966 — *Człowiek z lustra* (dir. Z. Wasilewski)
- 1967 — *Awantura w sadzie* (dir. J. Kotowski)
Tańczące lalki (dir. J. Kotowski)
- 1968 — *Podróżniczka* (dir. J. Hartwig)
- 1971 — *Agata i siedem kolorów* (dir. J. Kudrzycka)
- 1974 — *Straszny sen majsterkowicza* (dir. A. Piliczewski)
Zgadywanka (dir. L. Dembiński)
- 1975–1987 — *Miś Uszatek* (dir. L. Dembiński, M. Kielbaszczak, D. Zawilski, E. Ignaciuk, J. Kudrzycka, E. Strus, T. Puchowska-Sturlis, J. Galewicz, K. Kulczycka, J. Hartwig; TV series)
- 1975 — *Wio, Leokadio!* (dir. L. Dembiński, J. Hartwig, J. Kudrzycka, E. Ignaciuk; TV series)
- 1977 — *Kłótnia* (dir. J. Galewicz)
Na dworze króla Tuszyńka (dir. W. Berestowski)
Nie grymaś (dir. J. Galewicz)
Nie mam czasu (dir. J. Galewicz)
Obwieszczenie (dir. J. Galewicz)
Pędzą, pędzą (dir. J. Galewicz)
Podejrzenie (dir. E. Sturlis)
Prędzej (dir. J. Galewicz)
- 1978 — *Piękna filiżanka* (dir. M. Kielbaszczak)
Ręce i nogi (dir. E. Sturlis)
- 1979 — *Jajko* (dir. E. Sturlis)
- 1980 — *Nowe przygody Misia Uszatka* (dir. E. Ignaciuk; D. Zawilski; TV series)
Walc (dir. S. Śliskowski)
- 1980–1981 — *Plastusiowy pamiętnik* (dir. Z. Ołdak; TV series)
- 1981 — *Oj, słoniu* (dir. J. Galewicz)
- 1982 — *Julek i delfiny* (dir. A. Badziak)

- 1982–1985 — *Leśne skrzaty i kaczorek Feluś* (dir. W. Berestowski; TV series) [perhaps P. Hertel did not composed music for all episodes]
- 1982–1986 — *Trzy misie* (dir. T. Wilkosz; TV series)
- 1986 — *Romanca* (dir. M. Małecki)
- 1987 — *Dawni kronikarze zapisali* (dir. S. Śliskowski)
- 1987–1988 — *Jeż Kleofas* (dir. J. Kudrzycka, K. Kulczycka; TV series)
- 1988 — *Lalki Władysława Starewicza* (dir. W. Berestowski)
- Straszydełko* (dir. M. Małecki)
- 1989 — *Dziesięć siostrzyczek* (dir. J. Galewicz)
- Goście w glinianym garnku* (dir. L. Dembiński)
- Kaczorek Feluś* (dir. W. Berestowski)
- 1989–1992 — *Mały pingwin Pik-Pok* (dir. E. Ignaciuk, J. Kudrzycka, K. Brzozowski, K. Kulczycka, D. Zawilski, W. Gierłowski, T. Wilkosz; TV series)
- 1990 — *Niezwykłe przygody pluszowych misiów* (dir. T. Wilkosz, E. Ignaciuk, J. Kudrzycka)

