

Interviews:

Interview with Serge Kozlovsky of the Belorussian "Jazz Quad Magazine" and his online magazine at www.mkmk.com/kozlovsky

You're the owner of ACE Studio, which, as far as I know, releases a wide range of commercial audio products for radio, TV-series and movies. At the same time you take pleasure in creating in your own time the solo projects in the genre of new age and electronic instrumental music using various ethnic themes. Your albums Geographic and Docking, which I've heard, are just of that kind. Why do you create projects of such style? What attracts you in such music? And how would you define your music by yourself?

My solo projects reflect the music I like 100%. As I am a professional composer, meaning I earn a living composing and producing music, I very often have to compose music to the specification of a client.

So one day I may be working on a jazzy track and the next I may be rockin'! This is real fun but to keep my work interesting to myself I need to make the music that is always in me, it is "electronic music" (EM). I use my studio's sparetime (or book time for it) to focus on my synthesizers and start composing without minding about direction. It's only me trying to convert my feelings and emotions into music.

If I really have to categorize my music I would call it "World influenced electronic music".

Though, as far as I can see it, just new age and electronic music together with various ethnic influences specify the mainstream of the music as a whole, and pop music borrows many interesting ideas from there, new age music is not very popular in Europe. Why is that so, what do you think? Do you expect increasing of the popularity of such music at an early date? To what extent it is important for this planet, in your opinion?

It's a fact that new age music, and with it also EM, is not very popular in Europe. In my humble opinion there may be a few reasons.

Most of the CD buying public is aged between 18 and 25 years and a great deal of them aren't interested in "non-danceable, instrumental music". Most of Europe's mainstream music scene is dominated by "4 on the floor beat" music produced by DJ's.

Also the fact that a lot of uninspired new age (and EM) is released doesn't do any good. I don't want to offend anybody but I buy a lot of new age and EM CD's so this is my opinion. Thank god that there are also very talented composers who are influencing us.

I think the most important thing about good new age and EM is that it isn't made to just consume.

Now I think it's time to talk about your solo projects. Your album Geographic is a parti-colored cocktail of electronic ethnic music. Listening to it one feels as if moving to different countries and continents. How did the idea of this album arose? Could you please tell us in more detail, what you were going to express in this project?

I'm always working on different projects in a certain period simply because the studio can be rented by others. This also means that my solo projects are influenced by the people (and their music) I'm working with in that period. I happen to record a lot of ethnic and folkbands because of the large acoustic recordingroom the studio has.

I have always been attracted to ethnic or instrumental music because it teaches me new things like how certain rare instruments are played and how they sound. It also gives me images about places I've never been to ,so I'm happy that people feel the same while listening to my music. Especially with "Geographic" this is the case.

Let's also talk about your next (and the last for today) solo project Docking. As I feel, it's mood is more calm and bright. And also this music (as the previous project Geographic) is very visual and cinematographic. Which ideas you were going to bring to the listeners in this project, what was important to express for you?

Compared to "Geographic", "Docking" is more about moods, beauty and belonging somewhere (hence the title Docking).

As stated in the song "A state of mind" people always have changing moods. When I'm working on a song I have my certain mood or an image in mind. It's a bit my trademark to try to name my songs with the shortest title that reflects the mood I was in, or the image I had in mind. It's also fascinating how the images and moods my listeners experience differ from mine. :-)

I would also like to remark the beautiful sound design of your solo albums. As far as I know, you're at the same time a performer, a composer, a producer and a sound engineer with great experience. Which side of your creative work is closer and more interesting for you?

I can't enjoy music if it doesn't sound great. Don't get me wrong:a well recorded simple guitar-song can give me as much joy as a big symphony.

To me, composing and creating a great sound go together. I think this is also why I have worked all my life to have my own recordingstudio. I also spend a lot of time programming my own synthsounds because a song can also be build on an inspiring sound.

I would compare your solo works with the best melodies of Vangelis, as for power and expressiveness. Who and why had influence on your music? Where are the roots of your creative work?

People often compare my work to Vangelis and I take this as a compliment. I believe Vangelis is one of the best composers in electronic music. I think he, together with Ennio Morricone and progrockers like YES, influenced me a lot. But I will always take care not to plagiarize his music. Throughout the years I have developed my own personal style which has an emphasis on strong melodies and atmospheres.