



PETER GILBERT COTTON *speaker* (tracks 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13)
ILENE WINCKLER *speaker* (tracks 2, 5, 8, 13, 14)
ALEXANDR KRESTOVSKI *speaker* (tracks 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11)
TIBOR SZEMZŐ *speaker* (tracks 3, 5, 15)

PIERRE BERTHET *water drip drum installation* (track 4), *percussion* (track 11)
SHELLEY HIRSCH *voice* (track 11)
JOACHIM SCHÜTZ *guitar* (track 12)
ROBIN HAYWARD *tuba* (track 14)
JAN SCHADE *tuba* (track 11)
JÖRG HILLER *electronics* (tracks 2, 12)
HANS PETER KUHN *sound environment* (tracks 4, 11, 14)
ARNOLD DREYBLATT *piano* (tracks 7, 15), *bass* (track 6), *electronics* (track 9)

After all—and this is what I consider the compiler's central message- nothing in the history of mankind is ever repeated, things that at first glance seem the same are scarcely even similar; each individual a star unto himself, everything always and never, all things repeat themselves ad infinitum yet are unique." —Danilo Kiš, *The Encyclopedia of the Dead*, 1989



Who's Who in Central & East Europe 1933

Who's Who in Central & East Europe 1933

an audio journey in the text

1 OVERTURE	6:36
2 BEGINNINGS	7:31
3 FAMOUS	5:54
4 FORGOTTEN PROVINCES	6:43
5 NATIONAL STATES	2:30
6 WAR	4:18
7 DESTINIES	4:39
8 WOMEN	3:53
9 FRIENDSHIP	2:53
10 JEWS	3:32
11 INVENTION	4:49
12 PERSONAL PHILOSOPHIES	4:58
13 COLLECTIONS	3:11
14 1933	7:05
15 NOW	5:57

Produced by Arnold Dreyblatt
Executive Producer – John Zorn
Associate Producer – Kazunori Sugiyama

Concept, text, music by Arnold Dreyblatt

Voice recordings (Cotton, Winckler) by Jörg Hiller, Choose, Berlin

Sound design by Jörg Hiller with Joachim Schütz, Choose, Berlin

Tracks 1, 15 Morse code from *T-Mail*, installation by Arnold Dreyblatt, 2000

Tracks 1, 15 Sampled words spoken by Simon Newby and Megan Gay from *The ReCollection Mechanism*

installation by Arnold Dreyblatt, 1998, recorded by Tom Korr

Track 3 Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Radiology Office Dr. Anne Sparenberg Berlin, recorded by Jörg Hiller, 2004

Track 4 East European languages, 1998

Tracks 5, 8 German Radio Archive, 1990

Track 6 Film projector, 2009

Track 10 Great-grandmother's 78s, 1935

Track 11 Hans Peter Kuhn machine sounds, 1990

Track 13 Typewriter, 2009

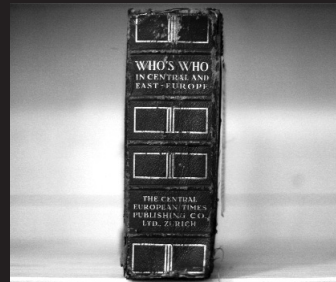
Track 14 Child Roma trumpet player, Romania, recording by Arnold Dreyblatt, 1985

Opera performances: 1991 Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, Munich

1994 Prague; 1995 Wolfsburg, Budapest; 1997 Zürich, Dresden, Ludwigshafen

Mastered by Scott Hull

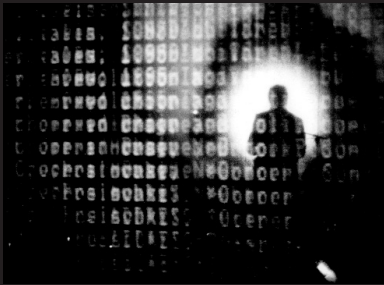
Design – Heung-Heung Chin



In 1985, I found a copy of *Who's Who in Central & East Europe* (Central European Times Publishing Co., Ltd., Zurich, 1933, 1934) in a used book store near the Galanta Tower in Istanbul. It contained over 10,000 Biographies and was the first and last biographical dictionary to be published concerning this region exclusively until *Who's Who in the Socialist Countries of Europe* was published in 1989 (Sauer Verlag). Both publications were immediately obsolete soon after they were published, as European historical events overtook them.

Under the structure of alphabetically arranged biographies lie buried layers of information not usually found in contemporary reference works of this type: revelations of a personal nature, intimate details, traces of desires and fears, life concepts and philosophies as well as references to major historical events. Though the majority of these entries are written in the second person singular, it is apparent that most were composed by the individuals themselves. As I first began to turn the page of this book, I perceived a complex network of personal myth construction: a geo-political history of Central and Eastern Europe put together as if a puzzle from thousands of individual stories, revealing an image of a vanished world captured at a critical point in time, which only a few years later would all but cease to exist. From our present vantage point, having experienced the historical discontinuities of a “world” and a “cold” war, these expressions of vanity and self-assurance take on a compelling significance.

The first performance of *Who's Who in Central & East Europe 1933* premiered in Berlin in early 1991 at the Kino Babylon in East Berlin. It was called a *Hypertext Opera* to indicate the “cut-up” non-linear libretto which I had been working on for the previous year. At the time, the term “hypertext” was a literary term, and the World Wide Web did not yet exist. The production was a co-production of DAAD Berlin Artists Program and the Wiener Fest Wochen, and was awarded the Philip Morris Art

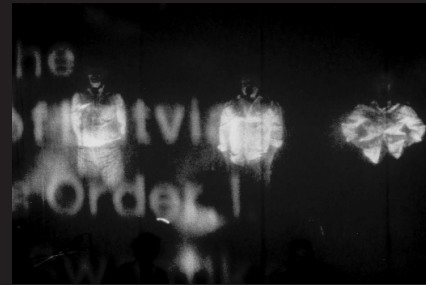


Prize in 1992. After the premiere, the opera toured extensively in Europe from 1991 until 1997, and was produced in German, Czech and Hungarian.

In 1993, John Zorn inquired about the possibility of an audio version of the opera to be issued on his new Tzadik label. The prospect of a reworking of the libretto into an English audio version and necessary recording project was daunting to me back then, and I politely rejected the offer. Thirteen years later, John asked me again. Many years had passed since I had suspended the opera production, during which time I had used the *Who's Who...* text in numerous other artistic projects.

The resulting recording, two years in development, is still very much based on the dramaturgy of the original performance yet at the same time represents a new approach. The opera marked the beginning of a new direction in my creative work, and I am still following that trajectory in my installations and performances. My interest in themes such as recollection and collective memory, as well as the use of text in visual display all stem from the research involved in developing this opera project in the 1980s.

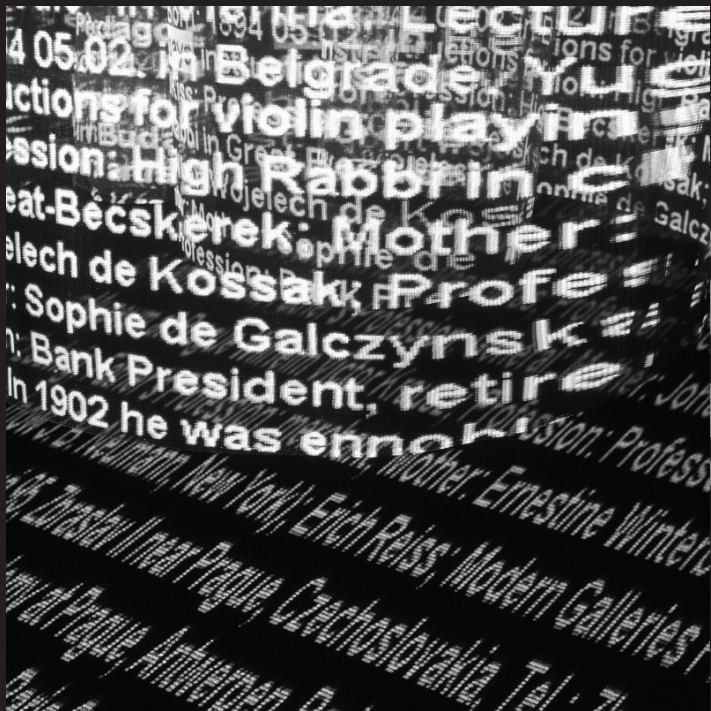
The opera collaged multiple layers of visual elements, including projections of animated text and images along with speech, live and pre-recorded music and sound. After re-examining the original libretto and listening to countless tapes of performances, I made a number of aesthetic decisions. I proposed a more minimal and concentrated work, more along the lines of a *Hörspiel* or artistic radio play. I opted to omit the musical intermissions of the original opera, during which my ensemble performed with Shelley Hirsch, since much of that music has since been released in instrumental versions. I kept the loose framework of the original libretto, while at the same time letting the details take on a new shape.



A number of sections were recreated much as they originally stood while other sections mixed older elements with newer material or were created especially for this audio production. I decided to re-record all of the text in English, with the intention that the text should be clearly understood. I invited two American-born actors living in Berlin (Peter Gilbert Cotton and Ilene Winckler), both of East European Jewish decent. To these voices I added Alexandr Krestovski (Prague) and Tibor Szemző (Budapest), both friends of mine since my travels in Eastern Europe in the 1980s. The vocalist, Shelley Hirsch, who had such an important role in the performance work, appears here on *Invention*, along with musicians Pierre Berthet and Jan Schade who both performed for years with my ensemble, The Orchestra of Excited Strings.

As I developed this work in the late 1980s, events in Eastern and Central Europe were illuminating a part of Europe which had been hidden behind what was then called the "Iron Curtain". Further historical development had been frozen since 1945. The cultural and political world within which my libretto navigates, had been largely unknown other than to a few specialists. Interestingly, it was at the premiere of the opera in Vienna in 1991, in a city where the public had been educated in the history of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, that the long forgotten place names and biographical details could again resonate. Today, we are accustomed to the nationalist earthquakes which continue to rock the region, yet we are still largely ignorant of the violent forces which were dampened by post-War Communism.

In my many works with this text I have treated *Who's Who in Central & East Europe 1933* as a canonic text: a "given" or "closed" text to which nothing can be added, as in the Talmudic textual tradition. With the aid of a computer, selected text fragments have been dissected and reconstructed, as a simulation of a "guided tour" through chosen paths in an architecture of biographical information.



I have largely concentrated my selections on the forgotten lives and the “no longer famous”; (though perhaps individual names might be familiar to East European specialists), whose forgotten voices call out to us now, both singly and in polyphonic chorus as an individual and a “collective” identity and fate.

—ARNOLD DREYBLATT Berlin, 2010

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this project over the years, and to: John Zorn, Allan Evans, Judit Kiss, Peter Forgács, René Block, Jan Faktor.

Full text of CD, additional photos and video can be found at <http://www.dreyblatt.net/Who.html>

Cover photo – Sandor Kardos, Horus Archive, Budapest
Dreyblatt portraits – Waldemar Kremser
page 3 photo – Arnold Dreyblatt
page 4, 7 photos – Jochen Wermann
page 5 photo – Dirk Bleicker
page 6 photo – Tom Gundelwein



Arnold Dreyblatt

PETER GILBERT COTTON, ILENE WINCKLER, ALEXANDR KRESTOVSKI, TIBOR SZEMZÖ speakers

PIERRE BERTHET water drip drum installation, percussion

SHELLEY HIRSCH voice

JOACHIM SCHÜTZ guitar

ROBIN HAYWARD, JAN SCHADE tubas

JÖRG HILLER electronics

HANS PETER KUHN sound environment for original opera performance

ARNOLD DREYBLATT piano, bass, electronics



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