

Eugene Birman & Scott Diel

“Nostra Culpa” Selected Press Coverage



Austerity Opera: "Nostra Culpa"

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BBC World Service: The Strand. Austerity Opera “Nostra Culpa”

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p015y2kt>

BBC Radio3 Nightwaves. Oliver Stone, Chimamanda Adichie, Web Harvesting

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01rr922> (39:45)

“And how a twitter feud over Estonia's austerity measures became the unlikely topic for an opera. Samira talks to the Estonian composer Eugene Birman about his new cantata *Nostra Culpa*, which is based on a heated exchange between his country's President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves and the New York Times columnist Paul Krugman about Estonia economic reforms to tackle the recession.”

Deutsche Welle. “How an argument on twitter inspired an opera”

<http://www.dw.de/inside-europe-inside-europe-2013-10-27/e-17123530#17183015>

“It’s good that the opera has provoked a debate...this opera ends with an ironic aria, ‘*Nostra Culpa*’, raising the roof. And many of the audience members...seemed to leave the concert hall with a renewed feeling of, ‘we’ll show those Americans that the Baltic can, and is, doing better!’”

New Music: New Audiences. The worlds first twitter opera?

<http://www.newaud.eu/events/the-worlds-first-twitter-opera>

Canadian Public Broadcasting. Austerity opera and the defence of Estonia

<http://www.cbc.ca/asithappens/features/2013/05/02/austerity-operetta-and-the-defence-of-estonia/>

“A sixteen-minute *operetta*, called *Nostra Culpa*, recently debuted in Tallinn, Estonia. Its inspiration: an online social media battle between economist Paul Krugman and the president of Estonia.”



CNN. An Economic Opera

<http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/04/15/an-economic-opera/>
<http://edition.cnn.com/video/#/video/bestoftv/2013/04/15/exp-gps-0414-last-look.cnn>

<http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/04/14/an-opera-out-of-a-molehill/>

“Discord. Conflict. Feud. Angry sniping in expletive-laden short bursts. The ingredients of a great drama, right? Well, they were all cooked up into an operatic work that premiered in Tallinn, Estonia, last week.”



Selected coverage: Muusika ajakiri, Rigas Laiks, Kultuurileht SIRP (print)

The Baltic Times. World's first twitter opera comes to Riga

<http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/33539/>

The Independent. The Estonian President's twitter rant and the resulting libretto

<http://blogs.independent.co.uk/2013/04/12/nostra-culpa-the-blog-the-estonian-presidents-twitter-rant-and-the-resulting-libretto/>

"The semantics of the event is hugely relevant, and that writing about a specific political incident is a traditional, folkloric, although potentially forbidden thing to do...Strangely structured the work finds interest when imagining the chronology of events taking place as the music plays through. In this contemplation there's the brutality of austerity and empathising with a belittled nation, a President's frustration and an economist's arrogance. It's subtle, but it's all there."

Mother Jones. LISTEN: Here is a song about the Twitter feud between Paul Krugman and the President of Estonia

<http://www.motherjones.com/mixed-media/2013/04/estonia-twitter-opera-paul-krugman-toomas-hendrik-ilves>

"This is not the *Onion*. It's the true story behind an original production that [debuted Sunday night](#) to a packed house at the historic [House of the Brotherhood of Black Heads](#) in Tallinn, Estonia, as part of the Estonian Music Days festival. A subsequent performance is in the works for the Estonia business conference [Pärnu Konverentsid](#) in the fall, and for a performance by [Sinfonietta Riga](#) in Latvia on October 18. The piece, titled *Nostra Culpa*, which means "our fault" in Latin (the expression was used in one of Ilves' angry and sarcastic [tweets](#)), isn't satirical, does not stake out a partisan position, and is not particularly critical of either Krugman or Ilves."

Wall Street Journal. Weekend listening: Estonia's Austerity Opera

<http://blogs.wsj.com/emerging europe/2013/04/12/weekend-listening-estonias-austerity-opera/>

Wall Street Journal. Ilves-Krugman spat to be turned into "Financial Opera"

<http://blogs.wsj.com/emerging europe/2013/01/10/ilves-krugman-spat-to-be-turned-into-financial-opera/>

Wall Street Journal. Paul Krugman v. Estonia (continued)

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323468604578249583211222780.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Yahoo! Music. Estonian operetta lyricizes economic austerity

<http://music.yahoo.com/news/estonia-operetta-lyricizes-economic-austerity-055303739.html>

Foreign Policy Magazine. How to turn six tweets and a blog post into an opera

http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/04/05/how_to_turn_six_tweets_and_a_blog_post_into_an_opera

Foreign Policy Magazine. Krugman vs. Estonia: the opera

http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/01/18/krugman_vs_estonia_the_opera

Foreign Policy Magazine. The cult of Krugman

http://ideas.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/03/13/the_cult_of_krugman

“American composer Eugene Birman took a more highbrow route, writing a 16-minute opera using Krugman’s Twitter feud with Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves as the libretto.”

Washington Post. Estonian operetta inspired by social media debate attempts to lyricize economic austerity

http://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/music/estonian-operetta-inspired-by-social-media-debate-attempts-to-lyricize-economic-austerity/2013/04/06/a7858d44-9e7e-11e2-9219-51eb8387e8f1_story.html

New York Times. Estonian operetta lyricizes economic austerity.

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2013/04/06/world/europe/ap-eu-estonia-austerity-operetta-.html?smid=fb-share&r=0>

ERR News. Nostra Culpa: an interview with the writers of the “Financial Opera”

<http://news.err.ee/Features/7536f6dd-f278-4dd0-9342-2598cafd720>

ERR News. The aftermath of Nostra Culpa

<http://news.err.ee/opinion/76cdb3ad-e45e-47cd-94a2-19fd59e07a95>

“The theme of the festival in which the concert was held was “juxtapositions,” and perhaps the best one of all was the way in which Diel’s unlikely, minimalist words and ampersands had been charged by Birman with unspeakable tension. And another one was how Oja, solid, serene, and wholesome looking, allowed herself to be transported, like a country girl possessed by illuminati.”

Euronews. Twitter opera hits the right notes

<http://www.euronews.com/2013/04/10/twitter-row-hits-the-right-notes/>

CNBC. Estonian Austerity, Paul Krugman, and Twitter: all the elements of an opera?

<http://www.cnb.com/id/100551633>

The Global Post. Twitter feud hits all the right notes: Estonia v. Paul Krugman, the opera

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/europe/130405/twitter-feud-hits-all-the-right-notes-estonia-v-paul-krugman-t-0>

Wealth Cycles. Krugman’s social media feud inspires opera Nostra Culpa

<https://wealthcycles.com/blog/2013/02/22/social-media-feud-between-krugman-estonian-president-inspires-opera-nostra-culpa>


Christian Science Monitor. Estonian austerity, Paul Krugman, and Twitter: All the elements of an opera?

http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2013/0313/Estonian-austerity-Paul-Krugman-and-Twitter-All-the-elements-of-an-opera?nav=106-csm_subcategory-leadStory

music > music interviews

New Opera Immortalizes Spat Between Paul Krugman, Estonian President

January 21, 2013 3:00 PM

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All Things Considered

 3 min 42 sec

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A new opera immortalizes the online spat between *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman and the president of Estonia. Robert Siegel speaks with Eugene Birman, the composer, about his new work and the debate over austerity and stimulus.

Transcript

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ROBERT SIEGEL, HOST:

Over the past couple of centuries, opera has drawn on a great variety of sources for material: Norse legend, the Book of Judges, the diplomatic travels of Richard Nixon. But even in the

NPR All Things Considered. New opera immortalizes spat between Paul Krugman, Estonian President

<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/21/169920880/new-opera-immortalizes-spat-between-paul-krugman-estonian-president>

“Over the past couple of centuries, opera has drawn on a great variety of sources for material: Norse legend, the Book of Judges, the diplomatic travels of Richard Nixon. But even in the eclectic company of incestuous Teutronics, anvil-crashing Italian gypsies and consumptive Bohemian Parisians, a forthcoming operatic piece - granted, a short one - has an unusual basis. It is based on a blog and Twitter feud between a New York Times columnist and the president of a Baltic Republic.”

NPR Business News. International Twitter War Becomes an Opera

<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/11/169117514/the-last-word-in-business>

Business Week. Krugman takes opera bow as Estonians sing blues on Euro wage gap

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-01-24/krugman-takes-opera-bow-as-estonians-sing-blues-on-euro-wage-gap>

The Sunday Times. Weird but wonderful: Austerity the musical

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/newsreview/theweek/weird/article1197371.ece>

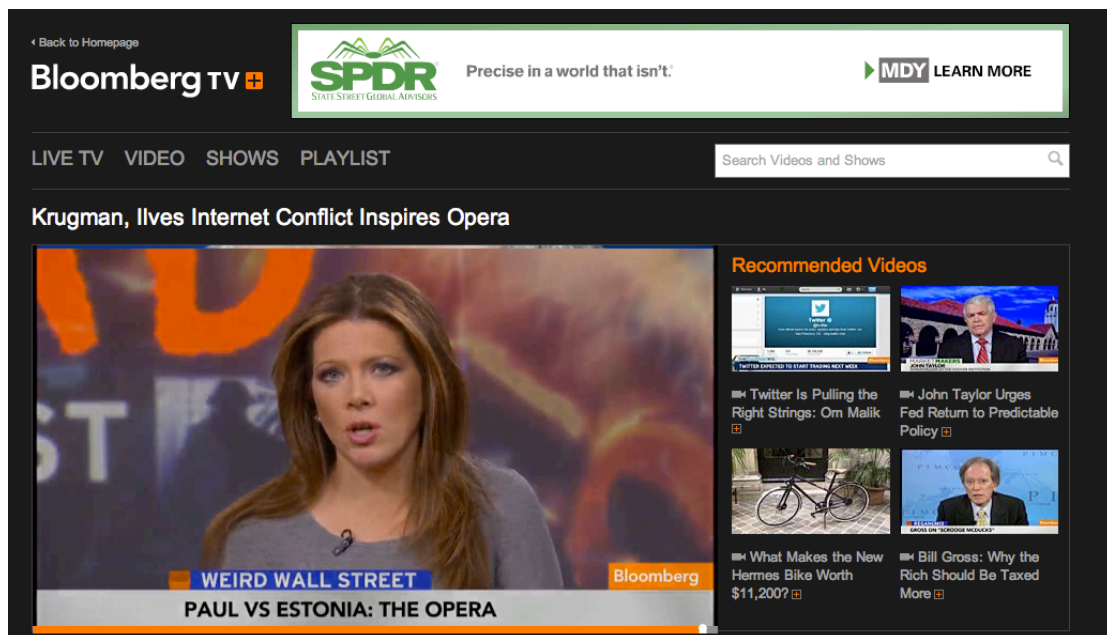
National Review. Austerity: the Opera

<http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/337383/austerity-opera-andrew-stuttaford#>

“Two characters, 140 characters, economics, Estonia and a mezzosoprano. I cannot wait.”

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Bloomberg TV. Krugman-Ilves conflict inspires opera

<http://www.bloomberg.com/video/krugman-ilves-internet-conflict-inspires-opera-graghYeWQl6oE4CChzB4NQ.html>

Bloomberg. Krugman takes opera bow as Estonians sing blues on Euro wage gap

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-01-24/krugman-takes-opera-bow-as-estonians-sing-blues-on-euro-wage-gap.html>

The Telegraph. Austerity opera to be performed in Estonian capitol

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/9806495/Austerity-opera-to-be-performed-in-Estonian-capital.html#>

France 24. Estonia leader's twitter feud becomes an opera

<http://www.france24.com/en/20130116-estonia-leaders-twitter-feud-become-opera>

The Baltic Course. Ilves-Krugman spat to be turned into "Financial Opera"

http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/baltic_news/?doc=10491

MSN Now. Estonian prez's Twitter fight with NYT columnist to become opera

<http://now.msn.com/nostra-culpa-a-new-opera-will-be-based-on-twitter-fight-between-estonian-president-toomas-hendrik-ilves-paul-krugman>

NETPROPHET. Krugman-Ilves Twitter war lives on in song

<http://netprophet.tol.org/2013/01/18/krugman-ilves-twitter-war-lives-on-in-song/>

Financial Times. Krugman vs. Estonia: the opera

<http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2013/01/18/krugman-v-estonia-the-opera/#axzz2NnhrAANF>

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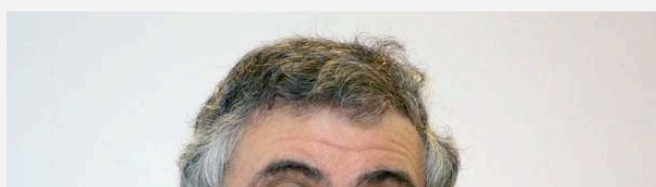


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Estonian Twitter tirade caused by Paul Krugman becomes an 'opera'

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LA Times. Estonian Twitter tirade caused by Paul Krugman becomes an “opera”
<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/culture/la-et-cm-paul-krugman-twitter-opera-20130120,0,7913484.story>

“Now the electronic spat has been turned into a 16-minute vocal piece that will debut in April in a performance by the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra in Estonia. The piece is by Eugene Birman, a young Latvian-born composer.”

UPI. Estonian pres. Twitter feud goes musical

http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2013/01/22/Estonian-pres-Twitter-feud-goes-musical/UPI-40051358872298/

The New Age. Austerity in opera after Krugman-Ilves Twitter feud

http://www.thenewage.co.za/78695-1021-53-Austerity_in_opera_after_KrugmanIlves_Twitter_feud

Kyiv Post. Estonia backs Georgian integration with EU and NATO

<http://www.kyivpost.com/content/russia-and-former-soviet-union/estonia-backs-georgian-integration-with-eu-and-nato-319596.html>

“Twitter feud in June between the Estonian president and New York Times columnist Paul Krugman who questioned the impact of Estonia's austerity measures, is being turned into an opera, US composer Eugene Birman told AFP on January 16, 2013”

Kaupo Kikkas Blog. Nostra Culpa

<http://www.kaupokikkas.com/blog/2013/3/18/nostra-culpa>

“Eugene's and Scott's story is already broadcasted in BBC, NPR, AP, Wall Street Journal and in many others world top channels and I'm sure you want to be in the hall when it premieres. So go and get a ticket fast if there are any seats left.”

Tallinn Arts. The Conversation: Eugene Birman

<http://tallinnarts.com/the-conversation/>

Metro News. Estonian operetta lyricizes economic austerity

<http://metronews.ca/scene/623543/estonia-operetta-lyricizes-economic-austerity/>

Business Insider. Krugman-Estonia Twitter feud over Euro crisis is turned into an opera

<http://www.businessinsider.com/krugman-twitter-feud-opera-2013-4>

“Fiscal stimulus trumps. Increased public debt. Devalue! You’d expect to hear that in a debate between economic policymakers, perhaps — not a rehearsal by musicians practicing to stage an opera. But that’s where composer Eugene Birman reads those words as the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra rehearses his libretto inside a stately medieval guild house in the heart of the Estonian capital. It’s part of “Nostra Culpa,” what he describes as a “financial opera” that was inspired by this country’s brief turn at the center of a raging debate over how to tackle the financial crisis paralyzing Europe and dragging on the [global economy](#).”

Huffington Post. Estonia operetta “Our Fault” lyricizes economic austerity

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20130406/eu-estonia-austerity-operetta/?utm_hp_ref=green&ir=green

Selected Non-English Press Coverage, by country

Der Standard. Krugman’s criticism of stimulus makes it to the stage **AT**

<http://derstandard.at/1356427765391/Krugman-gegen-die-Politik-Bittersuesse-Toene>

Hospodarsky Noviny. Twitter feud about economic policies becomes an opera

CZ

<http://hn.ihned.cz/c1-59145760-twitterovy-spor-o-politiku-uspor-se-stal-nametem-financni-opery>

iDNES.cz. Estonian opera about how brutal austerity saved the country. **CZ**

http://ekonomika.idnes.cz/estonsko-uvede-operu-o-ekonomickem-vyvoji-zeme-f5g-/eko-zahranicni.aspx?c=A130117_101741_eko-zahranicni_spi

ETV. MI (show) **EE**

<http://etv.err.ee/arhiiv.php?id=137597> (8:57 – 14:07)

Tallinna TV. Linn ja muusika **EE**

<http://www.tallinnatv.eu/index.php?id=6793>

Alkeemia.ee. “NOSTRA CULPA”: Vastamata armastuskirjad Eestile **EE**

<http://alkeemia.ee/artiklid/NOSTRA-CULPA-Vastamata-armastuskirjad-Eestile/l-0/c-1102/>

Eesti Ekspress. Ilvese ja Krugmani sõnasõjast valmib lühiooper **EE**

<http://www.ekspress.ee/news/paevauudised/eestiudised/ilvese-ja-krugmani-sonasojast-valmib-luhiooper.d?id=6551002>

Satakunnan Kansa. Nobel-prize winner and Estonian President's Twitter war becomes an opera **FI**
<http://www.satakunnankansa.fi/Kulttuuri/1194788904281/artikkeli/talousnobelistin+ja+presidentin+twitter-sanasota+oopperaksi.html>

Le Monde. In Estonia, the revenge of the tweeting President **FR**
http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2013/04/11/en-estonie-la-revanche-du-president-tweeteur_3157621_3214.html

Le Monde. "Nostra Culpa," the Estonian lyrical version of austerity **FR**
http://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2013/04/02/nostra-culpa-l-austerite-estonienne-version-lyrique_3151758_3234.html

La Presse. An opera inspired from a Twitter quarrel **FR**
<http://www.lapresse.ca/arts/medias/201301/16/01-4611875-un-opera-sinspire-dune-querelle-sur-twitter.php>

Liberation. Twitter: the stage of an economic opera **FR**
http://www.liberation.fr/economie/2013/01/16/twitter-scene-d-un-opera-economique_874567

Origo. An opera written about Estonian austerity **HU**
<http://www.origo.hu/gazdasag/20130117-operat-irtak-az-eszt-megszoritasokrol.html>

La Repubblica. Sing to me, o diva, of fatal finance! **IT**
<http://lastella.blogautore.repubblica.it/2013/04/06/cantami-o-diva-la-finanza-funesta/>

Apollo. Twitter opera "Nostra Culpa" performance **LV**
<http://www.apollo.lv/zinas/tviteropera-sinfonietta-riga-izpildijuma/615305>

Latvian National Television. Twitter opera "Nostra Culpa" in Riga **LV**
<http://www.ltv.lv/lv/raksts/18.10.2013-tviteropera-nostra-culpa-riiga.id19259/>

Diena. Twitter opera "Nostra Culpa" **LV**
<http://www.diena.lv/kd/kd-afisas/koncerti/tviteropera-nostra-culpa-14027182>

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia. Twitter opera Nostra Culpa **LV**
<http://www.culture.lv/?id=22913&s=244&r=twitteropera-nostra-culpa>

Riga 2014, portal of the European Capitol of Culture. Twitter opera "Nostra Culpa" performed at the D.FAB Design Factory **LV**
<http://riga2014.org/lat/news/19183-tviteropera-nostra-culpa-skanes-dizaina-fabrika>

TVNET. Sinfonietta Riga perform the twitter opera, "Nostra Culpa" **LV**

http://www.tvnet.lv/muzika/klasika/481834-sinfonietta_riga_atskanos_tviteroperu_nostra_culpa

Balsas.lt. An opera about the financial crisis staged in Estonia **LT**
<http://www.balsas.lt/naujiena/710796/estijoje-statoma-opera-apie-ekonomikos-krize>

Fontanka. Estonian President's tweets are made into an opera **RU**
<http://www.fontanka.ru/2013/01/16/194/>

Sveriges Radio. The world-acclaimed twitter opera: Eugene Birman's inspiration from Gotland **SE**
<http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=94&artikel=5506541>

Svenska Dagbladet. Twitter inspires a financial opera **SE**
<http://blog.svd.se/ledarbloggen/2013/01/24/twitter-aven-som-finansopera/>

Amic.ru. Tweets between the President of Estonia and a journalist become an opera **RU**
<http://www.amic.ru/news/205499/>

CA-News. President of Estonia's tweets become an opera **RU**
<http://ca-news.org/news:1054509/>

Vgolos. President of Estonia's tweets become an opera **UA**
<http://vgolos.com.ua/svit/news/3342.html>

Links to video of debut performance

<http://www.uudised.err.ee/index.php?0&popup=video&id=55423>

<http://menu.err.ee/24421a13-4d3a-459f-b68a-fa1884f71b1e>