

Music, rock and punk included, is essentially the opposite to power, said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves in his speech today at the opening of Tallinn Music Week.

He stated that every year he has spoken at the opening of Tallinn Music Week about how people in the free world have got themselves into trouble for their music – acts such as Elvis Presley, MC5 and The Doors – and how the situation has been even worse in closed societies.

"It worries me even more when things go in the other direction, in that rock music is forced to "serve" the government," said President Ilves, and he invited the audience to search for "Biker show Sevastopol 2014" in YouTube as a good illustration of the case and a synthesis of all the forms of art and totalitarian ideology – rock music, hip-hop, a light show, ballet dancers, fireworks, flag-adorned Harley Davidson motorbikes, tanks on stage, war and hatred.

In principle, the event that took place in Sevastopol represents the realisation of Richard Wagner's idea of Gesamtkunstwerk, and makes even Leni Riefenstahl's "Triumph des Willens" (Triumph of the Will) look pale in comparison.

President Ilves expressed his pleasure with the fact that since its inception seven years' ago Tallinn Music Week has not lost its freshness and ability to engage with people in a positive sense. In doing so, it maintains the essence of independence for us all, including the ability to listen to everything an individual would want without any interference from a regime.

Office of the President
Public Relations Department
Phone +372 631 6229