Cause and Curiosity

Walter Zimmermann in conversation with Richard Toop

Edited by
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Wolke

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Fig: Walter Zimmermann *Vergebens sind die Töne* (on poems by Mikhail Lermontov and Osip Mandelstam, 2015–16). Performance with Peter Schöne (baritone), Jan Philip Schulze (piano) on Jan. 14, 2018 at the Achim Freyer Stiftung Berlin; in the foreground from left: Hanns Zischler, Alejandro Moreno, Yonghee Kim.

Preliminary Remark – "with a boundless curiosity"

Shadows of Ideas: on Walter Zimmermann's Work is the title of a lecture Richard Toop gave in November 2002 at the XVI Weingartener Tage für Neue Musik and the Berlin University of the Arts.[1] At least in general terms, Toop already seemed rather familiar with Zimmermann's musical œuvre at that time. Both knew each other from Cologne, where Walter had lived from 1970 and Richard had taught as Stockhausen's assistant from 1972–74.

Richard Toop had a profound knowledge of music history, stretching all the way back to the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. He nonetheless focused his attention on the music of the present, with an unflagging curiosity and the ability to penetrate the works analytically from the roots of the creative process and the respective questions of their composers. Born in Chichester, southern England, on August 1, 1945, he encountered Berio, Nono, and Maderna at the Dartington Summer School in 1961, and Lutosławski a year later. A radio broadcast of Stockhausen's *Momente* (1962), which he heard at a WDR late-night concert in London, inspired him. At that time, he was also composing, and he was learning German – mainly so he could read *die reihe*, a magazine essential to serial music. As a pianist in London in the second half of the 1960s, Toop played Cage's Piano Concert and from La Monte Young's *Compositions 1960*, as well as, in October 1967, a 24-hour performance of Erik Satie's *Vexations* (possibly the first complete performance by a single player on record).

When Toop returned to London from Cologne, he learned from Roger Woodward that there was a vacancy at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music, now the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He taught there from 1975 and became a willing discussion partner and admired role model for generations of composers and musicians. We are in Toop's debt for authoritative texts: on serial music (on Olivier Messiaen and Karel Goeyvaerts, Michel Fano and Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Pierre Boulez), on Brian Ferneyhough, on New Complexity in Michael Finnissy, James Dillon, Chris Dench, and Richard Barrett, a monograph on György Ligeti (London 1999), and *Six Lectures from the Stockhausen Courses Kürten 2002* (Kürten 2005). [2]

The fact that Toop returned to Germany as a lecturer at Stockhausen's summer courses from 2002 to 2008 also made it possible to meet Walter Zimmermann again in Berlin. Toop was convinced that the unique tone that Zimmermann unfolds in his music deserved more attention than was the case in Germany. The idea of a monograph, which had the working title *Schatten der Ideen: On the Music of Walter Zimmermann*,

[1] Cf. the print version of this presentation on pages 263–276.

[2] For more details, see Rachel Campbell's obituary, pp. 277–280.

thereby took shape. The conversations that Toop had with Zimmermann for this project began in 2003 – in the chapter *Exposition 2003*, themes are echoed that recur in more detail in the subsequent conversations, most of which took place in 2004.

The conversations are not linear or chronological; nor were they conducted with the intention of publication in the present form. What was intended, as Toop put it in an exposé addressed to Peter Mischung and Wolke Verlag, was "a book about Zimmermann's music, but also about the thoughts behind it. Biographical material also plays a role, not as an independent, anecdotal life story, but as an illuminating background to intellectual developments or strategies."

At my first meeting with Richard Toop in November 2002, he was already a contributor to the loose-leaf encyclopedia *Komponisten der Gegenwart* [Composers of the Present][3], for which I am responsible, but it was already clear at that time that, due to the multitude of his commitments, it would be difficult to win him over for more detailed presentations. (In his fax letters he had regularly "justified" delays with quotations, for a while from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1628, later from E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr*, 1819/21). The audio recordings of the conversations with Walter Zimmermann remained unedited until I decided to write them down in a place far from Berlin, in Essaouira in Morocco. Even during this transcription in April 2012, which was not verbatim, but metaphorical, Richard sent me from Australia several new tape findings, which he had divided into about ten-minute sections. At that time I agreed with Toop that I would edit the conversations while he himself would contribute analytical remarks on the music, which were to be inserted into the dialogues like mosaic stones. However, Toop, who was already suffering from his cancer , then began sorting excerpts from the text chronologically, so that the process of publication stalled again. Meanwhile Albert Breier's monograph *Walter Zimmermann: Nomade in den Zeiten (Nomad in Times)* was published in 2014 as volume 14 of the series "Archives on 20th and 21st Century Music," also by Wolke Verlag.

In 2016, I took another run at preparing the manuscript for print. Walter Zimmermann produced a first edited version, while Toop had to write the sentence: "The disease has returned". Richard eventually passed away in June 2017. He would have been pleased that the conversations, albeit without analytical digressions, are now coming to print after all. The result is a volume on Walter Zimmermann and the genesis of his music, which weaves an unexpectedly rich tapestry of contemporary and cultural history; it is published in memory of Richard Toop.

Indirectly, it was Toop who, through his reference to the seconda pratica, and to monody, invalidated Walter Zimmermann's skepticism about the medium of songs for voice and piano. Thus, the song cycle *Vergebens sind die Töne* (on poems by Mikhail Lermontov and Osip Mandelstam, 2015/16) could come into being. This cycle is the subject of an eleventh conversation I had with Walter Zimmermann in 2017. A twelfth conversation *Gleanings Musings*)*Nachlese*) followed in 2018. Finally, the publication is rounded off by Zimmermann's lecture *Composition as Transcription* (1996), which forms the core of his poetics .

The seemingly paradoxical title "Ursache und Vorwitz" (Cause and Prejudice) was inspired by Walter Zimmermann's life partner Nanne Meyer, an established visual artist. It goes back to a composition of the same title by Zimmermann, who replaces "effect" with "Vorwitz" (now translated as “prejudice”) in the causal relationship of "cause and effect". What is implied here is that the desire for knowledge is bound up in a dialectic and in a cycle.

At the same time, this duality points to an essential aspect of Walter Zimmermann's music, which is often based on complex relationships, for example, on mythologically as well as cosmologically founded emblems and figures of thought from antiquity and the Renaissance. In addition, there are no less demanding mathematical operations to produce music in the form of meaningful works. Zimmermann transforms his sources of inspiration, draws from them and finds ways of formalising them, from which his compositions grow.

This idealistic as well as material, computational-mathematical background, in turn, contrasts somewhat with Zimmermann's external activities, , which he pursued with great energy. Zimmermann was one of the first to champion composers such as Cage, Nancarrow, and Feldman in Germany. He founded the Beginner Studio in Cologne, where he performed unconventional concerts (1977–84), organized, among others, the *Musicircus* in Bonn in 1979 and 1980, the Cage Festival in Frankfurt in 1992, acted innovatively

[3] The standard work on new music has been published by edition text + kritik in Munich since 1992 and comprises more than 13,000 pages in ten volumes.

as editor of interviews with numerous American composers (*Desert Plants*, 1976) and *Essays* by Morton Feldman (1985), and more recently discovered niches such as the Chinese *Chan Mi Gong* textbook by Liu Han Wen, whose translation he suggested and in whose editing he participated, and the *Novalis ABC*, which puts Novalis's fragments of an encyclopedic project in the alphabetical order originally intended. Zimmermann's social commitment to Herbert Henck and the archiving of his work in the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, must also not be forgotten.

Walter Zimmermann's 70th birthday on April 15 2019 was the external occasion for the appearance of this volume. If its contents can contribute to a more nuanced perception of Zimmermann's musical œuvre and its background, the book would have served its purpose.

Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer

1 **Exposition 2003**

Richard Toop: *What does the piano cycle* Beginner's Mind *(1975) mean to you and what position does it occupy in your overall œuvre? I see a very significant stylistic change there; it is perhaps the most important in your development, or are there comparable upheavals?*

The development towards *Beginner's Mind* was influenced by the Cologne scene, which had an established avant-garde, and a result of my stubbornness to find a niche in it that worked differently. This brought me to early Cage pieces, written around 1950; I was fascinated by Cage's *String Quartet*, for example, or *Six Melodies* for violin and piano (or keyboard). I found these pieces from his so-called "naïve period" incredibly strong because they completely ignored the idiom of the avant-garde.

A second change in style, comparable in its significance for me, probably occurred in the demarcation from Feldman. I already knew Feldman's music from my time in Nuremberg, where Werner Heider's ars-nova-ensemble, of which I was the pianist from 1968 to 1970, performed *The Viola in My Life I* (1970). Feldman's lyricism, perhaps related to his intuitive writing style, which was initially quite foreign to me, made a tremendous impression on me. From Cage I adopted the approach of underlaying the mechanics of a labyrinth, a complex cadence, to many of my compositions, like a dramatic foil. I then tried to combine Cage's idiom and aleatorics with Feldman's lyricism, beginning with *Ländler Topographien I: Phran.* That was the second big change. *Beginner's Mind* (1975) is a one-off; I rarely did this naïve moment-to-moment composing, but did it again in *Die Sorge geht über den Fluss* for solo violin (1989/2000). Then in the *Ländler Topographien* (for orchestra, 1978/79) I developed very complex mechanics, which originated with Otto E. Laske.

Before *Beginner's Mind* came *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies* for 21 instrumentalists (1973/74), which is tied up with Laske's thinking – Generative Grammar Theory and such – and after *Beginner's Mind* came the *Lokale Musik* series of works, in which I work with Laske's mechanics of "phrase analysis" (*phran*) on a concrete level, that is, on the level of folk music. This choice, in turn, was influenced by John Cage, by the *Quartets* (*I–VIII* for orchestra, 1976), based on New England chorales filtered out by erasure. *Beginner's Mind* does not yet use any mechanics, not even "cadence mechanics", and is therefore a unique piece.

Is the occupation with Laske's "Cognitve Musicology" also to be understood as a catharsis in comparison with other pieces from this time? I am thinking of the "Orgon" project (1972/74), which is related to Wilhelm Reich and where, among other things, there is explicit talk of a catharsis, following Reich's theory of orgone therapy, according to which the character shell is dissolved. Two works from this orgone project were realised: "Einer ist keiner" for seven instruments and live electronics (1972) and "In Understanding Music the Sound Dies" for 21 instrumentalists (1973/74).

Those were the crazy 1970s, where people tried to incorporate all kinds of theories, including psychoanalytical theories, as well as other extreme positions into their music. One of these extremes was Zen Buddhism, which I got to know through Dagmar von Biel in Cologne. At that time, in 1975, I was in an extreme state of psychological crisis with my then-partner. In this respect *Beginner's Mind is* my only existential piece, naïve indeed, but like a therapy. My then-partner Carol Byl was the daughter of a pilot and had the habit, because she could fly cheaply, of disappearing whenever things got too tight for her. She would then not contact me for weeks. This caused me quite a bit of anxiety and was one of the reasons why I later broke up with her ...

Hence the interest in Wilhelm Reich?

I became familiar with Reich's theory by chance in a course I took with Carol Byl at the University of California, Los Angeles, where Reich's daughter was also present in an amphitheatre with about 3000 people. There were these strange exercises; you were supposed to stand up suddenly and hug some stranger just because he or she was sitting behind you ... totally crazy!

And yet you wanted to write such a piece ...

Yes, but *Orgon Katharsis Strategien* remained unrealised. There is only one concept of it, which I published in the volume *Insel Musik.*[4] That was also influenced by Herbert Henck[5]. He had converted his closet into an "Orgone Chamber". That is, he filled the closet with alternating layers of absorbent cotton and tinfoil, drilled a small hole in the closet wall, sat down in it, and from there he saw the orgone energy. I wrote *Beginner's Mind* for him at that time ...

In the later works, there are almost always basic ideas that were stimulated in different ways by different sources –a circle of thoughts. But where did the very differentiated suggestions for the earlier pieces originate?

These came from books that often had nothing at all to do with music and which I read almost in excess for months on each project. The sketches for *Akkordarbeit* (for piano, orchestra, and tape, 1971) alone comprise two or three notebooks with excerpts from the books I was studying intensively at the time. That was pure mental work at first – and a lot of excerpting to reach a concept. Then came the building. There was, with *Akkordarbeit*, the idea of the Liszt étude, and with the Paganini Etude I for violin, as the epitome of virtuosity, as well as the division of labour in breaking down this virtuosity. To this end, I studied the analyses of labour processes in Adam Smith's political economy.[6] The hierarchical structure of an orchestra became a mirror image of the mode of production of a factory based on the division of labour in *Akkordarbeit* I found the description of the labour processes in Smith, applied it to the analysis of the Liszt étude, then transferred my analysis to the orchestra. At first, this was all just preliminary work without any spontaneity.

In *As a Wife Has a Cow. Seismography of a Text by Gertrude Stein* for Piano Four Hands (1970), I first arranged Gertrude Stein's text so that each word had a place on the paper vertically, so that I could see the

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[4] Walter Zimmermann: *Orgon-Katharsis Strategien*, in: Zimmermann: *Insel Musik,* Cologne: Beginner Press 1981, pp. 71–74.

[5] Herbert Henck, born in 1948, studied piano in Mannheim with Doris Rothmund, in Stuttgart with Arno Erfurth and in Cologne with Aloys Kontarsky and Wilhelm Hecker. As a pianist, he devoted himself above all to the music of the 20th century, with an almost encyclopedic breadth. Among his more than 50 recordings are J. S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier I–II*, as well as Walter Zimmermann*'s Beginner's Mind*. His pianistic activities were flanked by his music publishing activities. Among other things, he wrote *Stockhausen's Klavierstück X. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis serieller Kompositionstechnik* (Herrenberg 1976, Cologne 1980), *Reise nach Lateinamerika. Mexico, Colombia, Argentina* (privately printed, Bergisch Gladbach 1988), *Experimentelle Pianistik* (Mainz 1994), *Fürsprache für Hauer* (Deinstedt 1998), *Klaviercluster* (Münster 2004), *Norbert von Hannenheim (Deinstedt* 2007), and *Hermann Heiß (Deinstedt* 2009). From 1980 to 1985, five volumes of the yearbook (diary? Journal?) edited by Henck appeared, *Neuland. Approaches to the Music of the Present*.

[6] Adam Smith: *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, London 1776

rhythm of the poem vividly in front of me. And this analysis of the text was then in turn translated into proportions, repetitions, symmetries, etc. within a four-hand piano piece.

Where did this idea come from?

There was a book by Helmut Heißenbüttel in which I found the poem *As a Wife Has a Cow* by Gertrude Stein. I was fascinated by the principle of repetition *as a – has a* and so on.

Before that, I had written a piece that contains only clusters –*Nothing but* for piano, celesta, harpsichord, and electronic organ (1969) – and then one that has only glissandi, which is *Gliss* for four trombones (1970). I wrote both pieces while still in Erlangen, in the "Etüdenschule" of Werner Heider, who inspired these pieces, each of which focuses on a stylistic device. In this respect, *As a Wife Has a Cow* is my first independent piece, which I premiered together with a second pianist from my school, the Heinrich-Schliemann-Gymnasium in Fürth, at the BR Studio in Nuremberg.

The device of repetition plays a subcutaneous role in the proportions of lengths, pauses, measures, and so on. Nevertheless, it is not minimal music. Rather, very early on I was looking for Mozartian cadences, that is, for large architectural substructures through which a piece can be proportioned. [7]

Where did you get this tendency to do almost excessive research? Probably it was already a part of you before you composed?

Probably that comes from my humanistic school education. I had a school friend with whom I mostly read Adorno – we had a friendly alliance for four or five years and wildly discussed womens.

Even then an escape ...

We were sitting on the train reading *Negative Dialectics* (1966), some schoolgirls were sitting diagonally opposite, crossing their legs and showing their stockings, but we failed to notice them. He, my bestfriend from childhood, unfortunately killed himself– one day before his wedding. We were the philosophers of the class in an elite high school whose teachers included quite a few Nazis. We had huge ambition, which I initially thought I would not be able to fulfill, because I did not have an intellectual father, but instead a master baker. I saw this as a challenge and tried to achieve a great deal intellectually. We were young intellectuals, so to speak, and I read up extensively on a wide variety of subjects. The reading could not have been more complicated. Later, this also included the confrontation with Otto Laske. The music was then always a means of filtering or distilling, which became rather simplified compared to theoriginals.

Did these comprehensive intellectual demands andintense discussions then later support your inclination to think in terms of, and compose ‚cycles? Or is there another motivation behind the formation of cycles?

My father was a meticulous person. He played the organ, violin, piano, also some trombone, had been trained as a teacher whose specialty was music at the Aufbauschule Schwabach, but was not allowed to practice his profession for half a year after the war. He had not been in the NSDAP, but had been a tank officer with rank. Not wanting to wait, he took over our grandfather's business, a bakery, in 1945. He was underemployed in the village where I grew up, so he was constantly developing other activities, for example planning parties, singing festivals, hosting theatrical evenings, or building houses, the plans of which he designed himself. I made some models of these buildings together with him. He was constantly inventing, developing, building. For example, he designed a system to take the empty glass bottles that people brought back directly to the cellar without breaking them. He had this strong engineering and organisational side; to give another example, he designed a coal plant where the coal was dumped at the top and slid down so that you could conveniently take them out at the bottom. All this was meticulously planned, worked out and recorded in advance. I must have inherited this builder's spirit from him; it was always a matter of constructing with pragmatic results. Strangely enough, I have never thought about this before, but it could be that this is precisely the point that explains the extensive preliminary work on my compositions.

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[7] Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Kadenzrhythmik im Werk Mozarts*, in: Stockhausen: *Texte,* vol. 2, Cologne: DuMont 1964, pp. 170–206.

Perhaps there is even a parallel here with Cage, whose father was an inventor.

But my father was not an inventor; he was simpler ...

To what extent do you think that your early works are to be understood as a reaction to Mauricio Kagel, Karlheinz Stockhausen and so on, and for that very reason would not be almost conceivable without Stockhausen and without Kagel?

It all started when, as a 21-year-old, I wanted to play for Aloys Kontarsky in Darmstadt in 1970 and had prepared a piano program with *Rounds* (1965/67) by Luciano Berio, *"Les Adieux"* by Beethoven and Chopin's Étude in C major, Op. 10 No. 1. Kontarsky reacted, as it seemed to me, very condescendingly: "What is your name? Zimmermann? You want to go to Cologne? Another Zimmermann? Then come this afternoon at three o'clock!" This had such a destructive effect that I didn't go because I felt humiliated. I couldn't play a note on the piano for three years. I had never before met such arrogant people; I came from the village and still saw music as some kind of utopian island, and that very thing was destroyed. In the same year I had written Bernd Alois Zimmermann a letter saying that I wanted to study with him – under my signature I put "nomen est omen". I then received this letter back from his widow. He had committed suicide on August 10, 1970.

So the rejection I felt from the avant-garde came not so much from Stockhausen or Kagel, but from this arrogant and entrenched scene of performers who gave me the impression that I would not even be allowed to knock on their door. Among them was the cellist Siegfried Palm. To restore my mental equilibrium, I then listened to Zimmermann's *Sonata* for Cello Solo (1960) with Palm – I had it on tape. I let that play at half speed so that I could follow the notes all the way through and I noticed that he made mistakes ... so he was only human.

I mean something else; I would like to ask whether, for example, a piece like the Ländler Topographien *(for orchestra, 1978/79) from the cycle* Lokale Musik *(1977–81), which dates from your Cologne period, could not be understood as a reversal of Stockhausen's* Hymnen*, as a kind of* Kontra-Hymnen*, through the total reversal from the international to the local?*

No, I do not think so. I also studied some ethnomusicology at the time at the Ethnological Center "Jaap Kunst" in Amsterdam, played in the Gamelan Orchestra Bonang Panerus[8] at the Tropical Museum, and then later around 1977 in the USA, in the ghetto in Pittsburgh, I did part of the *Insel Musik* project, where I collected recordings from different cultures. In that context, I read quite a lot of anthropological and ethnological writings, including Claude Lévi-Strauss, Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson – authors who explored the concept of culture and its relationship to nature, including a study of the Nuer, a Nilotic tribe. I internalised all of this in such a way that out of this search, via the detour to the USA and the examination of exoticism, my homeland Franconia revealed itself to me as one of the possible relativities of culture. Then came this hinterland thought - "Hinterland" means an anthropological concept[9], the hinterland as a "relative cosmos". I discovered or found my way via dialectics to these techniques of de-territorialisation: one filters out the aggressive potential and recognises objective regularities, for example the natural or proportions of form. Harry Halbreich called me a "neo-fascist" at the time because he did not understand the concept, did not get this refraction.

You can say, for example, that my *Lokale Musik* is "country music" or *Kantrimiusik*. *Pastorale* (for voices and instruments, 1973/75) by Kagel, from head to feet. Whereas Kagel's work is based on four tapes with recordings of sounds from the countryside, my scores are based on musical material of rural music, which is subject to various filtering processes. Kagel deals with it only with cynicism or sarcasm , ambiguity or detachment. I wanted to set it up quite differently, as with Cage or as in early Romanticism as

[8] The *bonang panerus* is the smallest, and thus highest in pitch, of the group of Indonesian humped gongs that are struck with sticks. The humped gongs (*bonang*) are usually arranged in a double row and rest on a wooden frame.

[9] Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinterland (last accessed Dec. 17, 2018).

ephemeralization; from an idealistic point of view, warm-heartedly, not callously – precisely because the Germans have so abused the term "territory", I did not want to displace its original meaning ...

Does this term Ephemeralization have anything to do with Buckminster Fuller?

I found it in John Cage's diaries and made it the motto for my piano trio *Ephemer* (1981): "Ephemeralization; away from the earth into the air or: 'on earth as it is in heaven'."[10] Almost twenty years later, I found this again in Gilles Deleuze's text on *ritornello*, which can be read in A *Thousand Plateaus* (1980). He talks about the territories of birds, how they demarcate their territories and so forth, and then about the dissolution of these territories, the de-territorialisation. So, in terms of a reference to or a critique of Kagel, you are right. However, I hardly see a reference to Stockhausen's *Hymnen* because, as Pier Paolo Pasolini says, the peasants do not recognise any nations; national aspects play no role at all in the local cosmos of the peasants, as in my series of works of *Lokale Musik*, rather it is consciously about something transnational.

Something that you probably have in common with Stockhausen is that he was not a composer of a "musica negativa". You are one of the few composers whose relationship to creation may be called affirmative.

I also never had the feeling that I had to distance myself from Stockhausen, but I knew many people who went through various crises as a result of meeting Stockhausen. Also, in order to maintain my sympathy for him, I did not want to get too close to him. I always respected him and can understand seemingly crazy people anyway.

Was your fascination for objets trouvés, for children's songs, for example, inspired by your ethnological studies? I remember that Johannes Fritsch did not record children's songs in the Feedback Studio at that time, but street musicians did.

Yes, I think that is right.

When I was thirteen or fourteen years old and went to the humanistic grammar school in Fürth, I had to travel about twenty minutes on the train and, a year or two before I had my philosophical friend Helmut Jakob, I always sat opposite a deaf person. He attended the school for the deaf, but he was not completely deaf, and I tried to get in touch with him somehow, to communicate with him, to speak. My father thought I should not bother so much with him, but instead look for other friendships. This later led to my first radio play about hearing in Cologne in 1971.[11] For this I made recordings in schools for the deaf in Cologne, that was my first ethnological work, so to speak. I recorded how deaf people attempted to speak, to articulate themselves through sounds or words. That was in the context of a radio play course that Kagel was doing in the psychiatric ward in Bonn. Later I deleted all these tapes because I realised that I was using the deaf as objects. That was also a reaction against Kagel, for whom the psychiatric inmates were just that.

The children's songs came much later, around 1980. I then recorded in the hinterland of Fürth, in addition to children's songs, shabby tavern songs that were broadcast late at night on Bayerischer Rundfunk, because they were too raunchy for the normal broadcasting time for folk music.

Objet trouvé, you call it ... I was always looking for something somehow objective, or put the other way around: I was afraid to compose anything ex nihilo. Maybe because I do not have spontaneous access to myself, or maybe because I knew that the idea of self-expressionis a delusion. If you look at the history of music, the creative process has always been a reflex to a subcutaneous architectural formal structure, a system of rules, a convention that could also be broken and redefined. This includes the ages of mannerisms; even in Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, who occasionally allowed free fantasies, the momentum out of an apparent nothingness is always formally tamed. The phenomenon of cultural criticism, the *Gründerzeit*, the dawn of the 20th century, the inflation of apparatus, the hubris of the hypertrophic ego – these things, because of their monstrousness, I found somehow frightening.

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[10] John Cage: *Diary "How to improve the world"*, LXXIV, in: *A Year from Monday*, 1968, p. 152.

[11] Walter Zimmermann: *Hörtraining*, in: Zimmermann 1981, pp. 49–52.

Yet your attitude to early German Romanticism is different from Novalis, Wackenroder and Tieck, who also appear in your pieces, in "Spielwerk" for soprano, saxophone and three ensembles (Novalis / Wackenroder, 1984) or in other pieces of this cycle, "Sternwanderung" (1982–84).

But Novalis was also a mathematician, and in Wackenroder and Tieck there are very beautiful descriptions of music, sensitive and at the same time somehow free. This naïveté interested me. The taboo had been erected by *Neue Musik*, such as Kagel, who could only work cynically with "country music," and for whom the naïve childhood was a template, a cliché, but not a fact. But who forbids me to feel and to have feelings? Spahlinger would say that the naïve childhood is not possible because history is constantly progressing, the historical moment has passed and we now have to intervene in the historical process.

Still the question about the inclusion of children's songs.[12] *Is there an attraction to their naïveté and unconsciousness (lack of self-awareness?)? Or simply asked, why did you want these children's songs at that time?*

To this day, I am fascinated by William Blake's cycle *The Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1789), because in these poems he did not shy away from revealing both sides, the innocent-naïve, and also the darker sides of the child's soul. I recorded children's songs in various places in Nuremberg for the Bayerischer Rundfunk, Studio Nuremberg, and then transcribed some of them, exactly as uncleanly and incorrectly as they were sung by children in kindergartens and on the street; I did not want to put the children's song into a fetching frame, but to see it as an objet trouvé, which also contains false notes, singing to oneself, stuttering, forgetting the lyrics, etc.

Yes, what was behind it? Probably the idea of regaining trust, the naïve, the direct, the naturally felt, not as an empty shell, but as a fulfilled moment. That was avant-gardism for me. With the official avant-garde, I was always amazed at how quickly taboos or sanctions are erected in the closed society of new music; how a style once perceived as ingenious solidifies into a cliché, how it is quickly devalued by imitators, and how, on the other hand, it still has to be, so that people like Lachenmann or Ferneyhough can hold on to it. This adherence is at the same time a mistake, because it excludes other possibilities. Through the self-definition of a style, through a "corporate identity", other things are secondary for the time being. I was interested in this idea of being excluded. Why is that excluded, why am I not allowed to do that?

Although later there was also this interest in childhood with Lachenmann ...

I found that fascinating. He did it with much more sophistication than I did; he is also much more virtuosic in instrumentation. Those shadow rhythms in his *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied. Music for Orchestra with String Quartet* (1979/80)– it is quite fascinating how he turns that around dialectically and puts the shadow rhythms as pulsations of an underlying folk music. This also comes from his political attitude of a negative dialectic; one can no longer simply sing today – after 1945, "inheritance of this time", as Bloch called it. But with Lachenmann it is genuine; it is perhaps even too beautifully, almost impressionistically, resolved. I have much more banal surfaces and no fear of composing an edgy directness.

But, too, there was a problem with my own musical language in that it suddenly seemed almost impressionistic because of the dissolution of the surface structure. The contour had disappeared; it was so dialectised away that only a delicate touch remained. Funnily enough, this is also a kind of kitsch, the haut goût of a good French dessert: Even the virtuosically orchestrated *riens* are kitsch!

With "Feedback" or Johannes Fritsch, there was also an interest at that time, perhaps a superficial one, in Plato and in the world soul. Did that interest you back then?

[12] The question refers to Zimmermann's project *Kinderlied*, which strung together original sounds recorded on the streets of Nuremberg and was broadcast on Bayerischer Rundfunk. At the same time, he planned the composition *Das klingende Grün* (1979) about these songs, counterfactured with texts from Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience.* Realised from it was the string quartet of the same name (1996; rev. 2004) and *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989). The materials are in the Walter Zimmermann Collection at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin.

Johannes Fritsch[13] also had the habit of seeing other sides of things, which was very sympathetic, but with him this Platonic cosmos was already very elaborate. The Kayserian harmony[14] in *Akroasis* (for large orchestra, 1966/68) – there Fritsch dug himself into a cosmos that was too narrow for me; I always wanted to look for something new. The Platonic world soul in *Akroasis* appears not as a blossoming, but as a Procrustean bed.

In some piece Fritsch also[15] speaks of transferring proportions into emotions ... almost sentimentally.

I could not even say how to make such a transfer, because I cannot fix emotions. I already know what lies behind it, that certain ascribable proportions are like laws that resonate in the human soul as platonic bodies. Attributable emotions to fixed proportions, that of course comes from the Stockhausen school, the fixing of meaning and even of effect. The problem with this: take an Indian rāga, for which there are many emotional attributions. The formation of a particular rāga melody is a centuries-long process. There is something violent about the idea that this melody means a certain emotion. It is a beautiful idea, but it does not work. As Feldman used to say, "A composer makes plans, music loves."

Another question concerns your continuing interest in antiquity and Greek thought: Why do you keep coming back to Boethius, to Porphyrios or Epicurus?

Epicurus fascinated me because he exemplified the thinking of light-heartedness, Boethius because of the early theory of music, Porphyrios because of the concept of time; he introduced a third time between Aion and Chronos, which connected the two. Although I attended the humanistic Gymnasium, I did not learn Greek as a second foreign language after Latin, but French, which was offered for the first time at that time. In this respect, I perhaps had a small inferiority complex that had to be compensated. That began with *Ataraxia* for piano and orchestra (1987/88). These so-called materialistic philosophers, such as Democritus (459/60–ca. 370 BCE), Epicurus (341–270/71 BCE) and Lucretius (ca. 97–55 BCE) – at that time I had the idea that philosophical thoughts could be materializsd, i.e. materially represented (I did not check these dates of birth and death, by the way).

For example, the string trio *Distentio* (1992): Here the idea was to take the tension or relaxation of the hand as an analogue for the tension or tension or expansiveness of the soul, as Augustine expresses it. I created a situation for the strings to work on the following question of Augustine: "When the stars go out and only a potter's wheel turns, can we still feel time?"[16] When the cosmically distant fixed points of orientation are no longer visible, but only the individual looking up at a process, is that then time, can time still be perceived? I have taken the conflict formulated in this sentence literally and represented the cosmically fixed points via natural harmonics, which are there on each instrument only on a certain pitch and nowhere else– and on the other side glissandi from the nearest position to the farthest, as far as the hand of the string player allows – this extension with holding the cosmological fixed point is the basic idea of this piece. With the Greeks, the words express the substance of the thought. The vividness of how

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[13] Johannes Georg Fritsch (1941-2010) studied musicology, philosophy, and sociology at the University of Cologne from 1961 and in parallel at the Hochschule für Musik viola with Ernst Nippes, composition with Bernd Alois Zimmermann, and electronic music with Gottfried Michael Koenig. His *duet for viola* (viola and tape) was premiered in Darmstadt in 1962; he realized his first electronic composition *Fabula rasa* (1964) in the studio of the WDR and the electronic sounds for the last scene of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's opera *Die Soldaten*. From 1971–85 he directed the Seminar for New Music and the composition class at the Darmstadt Academy of Music. From 1984–2006 he worked at the Cologne Academy of Music as a professor of composition. As a member of the Stockhausen Ensemble (1964–70), Fritsch was involved in world premieres as well as concert tours (including to the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka). In 1970, together with Rolf Gehlhaar and David Johnson, he founded the Feedback Studio Köln and, a year later, the Feedback Studio Verlag, West Germany's first self-publishing house for composers. The Feedback Papers, which he published from 1971–2009, present in project descriptions and essays his own view of the history of *Neue Musik*, away from the mainstream philharmonic routes and established festivals.

[14] Hans Kayser: *Akróasis. Die Lehre von der Harmonik der Welt*, Basel: Schwabe & Co. 1946.

[15] Meant is *Translation of Emotion in Proportion* for organ (1973), in seven parts, created in association with seven wooden sculptures by Rudolf Knubel.

[16] Augustine: *Confessiones* Kp. 11, 23/29.

thoughts are translated into language fascinates me because it contains precise structural specifications that I can use and implement in musical language like a motif or theme.

Does that mean you find metaphors that translate musically?

They are not actually metaphors, but a direct structural analogy. The piano concerto *Ataraxia* (1987/88) is the oldest piece in my reception of antiquities. It is not entirely convincing because the programmatic attribution is too strong. *Ataraxia*, meaning "imperturbability" or even "peace of mind," is in fact the exact opposite of what the piece is about, and it begins only after the piece has faded away. The state of ataraxia is the inaudible goal of the piece. I consider the string quartet *Festina lente* (1990) and the string trio *Distentio* (1992) more successful, because these things develop without pedagogical intention, without the detour via a catharsis or something, from the cell, from the motivic core of the thought.

Ataraxia *is a tour de force and by no means characterised by introverted virtuosity, but demands a great deal from the pianist. Is it directly influenced by Frederic Rzewski,*[17] *who had also written a piano concerto at that time? [It is worth noting that Toop is a bit off here: the piece in question is* A Long Time Man*, from 1979]*
No, not at all.

Another question about your time in Liège in 1980-84, when you taught there. You must have met composers like Pousseur and Rzewski there. What kind of impression did you get from them and did they influence your work in any way?

Pousseur was important for me because he had a new harmony theory – *L'Apothéose de Rameau* (1968; German 1987) – a brilliant treatise, tried out in practical terms in his orchestral piece *Couleurs croisées* (1967). How he[18] let Vernacular Music in and at the same time abstracted it in strict formalisation ...

Did you not find it too academic?

I admired that very much; it was a kind of antidote for me, precisely because I am not so academic. I had no relationship with Pousseur in Liège either; he was *le grand patriarche*.

I barely took anything from Frederic Rzewski. He was thrillingly direct and loyal to me, but as a person and pianist so different from me, more virtuosic and brilliant, very intelligent, but I could not always share his political stance and his Variations on *El pueblo unido* (1975) was actually a prime example of socialist realism.

I asked about Rzewski only with regard to Ataraxia *(1987 - 88).*

Yes, I wrote the *Prologue: Daimon for* Rzewski as a piano solo, and he premiered the piece at the RAI in Rome in 1987. When I came back from Rome, I was seized by what I must say in retrospect was a strange

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[17] Frederic Anthony Rzewski, who was born in Westfield, Mass. in 1938 and died in Italy in 2021, studied composition with Randall Thompson and Walter Piston at Harvard University (B.A. 1958) and with Roger Sessions and Milton Babbitt at Princeton University, where he also took philosophy and Greek (M.A. 1960). A Fulbright scholarship enabled him to study with Luigi Dallapiccola in Florence in 1960/61. As a pianist, Rzewski participated in the Cologne Courses for New Music (1963, 1964, 1970); he played, among other works, the Italian premieres of Stockhausen's *Klavierstück X* (1962) and *Plus Minus* (1964). With Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum, he founded the ensemble Musica Elettronica Viva in Rome in 1966, for which improvisational elements and the use of live electronics were characteristic. Around 1970, Rzewski began making music with politically-oriented jazz musicians such as Anthony Braxton and Steve Lacy, but also participated in the Philip Glass Ensemble. From 1971–76, Rzewski returned to New York. During this period, he wrote several political pieces, including *Attica* (1972), about a prisoner's letter from the New York state prison of the same name. Among his variation works on popular themes, the most famous was the piano cycle of 36 variations on the revolutionary Chilean folk song *El Pueblo Unido Jamás Será Vencido* [The People United Will Never Be Defeated!] (1975), symbol of the spirit of the overthrown Allende regime and anti-imperialist resistance, written in the fall of 1975, two years after the beginning of the military dictatorship in Chile. From 1977–2003, Rzewski taught composition at the Conservatoire Royale in Liège, where Walter Zimmermann had teaching appointments from 1980–84.

[18] "Vernacular" stands for "dialect"; "vernacular music" here refers generally to folk music that has been handed down without recourse to notation.

academicism, and I wanted to write a piano concerto. This is how the piano concerto *Ataraxia* came about, the first movement of which was developed from the *Prologue: Daimon***.** The piece *Ataraxia* is almost embarrassing in this dramatic massing, but it happened.

There is no reason why you should not write a piece that is completely different. A new topic: Your relationship to music theatre seems strange to me in that, on the one hand, you are far removed from traditional procedures and wanted to write something against the usual form of expressive music theatre the first time around, but then, on the other hand, you came back to this genre three times. Why three negations?

The third, unfortunately, was no longer a negation ... It certainly had something to do with the fact that I received a commission from Gelsenkirchen for the "static drama" *Die Blinden* by Maurice Maeterlinck, which I completed in 1984. I was in such a mood at that time that I had to be quite radical as a result of the formal proposition or idea, which seemed to me very compelling, that each of the twelve blind people receives a tone and that the communication of the blind people with each other has to do with the expansion of the tonal space – adirect analogue, so to speak, of social structure and tonal exchange. I only succeeded in making such an ascetic piece because I wrote on a particell that had only two lines, which did not allow me to become opulent even if I wanted to.

In *Über die Dörfer* (Peter Handke, 1985/86) I had in mind a somewhat more monomaniacal destruction– insofar as the text itself is torn apart. I did write Handke's formula "intimate irony" in the program, but I meant something radically different from "intimate"; I referred to it because I knew that Handke's texts would be torn apart or dissembled in the opera. For nothing is as bad in opera as these slurred melismas, when the language demands a single diction. Monstrous for a composer is this work of building up a huge machinery, the opera machinery, which then runs like a clock, like an organ grinder[19]...

In *Hyperion* (Dietrich E. Sattler after Hölderlin, 1989/90) I no longer succeeded in writing an anti-opera, but insofar as I used scratching noises in the recitative of the letter-writing hermit, I did achieve an alienating effect. The role of the hermit Hölderlin was played by Dietrich E. Sattler[20], the decipherer and editor of his writings, in a film that was shown as a feed (on a loop?) at the end of the opera. Instead of the recitative, he produces scratching noises while writing with a quill pen.

What is the significance of music theatre for you? Surely not just in ironising it?

No, I did not want to ironise, I wanted the kind of asceticism I found in the films of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Hilliet, a certain unwieldiness; but the opera business is so strongly conventionalising in its addiction to exaggeration that it did not work. If I had to say where I have wasted my life the most, it was on *Über die Dörfer*. Do you know the concept piece by Cage *Musicircus*, whose performance I organised in Bonn in 1980 with immense effort? That was tremendously nerve-wracking and did not work out so well either. So forgive me the operas and also *Ataraxia* (1987/88) – that was akin to Feldman's sentimental phase when he wrote those biographical pieces like *Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety* (for ensemble, 1970), etc.

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[19] "The score shows five models, which themselves become part of the construction in a speaking manner. The levels of mediation [between poetry and music] range from quasi-free speech, timbral recitative, contour singing, singing of the original melody limited to a few moments, to singing of characterizing formulas of a rhythmic and melodic nature. Each of these models simultaneously unfolds a layer of drama and is situated in a conflictual construction of musical space, between the carelessly torn and the vision of eternal peace, harmony, and reconciliation." (Stefan Schädler: *Klangfarbenrezitativ. Über das Verhältnis von Musik und Sprache in der Oper "Über die Dörfer*," http://home.snafu.de/walterz/biblio/schaedler_klangfarbenrezitativ.pdf, last accessed Dec. 27, 2018).

[20] Dietrich E[berhard] Sattler (born 1939) has been working on a new edition of the works of Friedrich Hölderlin since 1972. In the process, he developed an edition procedure that enables an exact text-genetic reproduction of handwritten works. The Frankfurt Edition of Hölderlin's works (FHA) was published from 1975 to 2008 by Verlag Roter Stern (later: Stroemfeld / Roter Stern). It was initially rejected by established Hölderlin scholars, who were fixated on the Stuttgart edition, but then met with increasing approval. From 1978 until his retirement, Sattler worked as a research assistant at the University of Bremen. In 1987 he founded the publishing house Neue Bremer Presse and until 1991 edited and typeset the *Bremen Bible* based on Martin Luther's *Biblia deutsch* (1545) in 22 volumes. Sattler wrote libretti for composers Wolfgang von Schweinitz, Walter Zimmermann, and Hans Zender. In the late 1990s, he began another critical-edition project devoted to the vocal origins of the instrumental works of Johann Sebastian Bach: *Bach Decipherment*. In 2018, Walter Zimmermann arranged an exhibition of his typographic work, the colour-plate series of the Hebrew alphabet, at Kunsthaus Gomringer in Rehau.

There is nothing to forgive; I just wondered why Ataraxia *was so different from the other pieces....*

I probably also wanted to escape from Feldmaniana with it, so that was also one of the reasons, an anti-Feldman piece. Contradictory spirit can also lapse into the placative, not always into progress.

What does progress mean to you, in the context of your work?

Progress is the refinement – there is no solution, after all– of a basic conflict. I do not dare to say, like Spahlinger, that it is an objective one. As a basic conflict in my work, I feel what Aristotle calls *tyche* and *automaton* – the conflict between *tyche*, which is providence, also understood as chance, on the one hand, and the *automaton*, or what Freud calls the compulsion to repeat, on the other, and the question of how to escape from it. Or, to put it positively, the necessity of a cadence, that is, an architectural structure on the one hand, and the expression of an inner voice, *the inner voice,* on the other. In some pieces of mine the architectural configuration predominates and in others *the inner voice*.

The ideal of inspiration is when the two meet, which rarely happens. An inspired work like Mozart's String Quartet in A major K. 464 with the variation movement – all four movements as if from one cast, strict and at the same time soulful – that is progress for me. It seldom happens that both sides join. One side is usually stronger than the other, the kitsch of the emotion or the coldness of the formal machine.

I also feel this as a basic conflict in my being. We have already talked about my father and hisbuilder's spirit, but not yet about his sensitivity or also that of my mother, which are combined in the son in some way. I also have a talent for organisation and can organise things quickly, but this speed then again suppresses the other side, the inspiration. That fights inside you and there is the danger that every piece can be another misstep ... The question is how to manage that. And that is progress: refining the basic conflicts of the creative process in a time when you have not been given a language. That is a second difficulty: we are no longer in the Mozart era, but have to work out our musical languages with great effort and develop them anew in each piece. I was then quite happy when I discovered that one can build a home for oneself and felt that I had arrived, at least a little. That is progress for me.

One problem is that what is often called progress in new music today often only marks the point of no longer being able to jump off the tiger's back. The commissioning machinery of the operating theatre is still running ...

Can we say that you are basically not looking for anything new, but hoping, as you continue writing ...

To grow up. Sometimes I feel like I have not arrived at Opus 1 at all. If we are quite honest, we are subject to so many pressures. When I wrote *Akkordarbeit* (for piano, orchestra, and tape, 1971), the demons of Lachenmann and Nicolaus A. Huber were raging inside me. Many people are so locked into expectations, presumed or self-imposed expectations, that they think they have to keep up ... This superego formation, as Freud calls it, is so eminent. For example, a jury that awards composition prizes consists of certain people. You then think you already know what they are going to choose, or you also know what was chosen the previous year. Then there is this magnetism of auto-corruption. There is a lack of courage, the courage to express oneself directly, even to stand apart, to dissent. On the other hand, the approach to an entropic process is frightening. The entropy of the successful composers, who are being showered with commissions: Their music becomes grayer and grayer, interchangeable – and one falls asleep. The fact that *Neue Musik* has become acceptable also means that it is in crisis. It is merely that no one dares to say so.

The point of self-expression in the balance of not expressing oneself and becoming too personal or maudlin on the one hand, and not hiding behind techniques on the other – that is so difficult. The reflexive, spontaneistic so easily produces husks of history. Nevertheless, one must have a filter, a control, a kind of network, only then the network can in turn become so rigid that one gets caught in it.

A spontaneity factory ...

Or, conversely, an ice-cream parlour or sweets factory. What I would like to find out: Is this just my personal problem or is there a general objective regularity in it?

This leads me to the question: You said at the beginning that you sometimes feel or felt yourself to be a "marginal" composer. Do you think that what begins as marginal is valid for a limited time and that one can leave it, or that it can become the centre one day? Do you believe or have you believed that this can be a way of life?

If someone knows one piece of mine, they do not know how many different pieces I have developed. They only ever know this or that segment and then possibly infer the other. I am over this phase now, that this really affects me deeply, and I have understood that it is about something else; it is about discovering a great freedom, namely the freedom to keep searching and not to have to fulfil and perpetuate an emblem. On the other hand, I have always felt like a marginal figure.

That goes back to childhood; I was already too fat as a boy, and then you become an outsider very quickly, for example in sports. So, everything was clear – Iam out and communicate with a deaf-mute. Socially I also had a different background, my father was a master baker, the fathers of my classmates often academics; I was not a good student, either.

Then came the great hope with the piano concerto *Akkordarbeit* (1971), which was published by Moeck. Then I became an editor at the Moeck publishing house and as such rejected almost all scores. Then I came up with Wilhelm Reich or the *Orgon Katharsis Strategien* (1974) and the chief editor said I had better see a psychiatrist and fired me. After that came this self-destructive phase, during which I dismantled the career of a young composer myself. Those were the wild Cologne years and there was a point where I really turned around, buckled. That made it much harder for me, but on the other hand I was also much more curious about everything that was coming at me.

Then came various tragedies with publishers, including Boosey & Hawkes in Bonn, where we negotiated for years. I had a functioning self-publishing house with a large network and they wanted me at Boosey as a guinea pig. Then there was an approach from Peters through an editor, which also came to nothing, partly because in *Die Blinden* there was the sentence, "The power of the old men must soon come to an end." The old man who ran the publishing house sent me his rejection with the sentence, "As you see, the old man still has the power." I have kept this letter. Other hopes for a publisher's affiliation also failed.

What is your basic attitude towards the technology of new music? You studied computer music early on, of course, but for example in Akkordarbeit (1971)*, where a tape is included, and also in other pieces you used this technology as self-deprecating. Also in* "Ursache & Vorwitz" (for horn, violin, cello, piano, percussion, and tape, 1993/94) …

I had the tape of *Ursache & Vorwitz* from the early days of my involvement with electronic music; I made it myself on a computer in 1974, when I was still at Colgate University. It is such a Risset-like glissando into infinity.

... a Shepard tone?

That's right, it is also called Shepard-Risset Glissando! The year before last [2001], I spent about six months working with my home computer. There I made an electronic piece, an étude, in fact, which was called *Steinwurf – Faltenwurf* and later got the title *Seidenstraße.* It was first heard in the Diözesanmuseum in Cologne in the midst of Gothic statues; the question of ornament and abstraction loomed in the background It is about sounds found along the Silk Road, beginning in Turkey and ending with the Uyghurs, which were altered by means of special digital sound-processing, so that the folds of the robes – that was what mattered to me– become audible. Then there are two quotes to go with that: one from Leonardo da Vinci about the folds, veilings of bodies, spoken in Italian by Mario Bertoncini[21], which is then confronted with a second

[21] Mario Bertoncini, who was born in Rome in 1932 and died in Siena in 2019, studied composition in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi, piano with Rodolfo Caporali and electroacoustic music in Utrecht with Gottfried Michael Koenig. He began as a concert pianist and conductor, experimented with prepared instruments from 1962, and in 1965 joined the Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza in Rome (until 1973). From 1968 he was theoretically and practically concerned with the functional interaction of sound and gesture in music (*Note per un teatro della realtà,* 1981). He began in the early 1970s to create sound objects of his own design and construction, often based on the principle of the aeolian harp. From 1967–73 he taught at the Conservatory in Pesaro and in 1974 came to Berlin on a DAAD scholarship, where he created sound sculptures for the Berliner Festwochen. In 1975–76 he held a "musical design" course at McGill University in Montréal. From 1980–97 he taught at the Berlin University of the Arts and moved to Cetona in Tuscany in 2004.

quote from an Islamic woman who criticises Islam's veiling commandments. I found that in an email that was sent around describing how women in Afghanistan are degraded by veiling; I then staged that text like a phone call from that country. With this piece, I wanted to achieve a kind of double look at the principle of the fold and the veil. The music - it lasts about twenty minutes - should finally sound like an object being blown away by the sand. At theDiözesanmuseum , we shot the film *Silk Road* with this music. [22]

The other pieces with tape are merely banal playback tapes, partly with texts, that is to say shabby electronics. The problem with live electronics for me was always that the instrumental sounds are much richer than the so-called artificial sounds. There were very few pieces in the Cologne School where they worked. Most of the time it did not work, these strongly vibrated cello sounds with the electronic bubbling ...

And this elegant French school does not suit me either, it is too "polished", yes,I prefer this weird English, so that the joints are not seamless. Therefore electronic means play only a marginal role. Yes, where does that occur? In *Parasit / Paraklet* for clarinet, string quartet, and tape (1995) it occurs; on the tape there is a demonstration in Yugoslavia, then crackling fire, finally a parasite, such a terrible electronic sound hrrr ... , which I still had from Colgate. On the recording of *The Edge* for (mezzo)-soprano, clarinet, cello, piano, and tape (1994) you can hear Robert Creeley's voice, and in *Songs of Innocence and Experience* for string quartet with tape (1996) you will find tape recordings of children's songs that I collected in Nuremberg at that time and[23] transcribed and processed for the string quartet. By the way, Allen Ginsberg sings Blake's *Tyger*.

Wanda Landowskas verschwundene Instrumente (*Wanda Landowska's vanished instruments)* for MIDI-harpsichord / piano and randomised CD-Rom (1998) is technically my first and, I hope, only piece in this direction: it was too much work! The MIDI-harpsichord triggers the picture archives. The glissando in *Ursache & Vorwitz* comes, as I said, ultimately from my work in the computer studio at Colgate. That is it – the electroacoustic or electronic parts are discrete, inconspicuous in view of the overall work.

You once spoke of your conception of orchestral sound, and I would like to ask you where it comes from. Listening to your tapes, I heard a certain orchestral sound that reminds me a bit of Cage's orchestral version of "Cheap Imitation" (1970/72), a very specific orchestral sound.

You have a point there. *Cheap Imitation* was important for me, also the *Quartets for Orchestra* (1976), especially for the first part of *Lokale Musik*, the *Ländler Topographien* (1978/79). The orchestral sound basically comes from a way of thinking that is common in gamelan music: the sharing of a melody is important, where not one person plays out or sings out, but rather there are many pieces of the mosaic. Hocketing techniques – we sang Machaut masses in school, I had organised that and it was a reason for me to get into this music. That is when I realised that polyphony is a social endeavour; when there are five people at the table, you share the whole thing, and it's not one person leading and the others lagging behind. That was a principle for me – the light comes into the music, light and air, it becomes free. I feel there is an analogy to the political digression, the materialisation of a philosophical thought: when a subject is shared, you feel this light – *la lumière*, the enlightenment. It is really like that. That is how I wanted to brighten up the orchestral sound through a mesh of sound cells.

A question related to instrumental practice: In Beginner's Mind *(1975) it occurs for the first time that an instrumentalist also sings. After that there is a whole series of pieces where the instrumentalists also have to become singers, not only* Wolkenorte *for harp with voice (Meister Eckhart, 1980), but also "Saitenspiel" for 18 instruments (Blackfeet Indians, 1983) and other pieces? Why did you do that, especially in the pieces with many players? Did you want to achieve something special?*

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[22] *Silk Road*. Experimental Film and Electronically Transformed Music of the Silk Road, WZ 23.6 (2001).

[23] The children's songs were originally broadcast as an original sound study, arranged by age group, under the title *Kinderlied als* Hörspiel (*Children's Song* as Radio Play) on Bayerischer Rundfunk, Studio Nuremberg.

No, it is like Novalis, mathematics is right next to poetry. It is still the child in me; I feel that it is possible. Why should it not be possible? There is definitely a certain provocation in letting instrumentalists, who are perhaps one-sided talents, sing as well. But the provocation is not so important, it then just falls into place ...

There is usually some separation between instrumentalists and singers ...

It is a pity, I like to sing very much myself and I also sang my own songs. This separation need not be thisway. I also just pushed Ian Pace during the production of *Beginner's Mind* and he then sang very well. But I am not interested in combining high virtuosity with dilettantism; *Beginner's Mind* is a special case anyway ...

Let us discuss "Saitenspiel". From the fact that all the musicians are supposed to sing along at the end, a new collective emerges. Is that a sign of your unisono obsession?

It would be beautifully constructed if it were, but it is much more banal. I did not want any more wind instruments at the end, but only the string sound, which is obbligato in the piece – there is a harpsichord introduction and then always an obligatory string sound: two harps, mandolin, guitar. In the end, I wanted to have only the string sound, no other instruments, but the singing, so multiply the troubadour to ten or twelve people singing. I did not think so much about it, it was somehow compelling. The string instruments accompany the singer, the troubadour – as a group phenomenon. Does it sound forced to you?

No, rather strange.

Strange, right.

A bit like the '60s, hippies with singing ...

Oh, so I am old-fashioned ... well, why not?

Do you think – well, this refers mainly to what I think Christopher Fox says very lucidly about your work – do you think that your points of view have changed in the meantime, or could one nowadays read Fox's essay from 1983 with profit? He refers mainly to the Eckhart cycle and especially also to Abgeschiedenheit *(for piano, 1982). Do you think that most of what he says there is still true?*

Can you give me some details? What is it about?

He spoke of introversion, of depersonalisation, even the non-centered tonality was already there.

These are two quite different things. Depersonalisation was the tendency of the series of works *Vom Nutzen des Lassens* (Meister Eckhart, 1981–84), a kind of dissolution in which all concrete associations disappear and go into the void. For example, *Lösung* for viola, cello, and double bass (1983): each sound is repeated by three instruments at different speeds; with each repetition the timbre changes until the sound dissolves. This cycle has a tendency that is not transferable to all the other cycles.

For example, the cycle *Sternwanderung* (1982/84) has exactly the opposite tendency, which is why I find *Sternwanderung* so relentlessly purposeful. Especially *Spielwerk* (for soprano, [soprano, alto, tenor] saxophone and three ensembles, Wackenroder / Novalis, 1984) is a problematic piece, there I just let the first half stand. There is the reverse of the Eckhart cycle; at that time I had reached my anthroposophical phase. I had just radicalised myself and then there it crops up again such a strange smattering of six-eight rhythms (I assume?). At that time, I was easily influenced by the pedagogical-missionary work of the anthroposophists, so that I was drawn into it. I lived in the countryside outside Cologne and I began to think more strongly in harmonic terms again. With each new work, I enter into a cosmos that is ever different – and that is where I let myself be influenced.

What is the difference for you between letting yourself be stimulated and letting yourself be influenced?

It is quite strange, a manic curiosity: a childhood friend who was a communist when we met and then suddenly on the far right recommended that I read Ernst Jünger. I followed this and then had an Ernst Jünger mania for three years. When it was time to mark Jünger's birthday, and a vituperative article by Fritz J. Raddatz appeared in *Die Zeit*, I wrote a letter to the editor. I was not only stimulated by Jünger's world, but trapped in it, and first had to find my way out of it, lock myself out, close myself off to his world ... And in *MusikTexte* I published a piece on Jünger, which of course went against Reinhard Oehlschlägel, who had founded *MusikTexte* and hated Jünger. I had become a renegade for him, and that somehow pleased me again. My mania for getting totally involved in a world of thought is a weakness. When a friend gives a hint, it is merely a suggestion, but if you act on it immediately, the result of that suggestion is that a labyrinth opens up – and I follow the trail and am suddenly caught up in it.

The projects I have thought through in the last year, without composing a note, are amazing. It started with Jacques Roubaud, *La fleur inverse. L'art des troubadours* (2009).[24] He analysed troubadour verse and created synoptic charts of rhythms and rhyming endings. Inspired by this, I went to an antiquarian bookstore in Barcelona to get a three-volume work that probably collects all the troubadour songs,[25] but nothing came of it. I am given a secret tip, I dive in and out of it – and ten times out of a hundred, something might come of it.

Did the reunification, the "Wende" from 1989, change anything for you personally, for your work and your position as an artist? If you see yourself as a composer in Germany, what changed from your point of view, for example, just because of the geographical change?

Berlin is a complex, multilayered city, but also a hydra. Cage would say it is ideal because there's no centre. There are endless possibilities, especially for young people. It is not as arrogant as Paris, in that it is more open, but talent is not recognised and encouraged as it should be.

One author describes how, as a result of postmodernism, no great talent is allowed to exist anymore; all must be geniuses and all must be equal.

It is also because the artists often took their organisational things into their own hands: In the *Beginner Studio* concerts in Cologne, for example, I did not perform any of my work at all for seven years; that was a kind of ethical principle, one that hardly exists any longer.

Back to you and your compositional work. How can ideas be projected onto sounds; how much of the essence of an idea becomes musical structure?

Let us discuss it in Geduld und Gelegenheit (for cello and piano, 1987/89). The piece has three movements: I. *Hypneros* [The Sleeping Eros], II. *Sala della Pazienzia*, III. *Tyche*. It was the first piece of new music to use a baroque bow, even before Cage – this is often forgotten. I used a round bow because there are all four strings to play on. Let us start with the last movement. *Tyche*: Four-note chords are always used there, which at the same time form the vibration nodes for harmonics. The cellist presses the sounds completely or halfway or creates a harmonics; he plays a kind of strumming in different tempi. The *17eene*, here as a pendulum of fate, determines whether a harmonic or a fundamental is heard; a tilting process occurs –

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[24] Jacques Roubaud, born in1932, writer, poet, and mathematician. He taught mathematics at the Université Paris X-Nanterre and formal poetics at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in the 1990s. He became internationally known for his novel *La Belle Hortense* [The Beautiful Hortense], Paris 1985. Poetry for him means number and rhythm, form and formula. Poetry articulates itself through verse metre, rhyme, stanzaic form, and the subtle combinatorics of sounds, letters, words. Roubaud refers particularly to the tradition of the troubadours, who introduced the connection between lyric and song, song and love, to the "modern" cultures of the West in the 12th century. Roubaud belongs to a group of mathematicians and artists around Raymond Queneau and François Le Lionnais, whose playful-combinative textual production borrows from mathematical orders. "Contraintes" (constraints of form) are not meant to limit the production of the text, but to open new possibilities. "There is a natural relationship between poetry and numbers. This tradition goes back to Pythagoras and has continued into the Middle Ages. Many ancient texts are built on the digit that you hide; on the number that serves as a structure. The numbers of the Greeks were infinitely more complex than our arithmetical system; they included weight, harmony, person." (Roubaud 1985)

[25] Martin de Riquer (Ed.): *Los trovadores. Historia literaria y textos*, Tomo I-III, Barcelona 1975.

sometimes pressed firmly, sometimes lightly – and the direction in which the random pendulum swings can be directly experienced physically.

The second movement – the *Sala della Pazienzia* is in Ferrara, where these images *patience* and *opportunity* were originally (in the 16th century) opposite each other.[26] It is here that pizzicato and arco are attempted at the same time, which actually cannot be done, or together in double stops a pizzicato and an arco are produced – just as patience and opportunity stand in each other's way. Someone who is impatient seizes the opportunity at the wrong moment. And vice-versa: someone who is patient finds the right opportunity. Basically, however, it is about a string of wrong moments. Being patient and seizing the opportunity becomes a game between pizzicato and arco.

I understand that, but my question is meant a bit differently. It seems to me that the relationship between idea and sound is a one-way street, so to speak, insofar as, for example, when you hear Distentio *and read the sentences from Augustine, you can say, "Aha, that's what it means!" But it does not work the other way around! Or can one listen to the piece and say, that totally reminds me of Augustine?*

That is one problem with this title. Nanne has written a very nice text for my 50th birthday. There Nanne writes how she knows me as a person and my titles express goals that I am not at all and that I also do not achieve ...

Dieter Rexroth has described you as a restless spirit who, precisely because he remains restless, seeks out such themes that presuppose a certain harmony[27] *...*

The titles are often places where I am not at the moment, a therapeutic measure, homeopathic mini-medicine. One would perhaps have to have the courage to forget the titles again and call the music "piece for cello and piano". In the end, all of Mozart's, Beethoven's, Schubert's pieces also had real, biographical things in them somehow – in Schumann, who often had programmatic titles, perhaps to a somewhat lesser degree. This crazy pedagogical mania of having to give titles, and then helping the listener along with programmatic texts, often only leads to an album of blooming poetry.

Are these basic ideas a trigger or are they something where you are constantly involved until the end of the piece? For Distentio *it is probably the latter.*

One must distinguish, for some pieces this is true and for others less so. The phase in Rome – *Wüstenwanderung*, *Geduld und Gelegenheit*, *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton*, *Ecchoing Green*, *Festina lente*, *Distentio* – these pieces are at the heart of my work list. I was in existential distress, had separated from my partner, had gone to Berlin as a nobody, and had then woken to a new life in Rome. That is when the titles and the writing were almost lifesaving. In a later, more relaxed phase of my life, the titles were no longer so vital. There were these series, *Schatten der Ideen 1 –3,* derived from Giordano Bruno's *De umbris idearum* (1582), there came this principle of creating variants, basically one piece would have sufficed – unlike the others, which were all one-offs.

What about Die Sorge geht über den Fluss *for violin solo (1989/2000). There is part 1 (1989/91) and part 2 (2000) – but these are not variants.*

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[26]" The cycle deals with a hieroglyph of the Renaissance as it appears in numerous illustrations by Mantegna, Rubens, etc. The reading of this hieroglyph leads into the conceptual circle of opportunity, time, virtue, patience. The reading of this hieroglyph leads into the conceptual circle of opportunity, time, virtue, luck, patience, and is described in detail in the essay by Rudolf Wittkower *Gelegenheit, Zeit und Tugend* (Cologne: Dumont 1983, pp. 186–217). The paradox of the conceptual pair patience and opportunity is translated into sound and requires the cellist to overcome paradoxical ways of playing: playing on all four strings, which always results in the same tone in *Hypneros*, playing pizzicato and arco in two voices, which results in a game of mutual blocking and stumbling in *Sala della Pazienzia*, and finally playing on several strings at the vibrational nodes, which allow the sound to emerge both as ordinario and as harmonics, depending on finger pressure, like the fateful pendulum of *Tyche*" (W. Z., Introduction to the work).

[27] Dieter Rexroth: *Gedacht – mit beiden Beinen auf der Erde*, in: *Melos,* 1985, volume 1, pp. 59–81.

Die Sorge geht über den Fluss is important, the first part is a reaction to the death of Stefan Schädler; the second was written after I came back from India and became ill myself. The tragedy of human life is sometimes closer to us and sometimes it is further away; so the titles or the ideas behind them are sometimes used more existentially, therapeutically or in a cathartic way and sometimes more out of abundance ...

May we conclude from this that recourse to recurring images has essentially no or hardly any personal significance?

The desert initially had a rather positive connotation through *Desert Plants* – the beautiful blossoms in a hostile environment.

... so "despite" the desert and without desert no such flowers ...

Even before *Desert Plants* (1976), there was the desert I went to myself, the Siwa Oasis in Egypt, to record; then the *song in desert bird tone* after a poem by Nietzsche (for bass flute and piano, 1987)[28], before that *Wüstenwanderung*for piano (Friedrich Nietzsche / Ezra Pound, 1986)[29]- the greed principle about the desert and its negative connotations, the hollow man who is left and devours everything with greed and then gobbles on unsated, which is of course also a self-portrait.

The unisono is something else again, there was this essay by Hannes Böhringer[30] about the unisono, which inspired me to *Diastasis / Diastema* (1991/92): two pieces for two orchestras each without conductor, which can be played one after the other. *Diastasis* and *Diastema* present the unfolding and the contraction of time. In *Diastasis* [Unfolding of Times], both orchestras each have 36 voices identical for each respective instrument, which are played simultaneously, whereby, since there is no conductor and they sit opposite each other, heterophonic deviations occur until the contours dissolve. Behind this is the Plotinian idea that the now cannot be experienced and that only an image of it can be produced in the succession of what was originally simultaneous. The nonexistent conductor thus symbolises the deus absconditus, the hidden God.

Diastema is an intensive unisono study, whereby after the disintegration of the structures in *Diastasis*, a thread, a connection is once again to emergehere. *Diastema* means space or interval, but also distance, and both meanings are thematised: a continuous flow of intervals as well as spatial distance of the two orchestral groups, which must play in unison despite this distance, which in turn becomes a tightrope walk. Plotinus says: "The distance (diastema) namely is not outside the movement, but non-pushed (continuous) movement!" [31]

At the same time, the piece attemptsto make time audible as a flow. But Plotinus also spoke of the fact that it is not time that shows the distance ofmovement but rather it is through movement that time prolongs itself; they run, so to speak, alongside each other. This running side by side, these are the small shadings,

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[28] Walter Zimmermann took the title *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton* from a poem written in 1884, to which its author Friedrich Nietzsche gave six different titles: "Die Krähen schrei'n", "Vereinsamt", "Der Freigeist", "Abschied", "Heimweh", "Aus der Wüste". The fifth stanza reads:
"Fly, bird, snare
Your song in the desert bird tone! -
Hide, you fool,
Your bleeding heart in ice and scorn!"

[29] The piano piece *Wüstenwanderung* contains two quotations that the pianist should "speak loud & clear": a) at bars 192–193: "The desert grows: woe to him who conceals deserts!" (from Nietzsche: *Also sprach Zarathustra*, 1883–85, ch. 88); b) at bars 261a–263: "Re usura out of focus / I took a symptom for the reason / the reason is greed" (Ezra Pound, preface of July 4, 1972 to *Selected Prose, 1909-1965,* London: Faber and Faber 1973). A poem by Angelus Silesius precedes the composition as a motto. A structuring role is played by the idea of the "creation of the world soul according to Plato's *Timaeus*," which Zimmermann traces "in seven parts".

[30] Hannes Böhringer, born 1948, philosopher who deals with modern and contemporary art and architecture. He combines aesthetics in the reflection of words, actions, and objects with a phenomenology of everyday life. He taught at the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Braunschweig until 2012 and now lives in Berlin. *Three Dialogues*. Readings by Hannes Böhringer with music by Walter Zimmermann: *Unisono* (with the piano quartet *Schatten der Ideen 2*, 1993), *Abgeschiedenheit* (with the piano piece of the same name, 1982) and *gleich-gültig* (with *Irrgarten* for bass zither, 1997; rev. 2008).

[31] Plotinus: *Ennead III* 77/11.

which are produced by the unisono playing – a flawless unisono does not exist. The tiny inaccuracies break up the monadic unison structure, relativise it, and allow time to percolate into the field of vision or hearing. Behind this possibility of the unfolding of time, of deviation from the unison, which was already called absurd by Plotinus, there is a peculiar physical phenomenon, a law, which can scarcely be understood, namely that right next to the unison there are myriads of sounds; right next to the unison there are innumerable possibilities, an abundance lowered only at the minor second. So, it is not a gradual process, but rather a leap.

The unisono structure of *Diastema* has the basic intervals 1, 3, 7, and 9 (minor second, minor third, fifth, major sixth) – this appears more often in my work. Among these intervallic cells, there are more concise and less concise ones. Eight interval cells merge to form a phrase; there are 144 phrases, each with alternating instrumentation. A melody of timbres is created, notated in the parts in two systems. The lower system shows the voice to be played in each case; the upper system shows the sum of the timbre melody, whose instruments change constantly. In this way, the piece also builds its own memory, which can keep the listener in a state of equilibrium between forgetting and remembering. The more concentrated the listening is, the more the cells connect with each other. As in the string trio *Distentio*, the listener's own intensity gives the flow of time, which is quasi-objectively traversed, an individually ever-different directionality. The penetration of this flow of time can be achieved by means of intentional listening. The more intentio, the more distentio, tenseness in the past, present, and future of the temporal flow.

I conducted three dialogues with Hannes Böhringer, in which he read his texts and I played the piano, bandoneon, etc. to accompany his reading. "Abgeschiedenheit", the first dialogue, is a cento, i.e. a text consisting exclusively of quotations; parallel to the reading, the piano pieces *Abgeschiedenheit* (1982) and *Streifzüge* (1996) were heard; the latter is a graphic score, a map of pilgrimage routes from all over Europe to Santiago de Compostela, with the name of each city and place becoming a musical figure. "Unisono," the second dialogue, is a text by Hannes Böhringer, printed in *Lettre*;[32] following the reading came the piano quartet *Schatten der Ideen 2*. The third dialogue is called "gleich-gültig," which is about Prometheus, the mastermind, and Epimetheus, the afterthinker; I had sound generators on a table for this, which I moved like the bowls of a scale.

The unisono seems to run through almost all your pieces, already in "In Understanding Music..." (1973/74).

This is an ancient principle, but there is also the opposite: from unity to diversity, for example in the second part of *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989). The piano plays white chords and takes the black keys as clusters, while the violin plays in Pythagorean tuning. Sometimes they meet in intonation and sometimes they do not. I find this conflict very interesting.

At the university we are currently doing a semester on voicing, where we introduce new tunings and there is also a small concert series in which composers with new tunings introduce themselves or are introduced. We are also working with string players for the first time, which is what Marc Sabat is doing. He shows things that many students have never done before. They pick up a circle of fifths, start at *G-sharp,* come out at *A-flat,* and suddenly discover that they are two different notes, which they had never understood before. The tunings that were so important in classical music were completely forgotten as the 20th century progressed as a result of this emphatic vibrato. That is what I find interesting about the unison principle, that awareness versus action is becoming more important again. I have observed in England that the string players, who often earn little, participate in a Bach cantata in church in the morning, play in a coffee house in the afternoon, and classical music in the evening, and then still avant-garde somewhere. They are therefore much more flexible and learn early on to move stylistically in different traditions. We still have this ponderous philharmonic vibrato here; it is terrible and you cannot get it out of the teachers either. That is why these tunings and this unison principle are so important.

In my piano quintet *De Umbris idearum (Schatten der Ideen 4*, new version, 2010; premiere of the first version in 2001), the pianist must play almost everything in unison with the strings. That is, the strings must intonate well-tempered. This is very difficult for quartets playing only new music. The problem of harmony arises anew ...

[32] Hannes Böhringer: *Unisono*, in: *Lettre International* No. 24, 1994, pp. 34–35.

For the players, these constant changes are not just about a technical dimension, but about constant and rapid adaptation in both psychological and physiological terms.

Nevertheless: tonality or harmony is one of the taboos of Neue Musik, one of the questions one may not ask without being accused of revanchism. Why is it not allowed to ask the question of harmonics – not historically, but abstractly, logically, or acoustically? What are people afraid of? New music has fallen into a chain of avoidance strategies: avoidance of harmonic transparency, of tension–relaxation. A chain of negations.

Would you not say that describes the German situation in particular?

No, I am describing the cheesy, fattened orchestral music raging in other countries as well, pretending that nothing has happened.

This is conservatism above all.

Yes, but also a backlash to the new music syndrome.

I doubt that. I think the tendency to musical stupidity is always there. It need not be the avant-garde as a point of reaction.

Why was everything tonally conscious almost always formulated in a reactionary way? Why was the harmonic question not recognised and treated as a problem of the avant-garde? Perhaps because the proximity to history is far too ghostly?

One can also express it in a much simpler way. Probably hardly any talented composer has a sonic idea of music that could be presented in a really pleasing way. I can well imagine that one day someone like Mathias Spahlinger might stand up and say: it is now a matter of addressing tonality, history has come this far.

There are some cases I know of where theorists teach strict functional harmony in theory class and write something completely different as composers. There is no connection; it is schizoid. I used to play hooky, thank God. I was afraid of this harmonic system, insofaras it presents itself as a rigid functional framework. Counterpoint is above all a technique, but harmony is history.

2 **Youth in Wachendorf**

This time I did not want to start with music, but with literature, because not only writing, but also reading, is somehow part of the process of composition. When and with what did you start, do you remember the first books you read?

Well, in fact, I had little formal education, but rather taught myself based on what interested me, which in turn required a special energy. My parents, however, were in a reading circle where books could be ordered quarterly. When I was a little older, I then suggested which books they should buy. I then also began to develop a concert series, a kind of concert subscription, for my parents. For a whole year, I put together a programme for every Sunday that they had to listen to: almost real symphony concerts with an overture, a concerto, which was usually a piano concerto, and then after the intermission a symphony. That began quite

conventionally and extended to the *Sacre du Printemps*. My mother would sit knitting and say "turn it down, turn it down!" This was accompanied by handwritten introductions to the works, which I had compiled or copied from various concert guides, including Hans Schnoor, and presented to my parents as a programme booklet.[33] I was their musical educator, so to speak.

And these concerts took place with the help of records?

No, on tape. For my confirmation, I had received a tape recorder with which I recorded almost all the music broadcast by Bayerischer Rundfunk on its third programme, including the musica viva concerts. I can still remember Charles Ives' *Three Places in New England*, which was an exciting experience for me– I was 15 at the time. Then came records that I bought, *Daphnis et Chloé* – that was the most listened to; then Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*, with an introduction to the work spoken by Stravinsky himself in bad English –

Oh yeah, I know this one! For instance, he says, "When the curtain opened on a group of knock-kneed and long-braided Lolitas jumping up and down ..."

I listened to it so often; I still have the record today ... I then also got the score for it in the Nuremberg City Library. I devoured this score like everything else I could get. All this was a solitary activity, because my parents had no time. There were no music lessons at school, either, as I would have liked – then I did that at home. I also bought Hermann Scherchen's conducting book and tried to conduct to the *Sacre* record, which could hardly work because of the constant changes of metre ... Apparently, I also harnessed my brothers and they had to pretend to play along. All of this was self-taught; out of compulsion, I taught myself as much as I could.

Then I had this school friend, whom I have already told you about, who later killed himself and with whom I could not have complicated enough discussions on the train. That was the time when it became fashionable to read Adorno, the *Philosophy of New Music*, and later also *Negative Dialectics*.

When exactly was that? 1964?

Yes, or a little later, in 1965, 1966, even in 1967, until 18, that is, until I finished school. The *Philosophy ofNew Music* irritated me at first, because Adorno badmouths Stravinsky in a clearly partisan way, so much so that I immediately took sides with the weaker. Stravinsky was not weak, of course, but a highly successful composer, but I did not like this sneering tone that Adorno struck there.

How did you become aware that Adorno even existed?

Negative Dialectics was published in 1966, so the book was new at the time.

Had you heard anything about it on the radio or heard about it through friends?

In the run-up to "1968", such intellectual discussions were often held among young people. I was very eager to educate myself and was already living a dual existence. On the one hand, I was very bad as a student, and on the other hand, school was not enough for me, and I tried to get an extra education. To do this, I often bought books; I do this to this day and hardly a day goes by that I am not in a bookstore.

How far away from Nuremberg was your childhood home?

I attended the humanistic high school in Fürth and it was about twenty minutes by train. We lived in Wachendorf near Cadolzburg in Middle Franconia. It took five minutes to get to the train station, twenty minutes to get to Fürth, and then it was a ten-minute walk to the school.

[33] Programmes and introductions to works from 1964–65 can be found in the Walter Zimmermann Collection in the Archive of the Academy of Arts, Berlin (Z 554).

And what did you read back then besides Adorno?

Habermas, too, already, that is, all the philosophers from whom new works appeared at that time. And I read Peter Handke, Herbert Marcuse, and Wilhelm Reich. The book market in Germany was clearer then than it is today. There were a few renowned publishers whose new publications you could keep track of. And these publishers represented authors who, in turn, published regularly and from whom a new book appeared every year or every two years. People waited for these books and went along with these intellectuals, so to speak.

What had you read by Marcuse? The "One-Dimensional Man" (1964)?

In the German translation, it was called *Der eindimensionale Mensch* (1967). But before that, *Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft. A Philosophical Contribution to Sigmund Freud* (1965). I did not come into direct contact with Freud's texts at that time; they seemed dark and complicated to me. Then, in the science series put out by Suhrkamp, which I eagerly read, Noam Chomsky appeared. I found his syntax theory[34] fantastic, and later, when I studied with Otto Laske in Utrecht, I got to know it anew.

But I also liked Mallarmé and set his poem *Éventail* for soprano and some three players. Before that, I had already set Gottfried Benn's poem *Aufblick to* music, and even earlier, at 14 or 15, a poem by Li Bai called *The Empress*; as far back as I can remember, it was my earliest attempt at composition.

By the way, motivated by my confirmation classes, I also read the Bible. After all, my parents were not religious; they were not atheists either, but simply uninterested; they were much too wrapped up in their material interests. Then I cited Bible passages as criticism of my parents, and read psalm texts to my father while he shaved in the morning. These were, of course, texts that I had to learn for confirmation classes, and I wanted to motivate them to care about religious issues for a change, or simply to attend church.

You have two brothers. Are they older or younger?

I am the oldest, Gerhard and Robert are then each three years younger. We also had to work in the store at that time. There were bells: three times I rang, twice Gerhard, once Robert. We would be in the middle of reading and then the bell would ring and we had to weigh potatoes or coals and deliver them. I then took great pains to carve out free space from which my father could not simply order me away. For him, it was a matter of course that the sons worked along. Conquering the conditions in the first place in order to create a mental space for dealing with other, non-ordinary topics was hard work. My mother helped me quite well there; she understood that I had special interests that had to be protected. I was then able to retire to my room immediately after school, but I did not do schoolwork; instead, I studied music, and I did it passionately!

Soon the Wergo records came out. There was *Die Soldaten* by Bernd Alois Zimmermann, a recording conducted by Michael Gielen, which I studied with the score in mind (hand?). Then there was *Agon* by Stravinsky, conducted by Hans Rosbaud, an LP with a white cover and a beautiful commentary, a recording that is still valid today. Then there were also those little Wergo records, for example Debussy's Cello Sonata with Siegfried Palm and Maria Bergmann. There was also electronic music: *Funktion Gelb* (1967) by Gottfried Michael Koenig; this piece completely irritated me at the time.

You asked about literature – strangely enough, I never finished reading novels, I was interested in nonfiction. I also read Karl Marx; I studied *Das Kapital* at leisure. And then Lukács, *Aesthetics* (in four parts, 1972–76) and *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) – I got to know the concept of the classless society and the concept of reification, which Adorno also used. Back then I did not understand at all what "reification" actually meant. Adorno used it, after all, to criticise compositional phases of the non-organic. If a piece of music does not create transitions very organically, that was already a sign of reification for him. According to Adorno, Schoenberg's *Glückliche Hand* also already shows traits of reification because this opera has a symmetrical structure. His ideal corresponded to the *expectation* because the work generates itself out of itself ...

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[34] Noam Chomsky: *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, Cambridge 1965; Engl.: *Aspekte der Syntax-Theorie*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1969 (= Theorie 2).

... and consists only of transitions.

Yes, it was only in retrospect that I understood: On the one hand, my father had this incredible organisational talent and could structure complicated processes very quickly; he probably learned that in the military. On the other hand, it was a parental home without emotional affection. That is tragic, but that is the way it is. They had not learned it any other way, sothey could not pass it on any other way.

My composing then always required this infinite amount of preliminary work. I wrote whole notebooks full until I even got to the point of being able to write music. With my father's talent, the ability to organise material, I almost went overboard and thought my way into composing, eighty percent through intellectual, analytical thinking; the last twenty percent was maybe intuition or poetic inspiration. Thingswere very contrived. I tried to generate all this energy, which often runs through a certain spontaneity in composing, by creating an intellectual framework, architectural states, and so on. That is why I got involved very early on with analysts like Noam Chomsky; for *Akkordarbeit* (for piano, orchestra, and tape, 1971) there was Gilbreth in addition to Marx and Adam Smith.[35] I discovered these theoretical approaches in books, moving from one to the next and the next after that. So Marx mentions Gilbreth and I thought, aha, he's the one who described the phases of labour. Then I got the book and there I promptly found the structural outline of an orchestral piece. One divides the production process into various operations, each of which represents an element of the work, such as disassembling, assembling, and so on. With the Liszt étude, *Grande Étude de Paganini No. 6* [in A minor], which itself refers to Paganini, there is already a vector from the violin solo to the piano, which is essential for the instrumentation of the orchestral piece. Then there is the construction of hierarchies in the orchestra, similar to the work processes in a factory. What Nicolaus A. Huber said yesterday was interesting, the idea that Debussy would have acted more like an engineer. Probably at that time I was also a kind of engineer, not so much a composer in the poetic, emotional sense, but more in a calculating sense. And in preparation for the work of composing, I then gathered the literature in each case.

So, the reading of Hölderlin came later?

Only after I had met Dietrich E. Sattler at the Villa Massimo in Rome in 1988. I was always looking for hypertrophic figures through whom I could experience an intellectual affection that my parents could not give me. Therefore, I idealised such people; to the point of exhaustion I tried to see through them and understand them. Then it became difficult to shake them off again from within. I was looking for the father-substitute, as Freud would say.

It was the same with *Einer ist keiner* (for seven instruments and live electronics, 1972). There I was influenced by Erik H. Erikson, whose book *Identity and Life Cycle* had been published by Suhrkamp at that time (1966).[36] He divided the stages of becoming human into eight phases, and I used that analytically for the composition of *Einer ist keiner*, a piece for seven instruments and live electronics (1972), which I later withdrew. In reality, I did not need to withdraw it at all, because it was never performed, because it needs these strange electronics, where the intervals are measured seismographically according to a consonance-dissonance model between the structures of the players in real time, as in human conflicts, and then modified and distorted in real time. My family situation is in there in the first chapter; it then breaks open and becomes us as we are.

What does it mean to you that there is such a piece, in which you obviously invested a lot of work, which then remained unperformed and now lies far in the distance, yet easily comes back to your memory?

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[35] Frank Bunker Gilbreth (1868-1924), co-founder of Taylorism, studied work processes as well as the design of workplaces. In search of fatigue-free work, he founded the study of movement, using the technique of film and time recording. He eventually came up with 17 basic movement elements (therbligs).

[36] Born in Frankfurt am Main to Danish parents, Erikson (1902-1994) grew up in Germany, then moved to Vienna, where he did an apprenticeship in analysis with Anna Freud, and emigrated to the United States in 1933. He became known as a proponent of psychoanalytic ego psychology, describing the stages of identity in a stage model of psychosocial development by examining early-childhood behaviours through the stages of adulthood. He thereby expanded the psychoanalytic or psychosexual approach by exploring ego identity and addressing historical and social imprints.

It is like an experiment that bore no fruit. I have oftenreincorporated earlier pieces into later ones somehow. So in *Einer ist keiner* there is a metastructure that measures the dissonances of the primary structure and puts them on the pitch of a keyboard, because at that time a keyboard was supposed to control the electronic sounds. This substrate is like a seismograph. I then used the basic structure again in *Kindheitsblock* for viola and celesta (1994). It therefore reappeared much later and only showed itself there, before that it would only have served to control the electronic sounds.

To stay with or return to your early years: When did you start playing the piano?

When I was five or six; there was already a piano in my parents' house. By the way, it is also described in a book, did I give it to you? It is called *Beginnings*.[37] All kinds of composers talk about their beginnings in it. It is quite interesting to see who all is there.

My father asked me when I was five years old if I wanted to play the piano. We had a village piano teacher like that, who was very mediocre, and I was able to surpass him pretty quickly. The mistake was that I stayed with him too long. I played for him and he always just sat there and listened to everything. Late, indeed too late, at fifteen, I came to the pianist Ernst Gröschel[38]. It was a fabulous time with him. It is hard to describe the man, he was such a quaint guy and I responded quite enthusiastically. If I had had such a teacher earlier, missed opportunities ... After his death I acquired his old grand piano from his daughter; he had a grand piano from the Chopin period, a Broadwood, it is now in the Early Music Department of the University of the Arts. Those few years I was with Gröschel were fantastic. I played both volumes of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* ,then the Chopin études, then *Rounds* (1965/67) by Berio and his *Sequenza IV* for piano (1965/66). Then Gröschel brought me into Werner Heider[39]'s ensemble, the ars-nova-ensemble Nuremberg. He had previously been the pianist of this ensemble and cleared the place for me. We played Francis Miroglio, Gilbert Amy, Bo Nilsson, op. 24 by Webern – the *Konzert* for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, trumpet, trombone, violin, viola, and piano – and there was the event of me coming undone in the third movement of the Webern during a concert in Barcelona. I was the youngest, 18 or 19, some of the others were twice my age – there were tears, I went into a crisis and decided not to continue playing in this ensemble.

Before that, I had also played with Heider's ars-nova-ensemble as a pianist at the Tage für Neue Musik in Hannover; for example, we played a piece by Hans Ulrich Engelmann there, *Ophelia*. The most difficult piece in which I participated was by Gilbert Amy: *Inventions* (for flute, marimba + vibraphone, harp, and piano + celesta, 1960/61; rev. 1963). There I was allowed to play celesta in addition to piano. For two months I studied these irrational rhythms at home. Then came the first rehearsal in the ensemble and the conductor Klaus Bernbacher said he had not received the score in time – and beat something because he could hardly read the beat. So, of course, I asked myself: why am I practicing this like mad? I still had very idealistic notions and was simply disappointed that there were musicians who only wanted to represent themselves, had vulgar sayings and basically were not interested in Neue Musik. Then I went to Cologne to Kagel and that ended in disaster. So, it was over with the piano when I came to Cologne. I did not touch it again for two years.

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[37] Walter Zimmermann: *Von Anfang an der Suche*, in: *Anfänge. Erinnerungen zeitgenössischer Komponisteninnen und Komponisten an ihren frühen Instrumentalunterricht*, ed. by Marion Saxer, Hofheim: Wolke 2003, pp. 98–102.

[38] Ernst Gröschel (1918-2000) studied with the Liszt pupil Emil von Sauer in Vienna, among others. Gröschel was one of the first pianists to play Mozart and Beethoven on period keyboards. He was a member of the Bamberg Piano Quartet. Numerous recordings were issued by Bayerischer Rundfunk, including the complete Beethoven sonatas. Vinyl records were released by Colosseum in Nuremberg.

[39] Werner Heider, born in Fürth on January 1, 1930, composer, conductor, and pianist, studied in Nuremberg and Munich. His compositions show strict principles of construction, but also an interest in the dialogue between contemporary music and jazz. As a pianist, he formed a trio with Oliver Colbentson (violin) and Hans Deinzer (clarinet), among others. With Klaus Hashagen, he founded the ars nova ensemble nürnberg in 1968 in the original formation with flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, piano, and percussion, which he actively led until the dissolution of the ensemble in 2015.

Cologne – that was such an established world. Palm everywhere, Kontarsky everywhere, Caskel everywhere. Basically, you also failed because of the arrogance of these people?

Not really. Siegfried Palm, Aloys Kontarsky, and Christoph Caskel have always been very friendly to me. They helped me after it was over with Stockhausen. They defended me. They created a position for me at the Seminar for New Music at the Musikhochschule so that I could keep in touch with the students, and I worked there for another six or nine months. Then I could not do it any longer, especially because I'm not German. What they could do for me at that time, they did; Johannes Fritsch and Vinko Globokar also helped.

The fact that I did not get on so well with them was perhaps also due to the fact that I came from the village and was a little shy – I then also withdrew to the university library. I had a permanent place there. I composed *Akkordarbeit* (1971) in the university library; in the end I even had a doctoral student room there. Im Stavenhof, the road where I lived in Cologne, there were always visitors and always unrest. The feeling of libraries, that is what I liked. Being surrounded by books, I thought that was great; then this anonymity and yet people were there. I also wrote *Beginner's Mind* (1975) there.

I seem to remember that you had a piano in the apartment on Im Stavenhof ...

Yes, that wass my parents'. I always had it with me, at Niehler Damm, where I had lived before, and Im Stavenhof too. But I did not play on it any longer. It was only with *Beginner's Mind* that I began to approach the piano again. This first *prologue* of *Beginner's Mind* is the transcription of a piano improvisation I played after a heavy java clove cigarette.

I notice that almost everything you report from your youth about philosophy and also about music refers to the 20th century ...

All of this was knowledge that I did not acquire at the humanistic high school I attended. I lived out of opposition, wanted to have my finger on the pulse of the times, and admired the theory and science series by Suhrkamp, this really interesting offer for which I was so grateful. I did not read Hegel at the time, only the episodes of Hegel.

Secondhand via Adorno ...

Yes, I read Adorno and Habermas at the time, but I did not get to the roots of idealist philosophy. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and his *aesthetics* seemed too difficult to me at the time. That came later. That reminds me: I had a writer friend, Godehard Schramm, whom I met when I was 19 or 20 and with whom I made the radio play *Hier wohnt Krappmann* for the Bayerischer Rundfunk in Nuremberg in 1969. For this I made a tape collage of all kinds of noises; this was also performed in public once in the studio in Nuremberg. There is a score of it, which I wrote meticulously with stencils; it is a crazy piece and involved an unusual amount of compositional effort for a radio play.

Godehard Schramm, born on December 24, 1943, was six years older than me, a Slavist, and through him I came across Russian literature, learned about the futurist painter Kazimir Malevich, the director Vsevolod Emilievich Meyerhold, and so on. He was ultra-left at that time, probably a conflict with his father was behind it; he then, without me really noticing it, made a total switch to the right. He brought me to Ernst Jünger, whose complete works I read, sprawled across years, only to shake them off again. At that time, I had communicated to Jünger's publishing house that I wanted to compose an opera, so I received his writings quite cheaply. Fritz J. Raddatz then wrote a vituperative article about Jünger in *Die Zeit*when Jünger had a round-numbered birthday , and I reacted with a letter to the editor, canceled my subscription, defended Jünger with the remark, "after the earthquake, you hit the seismograph." The Goethean, encyclopedic quality, of which Jünger knew so much, that impressed me very much. I had no father to read to me in the evenings; I grew up as an autodidact. [40]

[40] Walter Zimmermann: *Offener Brief an C. Raddatz zu Ernst Jünger*, in: *Musikjahr 1985,* Theater am Turm, Frankfurt/M. 1985. - It states: "Now all these Jünger pro-contra debates, which have become idle in the meantime, have not allowed one thing at all, to perceive him as a writer of a 'magical realism', which is much more related to surrealism of French provenance than to German

My wife and partner Nanne, for example, still knows over 150 songs by heart – and several verses. She has such an incredible memory of songs because her mother sang these songs with (to?) her. Her father took her to museums and on botanical field trips. I admire Nanne's power of recall very much – I, on the other hand, forget a lot. My comparatively poorer memory has to do with the fact that I was self-taught out of this wildness, and although my work was motivated by a great need to catch up and a strong will, the appropriation processes took place later and were often faster and more unregulated.

Jünger knew so much, and it took me years to wriggle out of it. Then it says in one of Jünger's diaries that I wanted to compose an opera *Heliopolis*; Helmut Heißenbüttel read that and was horrified that I wanted to do that. Jünger was considered right-wing at the time and practically "was not allowed" to be read ... Today I once again see things in a slightly more relaxed way. I always got stuck on one thing for too long and could only detach myself with difficulty. With Meister Eckhart it also lasted until I could detach myself again. I was always looking somehow for new crutches to be able to walk. And each time I held on to something for quite a long time. Maybe that is part of being an artist, filling in big gaps with a special intensity. So, I ate my way from one semolina porridge to the next.

Where did the money come from to buy so many books?

After all, my parents were not poor; my father was trained as a teacher whose specialty was music and became a baker after the war because he had to provide for our living and my grandfather was a baker. He built a small empire in 25 years. My parents supported me until I was 26 or 27. But I also had income from broadcasting when I was 17 or 18 – as a pianist in an ensemble, as a composer, as an author. Then I wrote radio broadcasts in Cologne for Reinhard Oehlschlägel, the editor of Deutschlandfunk. When I came back from the USA in 1976, I did portrait programmes for him on quite a few composers, even more than he could use ... I also did programmes for WDR, including night programmes in which I spoke spontaneously. Uli Lux was the name of the editor at WDR who commissioned me to do this. I had visited the USA for the first time in 1974/75 and collected material on composers and conducted interviews, which I then published in *Desert Plants in* 1976. This material was also used to create broadcasts, and so I was already able to afford a few books ...

3 **School, Study, and Early Years**

We wanted to talk about the urban-rural divide that you felt strongly about during your school years.

Yes, we wanted to talk about different things; one thing was harmony ...

expressionism. This also points to an aesthetic difficulty of reception. Surrealism was never really perceived in Germany. Breton is known as the protagonist, but who reads Julien Gracq? The twenties were so dominant with their extroverted expressionism that they are now traded as a German brand and even the new paintings by the 'Junge Wilde' invokes it. This extremely clever commercial painting has, moreover, crypto-fascist elements, which one always looks for so strenuously in Jünger. It seems to be a kind of cultural-psychological phenomenon: Jünger has to serve as a scapegoat so that the neo-expressionists can let off steam. Jünger's transformation from a more expressionistic to an almost surreal style can be seen well in the two versions of 'Abenteuerliches Herzens'. The second version already has that frozen, surreal quality of the observed. One of the techniques that Jünger's writing, often dismissed as 'artificial', plays through in 'Abenteuerlichen Herzen' is that of 'stereoscopic enjoyment'. Jünger's great art is to give one observation several views, several possibilities of interpretation, which is constantly directed at a soft object, presenting the respective object observed like a kaleidoscope with all its perceptual possibilities."

We also wanted to talk about harmony, the question of tonality, where you were[41]*influenced by Ilse Storb's Debussy book, and so on.*

Yes, I did not learn a traditional harmony theory because I was very skeptical of formal training, which may have been common at the time, and was out to build my own world.

For me it was the right thing to do, because it did not take away my sense of harmony. Many composers who have gone through a formalised harmony curriculum have later become allergic to certain chords or even any tonal echoes. If you learn too much functional harmony, it is mind-numbing, and I bypassed that very thing. I was able to hear sounds without them being filtered through the lens of history . And in that, Debussy and the knowledge of Debussy, who eluded César Franck and the Schola cantorum, was very useful to me. He used harmony and certain modal elements primarily as colour values, basically a "disentanglement," a levering out of harmonic theory ... I experienced harmony theory or the examination of harmony more gently and not like a battle of who survives, as Schoenberg did: Twelve-tone technique on the one hand and all the 19th-century forms on the other, which, after all, are still in his work, the waltzes and other dances, their typical gestures, the sonata and suite movements ... I did not experience that kind of battlefield. Debussy, after all, was much more refined; he undermined the whole thing, as it were.

This urban-rural contrast, as I experienced it, is related to the feeling of a lost innocence. More strongly than the conflicts with father and mother, I experienced the conflict between two places. The city was structured differently, and I felt an incredible strangeness. This was not only due to the fact that I was the only one at school – I attended the humanistic Heinrich Schliemann Gymnasium in Fürth – who came from a comparatively simple family; the others were sons of academics, professors, doctors, and so on – and then there was the fact that I was getting fat at the time, and then you are immediately an outcast. For example, I did not participate in physical education classes, which the teacher accepted ... social contacts were not good, either. I had only one school friend; with the others I had almost nothing in common, so hardly any group contacts ... I had forgotten one school friend until he recently wrote me very moving words:

> "Possibly you will not remember me, and many hours spent together in Wachendorf and (for me very important) conversations. [...] You, two years older than me, were somehow an intellectual role model for me. For my 14th birthday you gave me two Suhrkamp books, *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe* and *Biedermann und die Brandstifter*, the first books beyond Karl May. With this gift, you ignited my love of literature, which remains unbroken to this day – one of the essential constants in my life, for which I am still very grateful to you. For your birthday wishes you enclosed the poem *Galgenberg* by Morgenstern, which ends with the words: ' ... you will know life better if you learn to understand it'. You also played a part in my love of film, which has remained unbroken to this day. Back then (as an older man) you took me to Nuremberg to see the films *Children of Olympus* and *Ashes and Diamonds*. These were also initiations for me, beyond Karl May."

An image that has remained with me: there was a lot of sandstone in the city, and on the way to school I used to brush my hands along the walls of houses made of porous sandstone. This feeling and this colour – the sandstone was ochre – have remained with me, and later in my string quartet *Keuper* (1980) I took up this sensation ...

Then I started composing. The first piece was written when I was 13 or 14, a little thing, a piano piece. Then – I was already 15, 16 – I composed *Psalm 23* in Latin after the Vulgate for choir with string orchestra and timpani; that was my confirmation psalm. The piece was not played because the timpani would have had to be retuned more often. After that I wrote a string quartet influenced by Bartók; there was a shorter and a longer version, but that was not played, either. Then, at 17 or 18, this poem by Gottfried Benn, *Aufblick* for mezzo-soprano and eleven instruments (1967), and then came *Éventail* by Mallarmé for soprano, flute, cello, and piano (1968). The fact that I reached for this poem already went back to Boulez, *Pli selon Pli* (1957-62 [and of course subsequent revisions]): I had already heard *"Improvisation sur Mallarmé"* from *Pli selon Pli in* a concert by the ars-nova-ensemble, and it made an incredible impression on me. I had also heard Henze's *ymphony No. 1* (1947; new version 1963) at that time and had written a *Study for Orchestra* (1967).

That was a life that was not controlled by a teacher, school, or anyone else. Later, I sometimes regretted that I was not taken to a teacher at that time and that I could not attend a music high school; nobody thought

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[41] Ilse Storb: *Untersuchungen zur Auflösung der funktionalen Harmonik in den Klavierwerken von Claude Debussy*, Diss. phil., Cologne 1967.

of that back then. My self-instruction was made possible by the Nuremberg public library, where I could borrow books and scores, by my tape recorder, and by my own room, where I could read and study all this.

And the music lessons in schools?

They were disappointing. But then I sang in the teachers' choral society, I had a high baritone voice, but I sang in the tenors because they needed voices there. We were involved in the performance of various oratorios – Haydn's *The Creation* and *The Seasons,* then Mozart's *Requiem*. I also sang in the choir of the Realgymnasium, a girls' high school; they needed singers, too. And with this school choir we also went on trips. And finally, I myself formed a circle at school, five or six people, who sang a Machaut mass. I intoned it on the piano and so we rehearsed it just for us - for me it was very important to get to know [42]the hocketing technique; that was like an awakening experience. There was consequently no shortage musical activity going on.

And then the private teachers – there I had Ernst Gröschel, unfortunately too late, who sent me through the entire piano literature and finally Werner Heider (cf. FN 36), with whom I received lessons in composition, also privately. He then also accepted me into the ars-nova-ensemble and we met again and again later, even though we went different ways aesthetically. He was a kind of composer prince of that region, and I always remained the prodigal son that you would not want at home. The school I attended was a disaster, with post-traumatic teachers influenced by the Nazi dictatorship. In 1970 I then moved to Cologne.

Can we briefly return to Ilse Storb's book on Debussy?

She formalised Debussy's harmony by showing, through a table of note examples, that what was otherwise forbidden was allowed there: parallel fifths, parallel movements, various tonal mixtures partly composed of modes, etc. That was like a little primer for me – the main thing was not to be reminded of functional tonality ... I also had Hindemith's *Instructions in Tonal Composition* in my hand for a short time, but immediately put them away again. I always liked the impressionists incredibly well. Very early on I also played *Children's Corner*, and among the first records I owned were Stravinsky's *Sacre* and Debussy's *Préludes* with Gieseking, but only the first volume; I discovered the second much later.

A classic recording ...
Yes, I was thrilled. These *Préludes* by Debussy were for me the most enigmatic world I could enter. The fact that at the end there was the title in brackets, so that there was some allusion after all, but just not so obtrusive – was also fascinating. I then also did auditions at the high school, *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, *La sérénade interrompue* (sings) ...

Now I remember - with the school choir we also once did the *Liebesliederwalzer* by Brahms; I played them together with the music teacher. But Debussy was my world, very early on. Ravel seemed too difficult for me, but in the first volume of the *Préludes* I played constantly, especially very loudly the *Cathédrale engloutie* – I was already thinking about the audience. The piano was on the second floor and my parents had the store downstairs; the louder I played, the more people who were shopping downstairs could hear me. Once they were remodeling and the piano was right next to the store, I improvised for hours ...

In Debussy's style?

In all kinds of styles, sometimes it was Beethoven, sometimes Liszt. I pretended it was by Beethoven, but it was made up and was supposed to make people think if possible –mm, a good pianist, but I was probably more of a lunatic pianist ...

Did you play Beethoven in parallel with Debussy? So you had no aversion to the German tradition?

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[42] The hocketing technique is a polyphonic setting technique that was cultivated from 1200 to 1400 and rediscovered in the 20th century. The voices complement each other – for example, a melody can be divided between two voices in such a way that one pauses while the other plays one, two, or even a few melody-bearing notes.

No, not at all, I was familiar with them. With the piano teacher I had in Wachendorf before Ernst Gröschel, I learned to play almost all the Mozart sonatas and the first volume of the Beethoven sonatas – the second then with Gröschel – and of course Bach.

To activate my compositional imagination, tonality was not useful to me. Riemann's music theory is the after-the-fact description of an invention; that was, so to speak, museum-like, historical, while Debussy opened up. That was something else, getting beyond Debussy to another world ...

It is inherent in music theory that it is always somewhat descriptive ...

Yes, but it is also part of the genesis of a compositional style – and today, in teaching, there is often no distinction at all between the slow genesis that has led to certain techniques and styles, and the invention of something new, the genesis of tonality on the one hand, and this point on the other, where this turns dialectically.

Hugo Riemann has already looked back at tonality. It is a strange juxtaposition of theory and practice: there is an incredible amount of cramming, but the composers who also take music theory at this university, which is very difficult, and who know all that well, then move as far away from it as possible as composers, as if theory were just a historical thing. I think this is crazy. These theoretical descriptions are formalisations and form cross-sections through the history of music; they do not carry the flow of history, the genesis, but artificially stop the development. After all, Neue Musik has long since carried its theory within itself and stands in a historical continuity. Quite a few students or younger composers do not remain within the flow of history, but rather separate themselves from it. Here the theory, there the practice. That is a strange way of thinking about history ...

But it may also be that from an early age I had no access to this expressionist music, to composers like Schreker, etc., who lay outside my world of feeling. I was attracted to Debussy, the first volume of the *Préludes*, and then Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky published this wonderful recording of *En blanc et noir* for two pianos – that fascinated me. But then came Boulez, *Le Marteau sans Maître* (1953/54) – since when could I have known that?

Philips had a record very early on, combined with Stockhausen's "Zeitmaße" in the recording with Robert Craft. I had that when I was 16 or 17 at the beginning of the '60s.

I had the recording with Bruno Maderna. I then bought the score of *Marteau for* this record. Funnily enough, that was before Schoenberg, whose *Pierrot Lunaire* I only got to know after Boulez, which is why it already seemed too historical to me.

And Webern?

At first, I only knew Webern's Konzert op. 24 because I had played it with the ars-nova-ensemble.

It is interesting to me in that almost everything you have described so far has been pretty parallel to my development and experiences – with the exception that I had all the Webern scores pretty early on.

I got to know Webern through the recordings with Robert Craft, later I also had the score of the cantata *Das Augenlicht* op. 26 at some point. Mahler was also rather alien to me at that time with the exception of the first and fourth symphonies, which I enjoyed listening to, I also liked Schoenberg's *Serenade* op. 24; but what I found completely abhorrent was the stilted *Wind Quintet* op. 26. I had the Wergo recording of this piece – five different wind worlds and then this intense counterpoint – too much of everything – I was so spoiled by this depth and breadth of impressionist music, this elegance of French music, to which Boulez also belonged. Maybe this also had to do with my French teacher, Dr. Ott; I was very good at French and learned it with enthusiasm. France, and French language and culture, seemed to me to be a way out of this gloomy, dark ancient Greek stuff and this Nazi atmosphere that was still emanating from the teachers. Then we played Gilbert Amy, *Inventions* for flute, marimba + vibraphone, harp, and piano + celesta (1960/61; rev. 1963) – on celesta and piano at the same time, which was perhaps not a masterpiece, but somehow fantastic. And then I borrowed Boulez's sonatas and tried to play the third sonata. That was exciting, because sound

and idea merged. With the German composers, the structure, the idea of something, seemed to me to dominate over the sonic result. When I compared how Stockhausen solved the same problem – the opposition of structure and sound – in *Klavierstück XI,* I still found Boulez somehow more convincing. I also played Stockhausen's piano pieces 9, 8 also and 7, 6 is insanely difficult, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 of course – I stood in front of it amazed. By Niccolò Castiglioni I played the piano pieces *Inizio di Movimento* (1958) and *Cangianti* (1959) and found this bright, crystalline world very beautiful. I also played in an ensemble work by Castiglioni, *Tropi* (1959). Eventually I heard that Castiglioni had a nervous breakdown at some point and would only write childlike, naïve music.

Yes, in a way, yet heremained his own ...

Berio, *Circles* for soprano, harp, and two percussionists (1960) – of course I find it a great piece, the *Sinfonia* less so. That certain sound he found there in *Circles*, the harp part, which comes from French music and has something to do with Boulez, the wonderful use of the percussion and then Cathy Berberian ... Stockhausen's *Zyklus* for one percussionist (1959) is something dozier in comparison ...

The "Circles" show a gigantic conception of form ...

I fled didactics; I had enough of teachers and immediately felt it when someone or something wanted to lecture me on music. That is why I also quickly said goodbye to political music; I was intolerant of raised forefingers that put music "in service" ...

Do you mean Mathias Spahlinger?

I do not know it from Spahlinger, rather from Nicolaus A. Huber – again a rather strange mixture of C. G. Jung and Marx ... No, I was thinking especially of Henze, who – perhaps to redeem his music – made such a drastic political turn under the impression of the student movement around 1968, or also of Penderecki. Nono I admired from a certain distance; I liked his early stuff. Then I saw him at a performance of *Intolleranza* in Nuremberg in 1970. There the hall went wild, fists were waved; Vietnamese or Vietcong flags were waved, and Nono went on stage and raised his fist as well. I sat there and was pretty much unaffected by it; I registered it that way. This bombast of the *Intolleranza* – I just did not understand it.

But you were inspired by "La fabbrica illuminata" (for mezzo-soprano and tape, 1964)?

Yes, then I wanted to copy that. I once had such a phase. I tried it out with this one recording of the industrial sounds of the MAN company in Nuremberg. I was somewhat affected by this movement, but it was basically a caper. After that, in my first year in Cologne, came this plan for a radio play with deaf-mutes. I visited deaf-mute schools at that time and recorded all kinds of speech formulations, the sounds that the children made in order to speak. I recorded about twenty tapes to make a radio play. Then I realised that I was using these people as material and erased the tapes again ...

What you had already noticed and resented with Kagel ...

Yes, yes, in this course in psychiatry. I saw through this duplicity of making politically or humanly engaged music quite quickly. As Morton Feldman later said, "You cannot attack people who write politically motivated music, they hide behind their noble goals." In an extreme case: whoever finds Penderecki's Hiroshima piece miserable gets the answer, "Are you for the atomic bomb?" A difficult subject ...

Your piece Akkordarbeit for piano and orchestra (1971)*: Why did you come to explore a tonal sound world? Was the soloist with Paganini paraphrases in the foreground?*

This is certainly a piece *ex negativo*, in that I dismantle Liszt's Paganini étude as a negative foil. For me, the piece was an attempt to make a sociological image of a society in which virtuosity is representative of the one who accumulates wealth. I was also reading Marx at the time. Like a car that comes out of the factory, the final product is perhaps the Liszt. And the body is perhaps Paganini ... The dismantling or deconstruction

of this étude can be heard in this piece, because one knows the product, the starting point. That is where this little reproduction takes place in the piece, that I put all the parts together again, that they reunite in a whole.

In essence not so farremoved from Stockhausen's view, practiced in the "Hymnen", to use known material and to attach importance to the processing. He uses quite familiar things ...

When are they from?

1967

Oh, so maybe I already knew it back then? I do not remember what the model for the piece was.

Tonal materials were processed throughout the sixties, especially by Bernd Alois Zimmermann ...

But I did not know these things so well that I would have referred to them. I think I rather developed that out of myself, because I wanted to represent something like that. It certainly also had to do with chordal work, work with the three triads, the supporting pillars of tonality, and my aversion to them.

But already in the next piece In Understanding Music... – *the language that emerges from it is a tonal one, so to speak.*

I do not like that at all today. That there is this unisono at the end of these two pieces, I find it dramaturgically cheap and I also do not know anymore how it came about, probably out of impatience. It is just the young composer thinking, how do I create an effect so that I become famous – and out of this desire something like this arises. At that time, I also dreamed of giant symphonies, which Wolfgang Rihm was then composing, But soon I realised that this was immature, adolescent, and to this day I am annoyed that *In Understanding Music...* ends on such a positive note.

Yes, but it is not a tragic melody, it is quite a cheerful one ...

In *Akkordarbeit*, the revolution takes place, after all – against the Liszt – with the twelve-tone melody; the workers hit upon the twelve-tone melody, that is almost socialist-realist ... terrible!

How did you react when, for example, Wolfgang Rihm began to bring such remnants of tonality?

I met Wolfgang at a party in Cologne. That was after this *Einer ist keiner* (for seven instruments and live electronics, 1972), during that time of crisis after Moeck had thrown me out and I could not compose for two years. Wolfgang was already a socialite at that time. I always liked him very much as a person and still do. How did I relate to him then? I was so occupied with my own becoming and not becoming that I did not follow his development at all back then, although I heard pieces by him on the radio from time to time ... My obstructed career, which also includes the fact that I did not have a publisher for ten years, certainly also has something to do with my last name especially in Cologne. It was probably a disadvantage in terms of market strategy to go to a city where a very famous Zimmermann had just died. On the other hand, this city gave me an energy I would not have had otherwise, resilience as well. It did benefit me in the end. I remember taking *Beginner's Mind* to Aloys Kontarsky, who received me quite graciously ...

This cycle would not have been his thing ...

Sure; but the problem was that at that time I often simply acted out of defiance. Out of defiance arose a piece like *Gelassenheit* (for alto with portative organ and two guitars, Meister Eckhart, 1975), which is, as it were, a "neo-Grecian" like Satie – a strictly Gregorian piece, in terms of modes and voice leading, without liberties in it. It was premiered in Witten and people thought, what happened now? That was only four years after *Akkordarbeit*. I wrote the piece in Italy – in a house where Roberto Majek lived, a psychologically fragile man who had a rich Dutch patron who provided him with a house near Casale Maritimo in Tuscany where

concerts were held. Franco Evangelisti and a few people from the group Nuova Consonanza were guests there. The world of new music was apparently completely forgotten at that moment, when I composed *Gelassenheit*. Such a great expectation had been built up with *Akkordarbeit*; I was thought to be a scandalous composer or something – and suddenly all that was gone ... That also has to do with my easy affectability, I still feel that way to some extent today; I had read about Meister Eckhart in Cage's *Silence* and then I immediately read Eckhart, even visited the Eckhart Institute in Cologne, where I even got to know Josef Quint, the Eckhart scholar.

Somehow for me, when you mention a name I do not know, I research it and go to the libraries and start reading to find out what it is all about. So now, since you mentioned the name, I have been reading the poet John Ashbery (1927–2017) every spare minute. Once I get afflicted by something, I enter completely into such a world that is foreign to me – and start thinking my way into it as if blinded by it. Back then I composed something that could have been created in the time of Meister Eckhart, far away from the world of new music, the "family", within which Wolfgang Rihm grew up and to which I did not belong. I always pursued my own stories, which often had nothing at all to do with new music. And I searched for them, especially in libraries – endlessly.

For example, there was Professor Helmut Petri, who had lived among the Australian Aborigines and whose institute was only two houses away from the house where Josef Quint was doing research on Meister Eckhart. I heard about it, so I visited him and became interested in Meister Eckhart and the Australian Aborigines almost at the same time ... And so I just read all kinds of books on Gregorian music at that time.

After that came this book by Shunryū Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* (1970), which stayed with me for a year and a half, trying to structure my distance from new music, and so on.

At home I have a rather old collection of your scores, which also includes " Gelassenheit" (for alto with portative organ and two guitars, Meister Eckhart, 1975). That was then called differently "Four Pieces from the Tradition", one of them was the "Spanish Journey" ...

Yes, these were four tonal pieces, or let me say more correctly atonal pieces that contain tonal elements. It was in the transitional period to *Lokale Musik* and at that time I did not know where to put these pieces and just called them that or grouped them together. Today, *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* (for string quartet, 1977), the choral piece *Aus Nah und Fern* (1977) belong to the work group *Lokale Musik* – this went back to a childhood experience; my father had positioned three choirs in the village during a singing festival and I ran back and forth between these three places, heard one choir become quieter, the other louder and about this phenomenon I composed this piece; a revised version of it went into *Über die Dörfer* (1985/86).

The NDR Choir performed *Aus Nah und Fern* once – four tonal pieces or four atonal pieces with tonality – and then *Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein* for baritone, ud, qanun, nay, rabab, and percussion (1976; rev. 1993). *The Spanish Journey* – I am somewhat ashamed of it today! I was then tryingto produce a Tunisian court music of the Nuba ed Dhil, which I analysed, like a riff on the minstrels. It was performed on WDR in the series "Musik der Zeit" , when,to take the provocation to the extreme, I performed in a Zimmermann suit, that is, in this black robe with white buttons and so on. I was simply caught up in an attitude of defiance against Neue Musik. Maybe I was a bit like Satie, who I hardly knew anything about at the time. But I can now imagine retrospectively what an oddball existence he must have led in Paris.

I had gained some trust in the WDR editor Wolfgang Becker. Around 1976/77 I made several broadcasts about North African music for him, and we once sat together in the canteen and talked about the plan for some WDR festival. He asked what pieces I would suggest for it. I replied that a key piece for me was the piano piece *Cheap Imitation* (1969) by John Cage, inspired by Satie's *Socrate* – by the way, this kind of unanimity (monody?) was once analysed by Nicolaus A. Huber, who also appreciates the piece. And then Becker asked me what I would call such a festival; I said "New Simplicity" and suggested to him other pieces by other composers, for example Michael von Biel. I wanted to include *Das klingende Grün* (1979), based on children's songs and William Blake's texts: This remained unperformed at the time, but later resulted in *Songs of Innocence & Experience* for string quartet with tape (1996). Instead, in 1977, *Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein. Musikgeschichten über den Kontakt von Orient und Okzident* (for baritone and Arabic instruments, 1976) was premiered.

Out of this festival mechanism, however, other pieces that had nothing to do with the original idea of new simplicity had to be programmed, and so Wolfgang Rihm and the "neo-romanticists", so apostrophised

at the time, came to have this label.[43] And now it happened that the catchword "new simplicity" migrated to the opposite camp and was adopted there. To this day, what I meant by it is not understood. In *Feedback Papers 13* in 1977 there was a discussion between Johannes Fritsch, Kevin Volans and me about this term – and then I suddenly saw an advertisement from Schott-Verlag promoting these neo-romanticists, including several students of Ligeti. Finally, there was a symposium at Otto Kolleritsch's in Graz, where this "New Simplicity" that had arisen so recently was discussed. I thought, what is going on here? – four neo-romanticists, I did not want to belong to this club. From this the decision was made: I found my *Beginner Studio* in Cologne, where I can do what I think is right.

By the way, in the concert series "Musik der Zeit" there were also quite wonderful things like a performance of Stockhausen's *Momente* with Grace Bumbry (not Martina Arroyo, she was earlier), who sang outstandingly. Then came the somewhat staid group of eight Cologne composers, including Manfred Niehaus, Hans Ulrich Humpert, Bojidar Dimov, York Höller, etc., to which I also felt I did not belong. Through my recalcitrance, however, I also made it impossible for myself to belong anywhere.

You said you did not notice that there were such pieces with tonal elements in Rihm, but even earlier there were in Kagel ...

Yes, I did notice that, but I had already finished with Kagel much earlier, because he disappointed me very much with his egomania and this ambition with which he pushed through his interests. Then there was this competition between Kagel and Stockhausen. Kagel was the city dweller who always had the laughs on his side, and Stockhausen was the country cosmic who had already retired to Kürten by then. Kagel's pieces were always longer, cultivated and professionally notated. "Country Music" or *Kantrimiusik* (1973/75) is of course a brilliant piece, what ideas and fantasies are in it, but this self-indulgence, this self-indulgence rather harmed his music, in which he increasingly had to tread everything epically wide. Pieces like the *St. Bach Passion* (1985).

... but that was much later ...

I didn't listen to it any more. The early stuff is fantastic –*Match* (1964), the Beethoven film *Ludwig van* (1969); already in Nuremberg I had admired this piece *Unter Strom* with the guitarist K. H. Böttcher. But then these later tonal pieces by Kagel were also retrospective – our culture is over, and we can only live off the husks. That does not sit well with me at all. What Kagel calls "country music" or *Kantrimiusik*, I call *Lokale Musik* – with him it is a cynical irony. With me, on the contrary, there is an intimate irony, floating, which comes from Novalis and also haslinks to the naïve phase of Cage. The beautiful pure sound of his naïve piano pieces like *A Room* (1943) or *Waiting* (1952) encouraged me ... I then found Cage's later pieces like *HPSCHD* for one to seven harpsichords and electronics (together with Lejaren Hiller, 1967/69) more difficult. Cage cultivated the ideas of maximisation and minimalisation – both extremes, in both directions ...

Yes, deliberately ...

Then I heard Rihm's piano trios in Düsseldorf, which go back to Schumann with the title *Fremde Szenen* – this arbitrariness of structuring and then suddenly quite cheeky Schumann quotations; that was again something completely different from what I wanted.

You were then at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht from 1970 –73? How did you get there? How did you learn about it?

I got there through Clarence Barlow, whom I had met in Cologne. We registered there and went there every week from Cologne for two days – we, that was Clarence, Allen Cartwright, and me. Then we also got to know the "liberated" Holland, suddenly there were lots of naked people running around and I came from

[43] Hans-Jürgen von Bose, Hans-Christian von Dadelsen, Peter Michael Hamel, Detlev Müller-Siemens, Wolfgang Rihm, Wolfgang von Schweinitz, Ulrich Stranz, Manfred Trojahn.

the country ... It would have been better if I had lived there, so that I could get more involved in the work at the institute. There I got to know Otto E. Laske, whose work I could also study at home, because in order to get to know it, one did not necessarily to be physically present. Nobody was interested in Laske at that time; he was an outsider within the institute. There was a connection from Laske to Noam Chomsky, whose work on syntax theory I already knew. Laske interested me when I realised he was referring to Chomsky, because I, too, was looking for a musical language. Laske's work suggested that one could generate musical meanings from abstract musical structures in a few years. His research was based on American behaviorism and positivism, which were unknown to me at the time. Clarence and the others worked more practically; they had more direct access to machines and programming; I was interested in all this more theoretically.

At the same time, I was a guest student in Amsterdam at the Ethnomusicological Museum "Jaap Kunst".[44] I was there more often and for longer periods; I had a Canadian friend there with whom I could stay. We were often at the Litterair Café, where I sometimes played the piano. And at the museum I briefly participated in a Javanese gamelan – I was the second bonang player who always had to imitate the first one in a syncopated way. Incidentally, I collected and photocopied an insane amount of specialist literature at this centre – still searching for universals of expression, for musical archetypes. In turn, I was able to connect this research well with Laske, who was also searching for expression, for meaning, and had come up with a "modal logic." This was a kind of "set theory," in which it was not the individual tone that was important, but a morpheme, a small motif, that was the unity from which one started.

Orgon I from *In Understanding Music...* and *Orgon II, Katharsis Strategien* (for didgeridoo, corroboree singer, two actors, and two tapes, 1974) were created during this period. These works would have been generated from the ethnomusicological approach: the music of the Australian aborigines as a foil and catharsis as an archetypal process not only of drama theory and dramaturgy, but as purification and purification in a psychological sense as well. At that time I went through an incredible amount of literary excerpts on the semantic connection between linguistic theory and ethnological structures, always looking for such archetypal expressions.

Orgon project, exposé

For the last year I have been working as a composer on the ORGON project, the aim of which is to use sounds to release definable energies in people in order to support the processing of psychosomatic disorders. The project is divided into four phases, which in a step-by-step approach will ultimately provide material for concrete use in an optimal environment with the design of energy-releasing sounds.

While searching for such an environment, I came across the vacant house "Im Stavenhof 13", which is owned by the city of Cologne and is set for demolition. The architecture of the four-story building is ideal for the construction of an ORGON music center. The 12 rooms are to be filled with activities, all of which belong to the field of non-verbal therapy and, the further up the visitor goes, the closer he gets to the to the specific problem area of the energy-releasing effect of music.

The non-verbal forms of therapy will be embedded in preparatory, group dynamic, and processing activities, and will be supervised by social pedagogues, a psychologist, and a psychiatrist or psychoanalyst. The group that will collaborate in the functioning of the house includes for the time being: Dr. Johannes Kneutgen, ethologist, who is currently doing basic research on music therapy at the Landesnervenklinik Bonn, Dagmar von Biel, who has performed "Stimmung" by Karlheinz Stockhausen all over the world with the collegium vocale Köln and is currently training as a breath therapist, Walter Zimmermann, composer, trained at the Institute for Sonology Utrecht.

The activities are tentatively composed as follows:

physiological therapy	Kneutgen
Respiratory therapy	Biel
Organic music	Zimmermann
ORGON music	
(in the sound room)	Zimmermann & ORGON Ensemble
preparatory activities	social pedagogues

[44] Jaap Kunst (1891–1960) contributed fundamentally to the knowledge and understanding of Indonesian music through his field research in Indonesia in 1920 and 1934 as well as his theoretical work. The fact that he introduced the term "ethnomusicology" instead of the previous "comparative musicology" meant a shift in emphasis toward the subject and its self-image. The comparative analysis of musical structures and styles was replaced by approaches that included the respective individual culture and its historical environment.

group dynamic activities	psychologist
reprocessing activities	psychiatrist or psychoanalyst

On the top floor, the central room of the house is to be set up, the so-called sounding room, which will suggest the energy-releasing sounds in an optimal acoustic environment – sound intense enough to the point of feeling the vibrations through KLIPPSCHORN loudspeakers. For the production of these sounds an ensemble is formed, which is probably composed of the Kontarsky student Herbert Henck (modulated piano), the Stockhausen student Kevin Volans (electronium), and Walter Zimmermann (electronic organ & electronic circuits).
The first three years are intended to advance the basic research of the individual participants in order to develop a concept that will make the centre functional and thus exert an attraction on target groups as something holistic and organic. Above all, the consistency of the centre must be guaranteed, i.e., to create a balance between variety and homogeneity in what is offered. Only when such a concept has been worked out can the house be opened. [45]

One consequence of this was that I wanted to found an institute in Cologne with Manfred Lexa; it was called SMIL, which means *Studio for Musical Intelligence – Laboratory* and was meant to finance our Orgon Music Centre.

For this Orgon Music Centre we wanted to rent a former brothel in Cologne that was empty. Stockhausen wrote us a letter of recommendation for this project to the Cultural Office, attention Mr. Hackenberg. There were small, somewhat crooked rooms there – and in each room you were supposed to be able to do sound research or music therapy or something like that. Dagmar von Biel would also have been involved. Building on research from linguistics, ethnology, etc., we looked for archetypal forms of expression, and the experience of Kagel's music-therapy course again played a role. With Kagel, I had become acquainted with the behavioural scientist Johannes Kneutgen; as an ethologist, he studied the behaviour of animals, as did Konrad Lorenz, in order to derive structures of human behaviour from them.

I encountered this cross-connection again decades later in the book *Milles plateaux* (1980) by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. There is the concept of *ritornello,* which ethologists also describe. It is about how animals mark their territories and so on, and the phenomenon of feedback. That works in a similar way to the feedback idea that we had back then, which is that humans can get a balance, an equilibrium, through their nature and despite their inbalance, through sound.

Interestingly, in Gregory Bateson's volume *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* there is a chapter about the "floating balance".[46] This has to do with the "double bind" effect, which according to Gregory Bateson can be attributed to the genesis of schizophrenia and which Cage also described: simultaneous attraction and repulsion. So there is the story of Cage, who was hugely excited because his parents had promised him to go out on Sunday, but when Sunday finally came, no one talked about it. Balinese women have been observed to take their children to the breast and take them away again, so that a "flow equilibrium" is created – attachment and detachment completely without reflex. This is said to stabilise the physical and psychological development of children. This occurs again with the Russian-Belgian Ilya Prigogine in the chapter *"Far from equilibrium"* in his book *Dialogue with Nature* (1986). Prigogine takes this from physics, from thermodynamics and aerodynamics. He speaks of "flux" and "force," of a new stability of states that can occur in nature only when things are kept far from equilibrium for a certain time. This leads to the concept of "clinamen" in Lucretius. [47]

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[45] *Orgon Musik Zentrum*, in: Walter Zimmermann: *Insel Musik*, Cologne: Beginner Press 1981, pp. 61–69, here: p. 62. - Here are further, more detailed texts as well as the reprint of Stockhausen's letter of recommendation. http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/orgon-musik-zentrum-im-stavenhof-13/

[46] Gregory Bateson: *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology*, Chicago / Illinois: University of Chicago Press 1972; Engl. as *Ökologie des Geistes. Anthropological, Psychological, Biological, and Epistemological Perspectives,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1981, pp. 156–181.

[47] Clinamen [Greek: slight deviation] is the term used by Epicurus and Lucretius to describe chance in the context of determinism, a (natural) law-like (pre-)determination. This is based on the idea that the world consists of the smallest particles, of atoms, which are in an incessant fall through empty space. In this case they would remain separated, if there were not smallest *movement deviations*, by which it comes to agglomerations and to the appearances of the sensory world. So it is said in Lucretius, *De rerum natura* (book 2, v. 217–224):

> The atoms, as their own weight bears them down
> Plumb through the void, at scarce determined times,
> In scarce determined places, from their course
> Decline a little- call it, so to speak,
> Mere changed trend. For were it not their wont

What I really want to say is that things that were already laid out at that time led to compositions much later.

What happened to that centre back then?

Nothing, it was over before it even started. The house was demolished. The moment we submitted the applications, the city noticed that there was an empty house. Parking spaces were then built there.

The *Orgon Project* would have had actually four stages: phase blue, phase red, phase yellow, and phase green. The second stage would have been, as already said, the *catharsis strategies* (see the text on my homepage), the third probably anthropological research, and the fourth stage the results in this centre. I had totally distanced myself meanwhile from Neue Musik. Then came Zen Buddhism. Dagmar von Biel brought me *Zen Mind*, *Beginner's Mind* (1970) by Shunryū Suzuki, for me after Meister Eckhart the most important book at that time.

What was the chronology, on the one hand Orgon *projects, on the other hand* In Understanding Music...*?*

They went in parallel; on the one hand I studied "Artificial Intelligence" (AI) with Laske in Utrecht and on the other hand ethnology in Amsterdam. But behind that was the attempt to find archetypes. I was also so interested in Nicolaus A. Huber, who made this piece *Aion* for four-channel tape and smells (1968/72). The question of archetypes is very controversial. Some say that there are no such things; they are exclusively acculturated forms. C. G. Jung believed that he had observed them in schizophrenics, whose psyche is said to have preserved intact parts somewhere, which went buried in others – but this is a hypothesis, theory.

That *In Understanding Music...* should represent AI was one part of the overall project; the other half was about anthropological and psychological research. At a third stage, the two should have merged into a functioning form of therapy.

At least you did not completely retire from composing *new music then.*

A piece comes to mind that impressed me very much, *Alphabet für Liège* (1972)[48] by Karlheinz Stockhausen. I went to Liège for the premiere and was very enthusiastic. Dagmar von Biel was there as a singer. She sang along in the *Indian Songs*. The piece has completely sunk into my memory ... At that time, through this *Alphabet für Liège,* I became aware that music has a magical power. There was also Hugh Davies, the Englishman who could make a glass shatter by means of a transducer attached to the glass. That inspired me at the time for the beginning of *Einer ist keiner* (for seven instruments and live electronics, 1972) – there is a glass shattering. And that, by the way, was also the original idea for the centre, that in each room you have something like your own therapeutic instrument or a different therapeutic possibility. We were all full of utopias back then ...

In Liège I then also got to know Pousseur[49]. The fact that a serialist simply dares to bring in quotations of foreign music or concrete things in a piece appealed to me: his orchestral piece *Couleurs croisées (*1967)

Thuswise to swerve, down would they fall, each one,
Like drops of rain, through the unbottomed void;
And then collisions ne'er could be nor blows
Among the primal elements; and thus
Nature would never have created aught.

Transl.: William Ellery Leonard. E. P. Dutton. 1916
Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, BOOK II, line 216 (tufts.edu)

[48] *Alphabet für Liège*. 13 musical pictures for soloists and duos (vocal, all with electroacoustic instruments). A complete performance takes about four hours. The *Indian Songs* are a part of *Alphabet for Liège*, and some of them were published separately.

[49] Henri Pousseur (1929–2009) was a regular participant at the Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt and the Donaueschingen Festival from 1952. In 1957 he worked with Luciano Berio and Bruno Maderna at the Studio di Fonologia Musicale in Milan and later with Stockhausen at the Studio for Electronic Music in Cologne. In 1958 he founded the Studio de musique électronique Apelac in Brussels. From 1970 he taught at the University of Liège, where he founded the Centre de Recherches et de Formation Musicales de Wallonie (CRFMW; since 2010: Centre Henri Pousseur) with Pierre Bartholomée and Philippe Boesmans. In 1975 he became director of the Liège Conservatory of Music (the Liège Conservatoire). From 1985–87, he directed the Institut de pédagogie musicale in Paris to pave the way for the reform of music education in France. From 1994–99 he was composer-in-residence at the Catholic University of Leuven. Around 2000, expanding his musical thinking, he became preoccupied with the connection between

and the harmony theory he developed, *L'apothéose de Rameau (Essai sur la question harmonique)* (1968; Engl. 1987). Thirty years after Hindemith, Pousseur starts from n theory of acoustic dissonance that builds networks of related thirds and fifths into which music from the environment can be brought, projected into, and alienated. *Couleurs croisés*, on the other hand, is based on an inverted principle of variation that starts at the fringes and only at the end does the quotation appear.

Whether this directly encouraged me to compose *Beginner's Mind* (1975), that iswhere I got the courage to compose such tonal music, I do not remember now. It certainly has to do with *Socrate* by Satie, which I then got to know through Cage. *Beginner's Mind* is in fact a regression, also a psychological regression; I was in a crisis at the time and had the feeling that I could no longer go forward, but that one had to lean back very far and also go deep historically. To write a piece on secure terrain like an archaeologist, where, in reality,not a note is mine: that already began with the Gregorian chant in *Gelassenheit* (for alto with portative organ and two guitars, Meister Eckhart, 1975). Today I sometimes do not understand the primal impulse of how I came to such an attitude. After all, the WDR had a wonderful series on non-European music, and I was very impressed by Japan. Last but not least, this simplicity I was striving for then also had to do with the fact that I understood how limited the circle of Neue Musik is. And I wanted to find out whether it was possible to write something with such simplicity and, if possible, lightness in the new music scene.

The immediate trigger for *Beginner's Mind* was Drew Lesso, who always brought clove cigarettes from Java and I took two puffs of them, but I was not used to that at all. I never took anything like that. And I sat down at the piano and started improvising and Drew recorded it on MusiCassette. At that time I was reading Harry Goldschmidt's Schubert biography and I looked a lot like Schubert, and then I saw the piano keys coming at me in undulating movements – and somehow it became the prelude to *Beginner's Mind*. So, it sprang forth from intoxication, the result of which was recorded and which I subsequently transcribed like an ethnologist. *Leave the old is the* name of the first part. The titles for the *prologue* with the *Five Moments from Schubert's Life* (*Rossini's Entry into Vienna*, *The Dangerous Friend*, *The Great Upper Austrian Journey*, *Renewed Outbreak of Illness*, *No Answer from Weimar*) came later.

I learned a lot at that time from Stockhausen's *Mantra* (for two pianos and electronics, 1969-70), namely how to compress or dilate a figure. Keith Jarrett's "Köln Concert" also impressed me at that time. And Aloys Kontarsky, reading the score of *Beginner's Mind*, rightly asked, "What is the point of learning the old and leaving it to do the new and then coming back to what was before?" If Ian Pace had not demanded that the whole *Beginner's Mind* cycle be recorded on CD, I would never have thought of it (CD 2003; recorded 2000 in Wantage, Oxfordshire). At that time, when Herbert Henck played the complete cycle at his home before the premiere (14 July 1976), some were bored. As a result, I agreed to all the cuts Herbert wanted for the LP with the piece, which was released in 1978. Today I still think that the fourth part *Prepare the New*, which is about preparing for the song, should not be played or only played at home when the player is preparing for the song he is then to sing or hum. This fourth part is superfluous, a similar case to the ending in *Akkordarbeit*.

But all this does not answer your question about tonality and how I came to this language. I simply also wanted to represent musical processes in an insightful way, where there is so much time that one can understand the change of a moment.

That is, one can hear the individual parts so that the compositional process can be experienced?

Yes, I probably wanted something like comprehensibility even back then. I was overloaded with literary-theoretical preliminary considerations, with attempts of a theoretical, not even tonal kind, and I had to try them out at some point. I did not want this regression, which also resulted, but a comprehensibility for the listener that did not condescend and was n'ot bound to any historical progressions like the sonata form or the like. I started out, so to speak, from a scientific research programme that was about a comprehensibility in which every historically-comprehensible gesture was to be avoided.

The formation of the form was experimental and has to do with the principle of metamorphosis. That something tonally reactionary came out of it, I simply did not want to see at that time. That was perhaps

sound and image (*Paysages planétaires*). In addition to some 150 compositions, Pousseur wrote *Fragments Théorique I: sur la musique expérimentale* (Brussels 1970), *Schumann le Poète: 25 moments d'une lecture de Dichterliebe* (Paris 1993), and *Musiques croisées* (Paris 1997), among others. He found aspects of his own "network theory" realised in Rameau's harmonic theory, which he recorded in the music-theoretical paper *L'Apothéose de Rameau in* 1968 (check L'a vs. L'A).

similar to the late Cornelius Cardew[50] (1936–1981), who was completely blinded politically and taken in by a world that no longer had anything to do with new music. So I firmly believed in a therapeutic activity and thought that music could do something, have a changing effect on psychological attitudes. Through *Beginner's Mind* (1975) I wanted to move people somehow, towards a catharsis or something.

But you have chosen the association with Neue Musik after all ...

Well, back then I also composed movements, postures, turns, sing-alongs, and such, which I took from Higher Consciousness books and formalised a bit. Stockhausen's *Mantra* (1969-70) further encouraged me in this; at that time one was allowed to do such things; unconventionality was desired. And *Stimmung* (for six voices and microphones, 1968) also builds on a very beautiful tonal chord, nature ...

Through Stockhausen's *Indian Songs* (Poems, Sayings and Prayers of North American Indians, 1972), the allusory use of material from foreign cultures appeared to be condoned. Through *Telemusik* (1966) and *Hymnen* (1966/67; rev. 1969), one felt legitimised to use music that already existed, etc. This is not "postmodern", either. Only through these "pieces of recognition", through known material, can one follow the transformation process in Stockhausen's *Hymnen.*

I was interested very early on in the fact that music is not mere ornamentation. If you have no relation at all to something recognisable and the unrecognisable is too far off in the distance, but if only everything shimmering and diffuse is allowed, then you have an artistic enjoyment, but no more, I mean everything can be "full" as with Brian Ferneyhough, but you achieve no more than a good improvisation. That is, I tried and try to do something different that should be somehow comprehensible.

Did you also try something beyond the Orgon *projects and* In Understanding Music... *back then?*

Yes, at STEIM [Studio for Electro Instrumental Music] in Amsterdam, *Einer ist keiner* was written for seven instruments and live electronics (1972), which is a realisation of the Utrecht experience. There was also a tape recording with sounds of breaking glass, similar to the glass pane that Hugh Davies' in Stockhausen's *Alphabet für Liège* had sounded with transducers through the Voltage Control System until the vibrations caused it to break. Rob van den Poel wanted to build a live-electronic circuit with me for *Einer ist keiner*, to be able to represent interpersonal tensions sonically through degrees of dissonance/consonance. Bernhard Hansen from NDR was also there and wanted to support the project. These were lengthy negotiations and in the end it failed because the NDR did not want to cover the costs for the live electronics.

I also got into Erik H. Erikson's theoretical approach, *Identity and the Life Cycle* (1966) – *Building the Stages of Human Development*. That belongs to the Stranded Projects series. But what was the question now?

Did Utrecht have any consequences for your later compositions, or did that end in 1974?

At Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, I then took the summer course in electronic music in 1974 and educated myself further, and I tried to help Laske to be heard in Germany. Then came the series of works *Vom Nutzen des Lassens* (Meister Eckhart, 1981–84), which also included the piano trio *Ephemer (*1981), which had actually been composed beforehand and in which I used this Cage quote *Heaven & Earth* as a motto. In order to make the contrast between heaven and earth plausible, I had an *arco* and a harmonic produced at the same time, for which a player needs three fingerings. *Ephemer* also marks the beginning of

[50] Cornelius Cardew (1936—1981) studied cello and piano at the Royal Academy of Music in London from 1953—57 and composition with Howard Ferguson. In 1957 he studied electronic music with Gottfried Michael Koenig in Cologne. There, as Stockhausen's assistant, he was involved in the composition of *Carré* (for four orchestras and four choirs, 1959/60), and in 1958 he acted as répétiteur for the European premiere of Cage's Piano Concerto. Cardew returned to England in 1961. In 1966 he joined the London improvisation ensemble AMM, of which he was a member until 1971. The Scratch Orchestra, which he had founded with Howard Skempton and Michael Parsons in 1968, continued until 1972: composers, professional musicians, visual artists, actors and amateurs performed music together. Beginning in 1974, Cardew, who founded a song class at Goldsmiths College in London in 1975, wrote numerous political songs, including for performances by the Maoist Peoples Liberation Group. Increasingly convinced that music had to become a means of revolutionary politics, he became involved with John Tilbury in demonstrations, supporting striking workers and, as a fellow in Berlin, the fight for a children's clinic at Haus Bethanien, for which he composed *Bethanien Song.* His central compositions are *Treatise* (variable instrumentation, 1963—67) and *The Great Learning* for organ, mixed choir, melody and percussion instruments, and unconventional sound generators (1970).

the use of paradoxes, by which I mean the idea of representing paradoxical states through paradoxical ways of playing, as I did in the string trio *Distentio* (1992) or in *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for cello and piano (1987/89). This received its first impetus in *Ephemer* through the Cage quote and the paradox that heaven and earth must be held together.

Some research into the heaven-earth dichotomy in the symbolism of the harp of various cultures played a role. I undertook this research at that time with the harpist Gabriele Emde, when I composed *Cloud Places* (for harp and voice, Meister Eckhart, 1980), and it came out that heaven and earth are always connected with the numbers three and four in the most diverse cultures. In African cultures there is a harp that is bent like a ship, with left and right sides presenting the three and four, so mythological and symbolic things play into it. Then came the project *Island Music*, where I made recordings partly on behalf of the WDR of four island cultures – in the Siwa oasis in Egypt; in an Indian reservation in Browning, Montana; in a black ghetto in the middle of the city of Pittsburgh; and in the "hinterland" of Fürth; in the city of Pittsburgh, by the way, Laske, who was in Europe, made his apartment available to me. [51]

When my girlfriend at the time, Carol, the photographer, was blithely traveling the world and did not let me hear from her for weeks, my inner cosmos got confused and I hardly ever got around to composing. This also gave rise to the idea of *Lokale Musik*, the reference back to my childhood and the idea of "innocence not lost". So this was also born out of existential fears – not so much because of Cage and certainly not out of a ponderous, Franconian/neo-fascist folk music. It was like an outstretched hand in the chaos – the assumption that something could be found in childhood after all.

What do you think about Lachenmann, who tried something similar at the same time? He spoke of lost magic ...

His choral piece *Consolations* goes back to an ancient text, the Wessobrunn Prayer – that is also a stretch, but he did use very advanced techniques; it does stand out. To me, it is more comparable to the story of the prodigal son found in the Bible and the ideas Cage practiced in the New England Chorales (*44 Harmonies from Apartment House 1776*, 1976) of filtering out the aggressive tendencies and retaining the ethereal sides. This is another kind of return to the origin.

Very problematic for my music was the suggestion of Josef Häusler from the then-Südwestfunk Baden-Baden and Cristóbal Halffter, who called me a few weeks before the beginning of the Donaueschinger Musiktage 1980, because they needed an orchestral piece after another composer's piece had failed. They had the idea of taking ten minutes out of the *Lokale Musik*, the *Ländler Topographien* (1978/79), which alone is already forty minutes long, and performing it individually. I replied that the only thing I could imagine would be to take the first ten minutes. Yes, but they had already been premiered at the WDR. Then I let myself be persuaded to perform the third and last part. But what I did not know was that Lachenmann's *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (1979/80) was also on the program. First came my piece, then *Gestalt* for orchestra by Peter Michael Hamel, and finally the *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied*. My euphorically tuned and filigree music could not have been destroyed any better.

If this is the music of a prodigal son, did he come from the USA? Or asked differently, on which Lokale Musik*, on which collecting activity is the* Ländler Topographien (1978/79) based*?*

After collecting in Pittsburgh, Montana in the Indian reservation, I then had the idea to collect in my home in the hinterland of Fürth. That was the place of collection.

I was in the U.S. almost every year, always in the summer for two or three months. That was a great time in Chicago and at Big Star Lake in Michigan. Around that time, I also wrote the essay *Continental Divide. A Story about Driving Away and about the Relationship of Landscape and Emotion* (13–16 August 1976)[52], a kind of diary with impressions of the journey from the east to the west of the USA.

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[51] http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/insel-musik/
http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/die-musik-der-oase-siwa/
http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/ghetto-blues/
http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/die-lieder-des-indianers-pat/
http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/grastanz/
http://beginner-press.de/schriften-writings/continental-divide/

[52] in: *Insel Musik*, Cologne: Beginner Press 1981, pp. 156 –165.

What was the reason for going there?

First, in 1974, the studies at Colgate, then the relationship with Carol, whom I had met in Cologne during the 1974 carnival. We worked together on *Desert Plants* (1976) and at that time I was seriously considering emigrating to the USA.

Was this an escape from Germany or an attraction to the USA?

Well, first and foremost the relationship with Carol, but then I was drawn back to Europe in the end. I wonder how you did that back then.

That was just the job, nothing special behind it ...

But was it so easy for you to go from England to Australia?

Yes, very simple ...

You had the language, which stayed the same. Did you ever regret going to Australia?

No, because I am always happy when I come back, especially to Cologne ... However, in Cologne I notice how close people have become. Even if they do not live in the past, they still remember the past sentimentally. "Oh, the good old days ...": I do not want that!

That has become quite clear to me: If I lived in Germany, the Stockhausen devotees would demand something of me, and on the other hand, the Ferneyhough devotees, if they exist, would want something. But in Australia, from a distance, I can decide quite freely what I do and what I do not do. I have a freedom there that I would hardly have here. So I can visit Brian at any time ...

Brian Ferneyhough I do not let fade out of my consciousness. I liked his opera *Shadowtime* (1999/2004) musically very much ...

... yes, theatrically, of course not ...

The production of the premiere in Munich in 2004 was weak anyway, theatrically the piece has the problem of length and this self-indulgence; this is perhaps due to the libretto by Charles Bernstein, which is a bit too ambitious. By the way, there was once trouble with Ferneyhough in connection with a survey by Reinhard Oehlschlägel, which in my view should not have been published under any circumstances ... In the presence of Oehlschlägel, I answered the question "What do you think of Darmstadt?" on a beer mat, stupidly writing "Ferneyhough-ab" ["down with Ferneyhough"] on it, which could soon be read in *MusikTexte*. This hurt Ferneyhough, who was in San Diego at the time, very much and I also apologised to him. That must have been in 1990, and at that time there was this Feldman-versus-Ferneyhough club; people performed like two football clubs, sponsored by the complexists versus the minimalists, or something like that.

In 1988, I also gave a lecture at Darmstadt, which I did not give. It was always so terribly hot there in the summer, and I knew of a destination pub to which one had to drive for about twenty minutes. We sat then in Hundertmorgen under cherry trees at a giant table with cider and cheese. I had with me the book *Das Recht auf Faulheit: Widerlegung des "Rechts auf Arbeit" (*1887) by Paul Lafargue, Karl Marx's son-in-law. Heinz-Klaus Metzger read it in French and I read it in German, while Teodoro Anzellotti played some accordion sounds along with it. At the same time, in Darmstadt, at the lectern of the lecture hall, there was a T-shirt on which Haydn's song *Lob der Faulheit* (on a text by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Hob. XXVIa:22) was printed. Daniel Wolf stood in front of it and said: "Walter Zimmermann lets you know that he is giving his lecture in the countryside. You will find his place if you follow Bundesstraße ..." The event in Hundertmorgen was a huge success, but Ferneyhough, who did not go, was mad about it. I had thus cheated

the dominance of the aesthetic schools; two years later came the thing with the beer mat, which today I consider too brazen, but I was a provocateur!

Were there influences from the other arts, from Joseph Beuys, for example?

We talked about Michael von Biel yesterday. – Joseph Beuys: the fate of a man who copes with his trauma by surrounding himself with or holding on to the materials that had saved his life. We know that he was shot down as a pilot, as a Stuka pilot[53] in World War II, and Ukrainian peasants treated his frostbite by rubbing him with grease and wrapping him in felt. And this is reflected in this Fluxus aspect, that he wrapped a concert grand piano in felt, as well as in this shaman-like aspect, that he uses a sign language that he invented himself, as if it came from an archaic culture. All this has to do with his immediate past; he was also attacked because he seemed to process exclusively his salvation, but not fascism. I did not like his demeanour then, this missionary zealous side that reminded me of Stockhausen. I saw him more as a cultural phenomenon.

In general, I was very interested in exhibitions. I was particularly fascinated by the abstract expressionists, especially Mark Rothko, although incidentally I also got to know Feldman's *Rothko Chapel* (1971) quite early on, and Barnett Newman, whose writings I found more interesting than his art.

Later I became acquainted with the paintings of Brice Marden. I adopted the title "Cold Mountain", which he gave to a series of his paintings, for my series of works *Shadows of Cold Mountain* (1993; 1995; 1997), dealing with the paradox that the continuum of painting in music is very difficult to establish, because the key mechanics of wind instruments are not designed for a continuous change of sound. An artist I also appreciate very much is Robert Ryman, who paints solid-white pictures.

Parallel to the allure that French music exerted on you, was there a parallel or analogue to it in French art?

Do you mean Impressionism or later times? No, that would be too far-fetched, but I find Cézanne's essays fantastic. I have been with a draftswoman for 16 or 17 years now, and there are constant conversations about fine art, too. At the MoMA exhibition in the New National Gallery in 2004, I saw paintings by Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947), which are fantastic. The colour schemes of the Impressionists, especially the late ones, made an enormous impression on me, but that did not flow into my music. It comes more from linguistic, intellectual constructs.

What was the chronology of your time in the USA? Did you first come there as an ethnologist?

No, first to study at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York in 1974, then it was with *Desert Plants,* which was published in 1976, and immediately afterwards came the ethnomusicological research.

Is there a connection between Colgate University and Desert Plants*? Did you become more aware of American composers during your Colgate time?*

Probably. I already knew Cage personally from Cologne; I knew Feldman's music from Nuremberg, when the ars-nova-ensemble played *Viola in My Life*. I also knew Frederic Rzewski from the musica viva series in Nuremberg's Meistersingerhalle. What I had never seen before: the performers all sat on the floor with blue jeans and giant holes in them; Richard Teitelbaum[54] crawled across the stage making slurping noises. Then came an incredibly loud piece by Rzewski, an electronic chirping piece: *Zoologischer Garten* (1965). This concert came from another world and was my first encounter with American music. I also attended concerts

[53] Stuka = dive bomber.

[54] Richard Teitelbaum, born in New York City in 1939 and died in upstate New York in 2020, studied with Allen Forte and Mel Powell and deepened his studies in Italy in the mid-1960s with Luigi Nono and Goffredo Petrassi. In Rome, he was one of the co-founders of the ensemble Musica Elettronica Viva (with Alvin Curran and Frederic Rzewski). He has collaborated with Anthony Braxton and George Lewis, with Nam June Paik, Joan Jonas, Karl Berger, Dave Holland, Andrew Cyrille, and Leroy Jenkins. Teitelbaum became particularly known for his live electronic music and synthesizer playing. He was also involved with "world music" and the use of Japanese, Indian, and European musical instruments and notation systems. Teitelbaum taught at Bard College in New York state.

organised by the composer Josef Anton Riedl[55] in Munich, which were sometimes given in Nuremberg. There I also heard music by Cage and Feldman, for example Cage's piece *HPSCHD* [Harpsichord] (for electrically amplified harpsichords and tapes, 1967/69). In the Amerika-Haus in Nuremberg, where, by the way, as a nine-year-old I experienced the then-already very elderly pianist Wilhelm Backhaus, I also borrowed records of American music early on and recorded them onto tapes, which are still lying in some corner today.

4 **Darmstadt – Cologne**

To come back to Darmstadt: You were there for the first time in 1969?

The composition *Music for a House* by Stockhausen dates from that time, I think.

No, that was 1968. John McGuire was there in 1968. But Stockhausen's "Aus den sieben Tagen" (text score, 1968) was premiered in 1969.

So I was there for the first time in 1969, then it was the end of the *Sieben Tagen*. By the way, there is a photo in Stockhausen's book where he is sitting in front and I am among those spectators in the back of the Baar-Sporthalle?.

Yes, I' a sitting there somewhere, too. Nicolaus A. Huber was also there. And then John Deathridge, who is now a Wagner specialist at Cambridge. What do you remember about that?

I remember the fight with Globokar, who did not want his trombone sounds to be manipulated by Stockhausen's controllers during the improvisations in *Aus den sieben Tagen*. Kurtág was also there at the time; one of his song cycles was probably performed, the score of which was on display in the music shop; Kurtág was not taken so seriously at the time. And then Ligeti's *Continuum* – I had to hear this piece about ten times in an instrumental course. Ligeti sat there and listened to this little trifle with a smugness that was unparalleled. And then two bells rang somewhere and he said, "Listen, this is how my piece is built!" This vanitas could be observed even then.

Then this polarisation became clear in a panel discussion after the performance of Lachenmann's choral piece *Consolation* (*Consolation I* for twelve voices and four percussionists, 1967; *Consolation II* for 16 mixed voices, 1968). On one side sat Fritsch as Stockhausen apologist and on the other Lachenmann as Nono apologist.

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[55] Josef Anton Riedl (1929–2016) studied at the Munich Musikhochschule after 1947. Influenced by Carl Orff, in whose music percussion dominated, as well as by Edgard Varèse's *Ionisation*, he initially concentrated as a composer on the rather neglected instrumentation of percussion. After attending courses with Hermann Scherchen in Gravesano, hearing the first pieces of musique concrète in Aix-en-Provence starting in 1951, and getting acquainted with Pierre Schaeffer, Riedl wrote a series of pieces for concrete and electronic sounds in 1952 in makeshift studios he had set up himself. In these pieces, Riedl was the first composer in the Federal Republic to anticipate an expansion of the material that only later became topical. In 1959, he became musical director of the Siemens Studio for Electronic Music, established in Munich, which existed until 1966 and was equipped with a prototype of a computer that enabled punched tape control of all parameters. In 1967 Riedl founded the ensemble "Music / Film / Slide / Light Gallery". With series of events in Munich and Bonn, he strove from the beginning for unconventional forms of conveying new music, taking on the functions of initiator and mediator, through which he defined himself as much as through his experimental music now with the aid of visual media.

That was still 1969. Lachenmann asked, among other things: "Mr. Fritsch, with which finger do you control the mixing console when you play Stockhausen's pieces Aus den sieben Tagen*?" And Johannes got all red and said "With the smallest one!" And the next day Stockhausen came with a sketch or a diagram, which he brought to Lachenmann for explanation ...*

Was that also the year Holliger played *Plus Minus* by Stockhausen and was pulled up from the ground after the performance?

That was another time. Holliger premiered Discours *by Globokar at that time.*

One noticed the great conflict between Stockhausen and the others. Then in 1970 or 1972 came the "revolution," the big vote on the future of the summer courses. Ernstalbrecht Stiebler was there, and I kept my hat on to collect the votes.

I was no longer there.

Frisius, the Stockhausen specialist, was already bustling about at that time. And I enjoyed being there as a stranger. At that time, I showed Globokar my piece *Gliss* for five trombones (1970), which was essentially based on effects Berio used – singing and playing, so Globokar certainly could not find anything new in it. And then there was that primal scene with Nicolaus A. Huber and my piece *As a Wife Has a Cow. Seismography of a Text by Gertrude Stein* for piano four hands (1970). It begins with a major third. We sat next to each other on the bus to Frankfurt for the world premiere of Lachenmann's *Air*. Music for large orchestra with percussion solo (1968/69), with Michael Ranta[56] playing the percussion part. So Huber opened the score, saw this single third, shook his head, and said, "That won't do!" We then had a long discussion about this third, about which he was so horrified that he could hardly look at more than the first page!

Then *Momente* (for solo soprano, four mixed choirs, and 13 instrumentalists, 1961/62—72) by Stockhausen – was it this piece that was at least discussed at Darmstadt? That impressed me enormously.

At least not in 1969. What was your attitude towards electronic music at that time?

Gesang der Jünglinge (1955) I admired deeply, I owned the record; that was a tremendously poetic piece for me. *Kontakte* (1958–60) was also on this record. I had acquired a score of the latter in Darmstadt. I was thrilled by how this transcription of electronic music worked and that it suggested a certain closeness to instrumental music. Then also *Hymnen* (1966/67; rev. 1969), which already impressed me, also *Carré* (1958/59) and *Gruppen* (1955–57) – but this is no longer electronic music. I got to know Gottfried Michael Koenig[57] only later in Utrecht, where I studied in 1972–73.

I was also fascinated by the music to a silent film fragment by Eisenstein, *¡Que viva México!* – a completely asyntactic score by Josef Anton Riedl, which does not underline the dramaturgy of the film, but rather ignores it.

Then I heard *Harakiri* for small orchestra and tape (1971) by Nicolaus A. Huber – there was a scandal of some sort surrounding that piece – and *Aion* for four-channel tape and smells (1968/72). *Aion* impressed me very much, especially these tremendous lengths where simply nothing happens, this provocative aspect.

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[56] Michael W. Ranta, born 1942 in Duluth, Minnesota, composer and percussionist, studied composition with Lejaren Hiller and Herbert Brün at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from 1960–67. In 1964–65 he was also an assistant to Harry Partch. From 1967–70 he lived in Cologne, working with Kagel, Lachenmann, and Josef Anton Riedl, among others. As a member of the Stockhausen Ensemble, Ranta participated in the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka. In 1971 he worked in the electronic studio of NHK. From 1973–79 he lived and taught in Taiwan. Since 1979, composer and percussionist in Cologne.

[57] Gottfried Michael Koenig, born 1926 in Madgeburg, composer, studied in Braunschweig, Detmold, and Cologne. From 1954–64 he worked in the Studio for Electronic Music of the NWDR (later: WDR) in Cologne, collaborated with Stockhausen, among others, and held teaching positions at the Cologne Musikhochschule. From 1964–86 he was artistic director of the Studio for Electronic Music (later: Institute for Sonology) at Utrecht University. Koenig developed computer programmes for compositional strategies, and wrote electronic and instrumental compositions. His collected writings were published by Pfau-Verlag from 1991 to 2007 (*Aesthetic Practice. Texts on Music*, vols. 1–6).

... which already exists in Versuch über Sprache *(for 16 solo voices, Chinese cymbal, Hammond organ, double bass, and two-channel tape on texts by Alkaios, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Friedrich Hölderlin, and Karl Marx, 1969).*

I was interested in it: Why is this sound now in the room and why des it hurt quite a bit? I then used something similar in *Akkordarbeit* (1971), such a long drone. Electronic music; I found it mysterious, but also unapproachable. Then the musique concrète of Pierre Henry, the *Variations pour une porte et un soupir* (1963)[58] – I found that piece odd and strange. I then also studied computer music and realised that it was somehow not my world. I made one sound at Colgate University that has stuck – it appears thirty years later in *Cause & Prejudice* for horn, violin, cello, piano, percussion, and tape (1993/94).

Whereas in Einer ist keiner *for seven instruments (1972) you have live electronics.*

Yes, but unfortunately this did not work. The system of mapping interval voltages via voltage control to the modulation of the sounds could not be built. The NDR did not give money to realise it at STEIM (Studio for Electro-Instrumental Music) in Amsterdam.

But then what did you think of Stockhausen's live electronics, the live instrumental electronics without short-wave radios or something – not so much the pieces, but the practice itself. Were you interested in that or not?

With Stockhausen, I found the idea plausible and quite wonderful, too – capturing sounds directly from the cosmos, transforming them and using them through instrumentalists. And I loved this electronic piece that Stockhausen composed for Japan and Péter Eötvös wrote into pure form – *Telemusik* (1966). It has something hermetic, magical ...

Telemusik *is perfect!*

Live electronics – at that time I found what York Höller was doing in Cologne and what was coming over from France rather dull and boring. I think much later there were more interesting developments that I failed to follow closely. I am not the type for electronics – I prefer the intellectual work at the desk. For live electronics you need a certain sensuality and spontaneity, to be able to make decisions in real time. Empiricism and the influence of the moment are important there – and that is what I was afraid of. The fact that I prefer to act out of a calculation at my desk also shows my limitations! Spontaneity – things you lack – you replace with construction. John McGuire[59] is an electronic music composer and his works are consistently constructivist; there is not an ounce of freedom there. But we are talking about live electronics – you have to be able to let things happen or make them happen.

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[58] Pierre Henry (1927–2017) is considered, alongside Pierre Schaeffer, one of the founders of musique concrète and a pioneer of electronic music in France. His teachers included Olivier Messiaen (harmony), Félix Passerone (percussion and piano), and Nadia Boulanger (composition). From1950–58 Henry worked in the Studio d'essai des (de la?) Groupe de Recherche de Musique Concrète (GRMC), founded by Schaeffer, which was part of the French Broadcasting Corporation. With Jean Baronnet, Henry then opened the first private studio of electroacoustic music in France in 1960. With Schaeffer, he composed *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (with voices, noises, and instrumental sounds, 1950). From 1952 Henry also composed for film and ballet, including for Maurice Béjart. He first turned to rock music with the movement *Psyché Rock* from *Messe pour le temps présent* (1967). Later, Henry was also considered an influence on techno.

[59] John McGuire, born in California in 1942, studied at the University of California, Berkeley (with Ingolf Dahl and Seymour Shifrin), attended courses with Krzysztof Penderecki in Essen from 1966–68, with Stockhausen in Cologne in 1967, and with Gottfried Michael Koenig at the Institute for Sonology in Utrecht in 1970–71. From 1972–75 he was the pianist of the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra. Stockhausen's "how time passes" in its macro-micro relatedness was the trigger for his strictly constructivist composing. His music is created in lengthy processes of constructing rhythmic pulse proportions that interpenetrate from the macro to the micro level. The pulse layers, which are newly combined into tone cells in each section, experience their manifold reinterpretations in analogous tempo proportions. The title *Pulse Music* points to this kaleidoscope of interpenetration. A kind of highly complex minimal music emerges.

You took the radio play course with Kagel back then. Were you interested in radio plays before that?

Yes, I had made *Hier wohnt Krappmann* (1970) with Godehard Schramm for the Bayerischer Rundfunk in Nuremberg – I edited noise catalogues from the radio archive into collages. The *Orgon* project (1974), which exists only as an exposé for a performance, was then joined by these *catharsis strategies* that I developed from studying Wilhelm Reich texts, brain-wave-biofeedback experiments, and so on. So, I had already started working with radio plays. In *Hier wohnt Krappmann,* however, there was far too much text; the poet should have his say ...

With Kagel it was once again an extension of the radio play as a medium. Frederic Rzewski, Luc Ferrari [60], and Kagel conducted the radio play course; Rzewski conducted "outside", Ferrari "inside outside" and Kagel "inside". That means only in the studio, only plein air, or both. I then contacted Kagel.

I had then developed such reaction games where one sits in one studio and the other, who sits in another studio, reacts to it or to something from a third source. You can continue to play this with partners in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth room. This created a problem that was insurmountable: we were a collective of six people who were supposed to work together on a radio play. But Kagel was also still there and interested in using the studio at the same time to produce his own radio plays. While we were doing something in the studio, he was rehearsing pieces in the morning that he wanted to record in the afternoon or evening. So, he had *Tactil* (for two guitarists and a pianist, 1970), for which the piano has to be prepared, and I came there at noon and wanted to use the piano ...

Oh, here is the score of *Nothing but* for piano, celesta, harpsichord, and electronic organ from 1969 – this is my first piece with Werner Heider. Before the time with Heider I had written a string quartet of about twenty minutes entitled *Parabel* (1966).

The earliest of your pieces whose score I have is As a Wife Has a Cow. A Love Story. Seismography of a Text by Gertrude Stein for piano four hands (1970).

As a Wife Has a Cow is my opus 1 in that it is the first piece of mine to be performed in public; I played it with a schoolmate in a concert at BR's Nuremberg studio and that was later even broadcast on Bayerischer Rundfunk.

We spoke of the radio plays last time.

Yes, so the grand piano in the studio. During the lunch break, I removed the cloth and played the piano. Kagel threw a tantrum and withdrew, sulking; two days later I confessed that it was me, but from a pedagogical point of view it was counterproductive from then on. Then there was an attempt with Stockhausen – with his student Claude Vivier, I visited him in Kürten and said I wanted to listen in on the lessons because I did not really know yet with whom I wanted to study. I mean, I said it that way in that openness. Then I met Stockhausen a few days later at a concert by Nicolaus A. Huber in the still-unfinished building of the Römisches Museum and sat down next to him, or he sat down next to me: "Well, have you thought it over in the meantime?" Then I answered again quite directly, "Yes, I want to go to Pousseur in Liège." Instinctively, I felt that I could appreciate him longer if I did not go through his school; I believed that it was better to admire these great people from a distance ... Except for the pianist Ernst Gröschel, I therefore never had a teacher; I always needed a certain distance – it was the same with Feldman.

In the earlier Cologne years, how did you relate to the various groups, to the Feedback Studio, for example?

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[60] Luc Ferrari (1929–2005), a major representative of musique concrète after Pierre Henry, was best known as the author of radio plays and music forradio plays, and of portrait films (with Gérard Patris) about Messiaen, Stockhausen, and Varèse, as well as Hermann Scherchen and Cecil Taylor. He had to interrupt his studies with Alfred Cortot and Arthur Honegger as a result of tuberculosis in 1950. In 1953 he visited Edgard Varèse in New York and a little later took analysis courses with Olivier Messiaen in Paris. From 1954–58 he participated in the International Summer Courses in Darmstadt. In 1958 he founded the Groupe de Recherches Musicales (GRM) with Pierre Schaeffer and François-Bernard Mâche. Different artistic views led to their separation in 1966: while Schaeffer demanded *an* abstract and typifying sound work, Ferrari incorporated recognisable environmental sounds into his music (*musique anecdotique*). He recorded natural processes, such as the sound of the sea, and left them in their raw state in a kind of "cinéma vérité." This withdrawal of the compositional subject alienated him from the eager musical avant-garde. He was no longer noticed within French academic circles.

At Feedback, I regularly attended these backhouse events. Rolf Gehlhaar was still there and David Johnson. Gehlhaar was later together with Nouritza Matossian and I lost contact with him. I always liked the activity and fine noble attitude of Johannes Fritsch (see FN 10). Then such a stupid competition arose through the *Beginner Studio*, which was not my intent any way.

That was also much later.

Then in Utrecht I met Gottfried Michael Koenig, who was charismatic enough, but who really fascinated me was Otto E. Laske[61] . The others, by the way, did not like him that much; he was considered too "brainy." But I was captivated by these complicated semantic treatises; I needed this impenetrable reading fodder ... That's where *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies for* 21 instrumentalists (1973/74) was written. So it was not really about electronics during my time with Laske, either.

That reminds me: Under the influence of Nono, *La fabbrica illuminata* (1964), I made recordings of sound worlds in various factories in Nuremberg in 1969 or 1970. For this purpose, I had borrowed a Nagra, which is a high-quality recording device, from Bayerischer Rundfunk, which trained sound engineers in Nuremberg. There I filled entire tapes and had a project in mind that corresponded to the zeitgeist of 1968, but it was never realised.

Later my *catharsis strategies* also remained unrealised. There is only one concept, which is printed in the text *Insel Musik* (1981) with these pick-ups and brainwave headbands – a reaction to my visit to the Wilhelm Reich symposium in California, where Reich's daughter was also present, gave lectures, and gathered a crowd of doctors around her to confirm the seriousness of her father's theories.

These crazy Americans with their Kirlian photography, in which the aura or the electrical voltage, which for example emanates from body parts, the so-called corona, is photographically represented by a short-term high voltage, by high voltages in fractions of a second. The surge of current produces an electrical discharge in conductive objects. For example, one saw a spark, a red dot, which jumped when two people kissed. Or a leaf was cut, photographed, and the aura or corona energy of the undivided leaf was on the photograph. And there my girlfriend Carol and I also experienced this hideous mass meditation of 3000 people in a stadium like an amphitheatre. I have already told you about that.

When and how did you meet Clarence Barlow[62]?

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[61] Otto Ernst Laske, born in 1936, came to Bremen in 1945, received his first piano lessons there and began writing poetry at the age of 13. He studied sociology in Göttingen, and from 1957 at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt/Main. In 1958 he turned to philosophy, and also took musicology and English/American studies. In 1966 he received his doctorate with Theodor W. Adorno *on the dialectics of Plato and early Hegel* (Munich 1966). Decisive for the development of his compositional theory as well as the formulation of the so-called "cognitive musicology" (among others in *Music, Memory and Thought,* Ann Arbor 1977) became his acquaintance with Gottfried Michael Koenig. From 1970–75, at Koenig's invitation, he worked at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht, where he also collaborated with Barry Truax. Influenced by computer-science studies, he then developed the foundations of his "cognitive musicology": the attempt to transfer cognitive musical processes to musicological thinking. Cognitive psychology looks at cognitive processes from the perspective of information processing: attention, learning, memory, acting, thinking, problem solving, language, and perception. An example of this argument is Walter Zimmermann's *In Understanding Music...* (1974). In 1992 Laske turned to developmental and clinical psychology (Harvard University) and served as a clinical psychologist in Boston. He has published poetry in German and English.

[62] Clarence Barlow, born in Calcutta in 1945, began playing the piano at an early age. From 1961–65 he pursued scientific studies in Cologne, then from 1966–68 he worked in Calcutta as a music teacher and director of a madrigal choir and a youth string orchestra. In 1968 he joined Bernd Alois Zimmermann's composition class in Cologne, and after Zimmermann's death studied with Stockhausen until 1973. Barlow's first attempts to use the potential of the computer for musical purposes took place in 1971. In 1973, he explored North Indian chant. From 1975 Barlow lived permanently in Cologne as a freelance composer and employee of the WDR (for which he wrote radio plays and other broadcasts). His long theoretical exploration of the phenomenon of tonality culminated in the publication *Bus Journey to Parametron,* completed in 1980. Also in 1980, the hypercomplex piano piece *Çoğluotobüsişletmesi* (1975–79), composed on the basis of the theories formulated there, was premiered at Darmstadt. The following years include periods of work in the major electronic studios of Europe (Utrecht, Stockholm, Paris, Amsterdam). In 1986 Barlow co-founded the Initiative Musik und Informatik Köln (GIMIK). In 1990 he became artistic director of the Institute for Sonology, now based in The Hague. He taught in the Music Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara from 2006–19.

I no longer know. He lived at Klingelpütz, near the former prison, there is only one house left. Did I not get to know him through you, in your courses at the university?

No, I mean, you already knew him back then. But maybe it was the other way around and I got to know you through Clarence?

Clarence Barlow is also hard to miss. I probably knew him through the concert series "Musik der Gegenwart"? But when did you actually come to Cologne?

The end of 1973.

But there was also a connection between Barlow and the publisher Moeck. I was once an editor there and was allowed to evaluate dozens of scores ... I was able to get Barlow a job there; he did the fair copy of the score of *Akkordarbeit* (1971) for me on behalf of the publisher, in which he deliberately left an error. Later, when the publisher's chief editor saw the score of *Einer ist keiner* for seven instruments and live electronics (1972), I was fired from Moeck.

You also once referred to this as the "self-destructive phase."

In some circumstances, yes.

Clarence was interested in the computer at a very early stage. You once wrote this piece for harp...

This is *Cloud Places* for harp with voice (Meister Eckhart, 1980) and Clarence made this for me on his computer. Since he is a mathematical genius, he helped me in such things. It is a single dance melody in seven different speeds that he wrote on a kind of punch card so that I could take it and use it for the score.

Does it only apply to Cloud Places*or did you do it that way on other pieces as well?*

Before that started with the magic square – that was much later – *Klangfaden* (for bass clarinet, harp, and glockenspiel with Klingstein, 1983) was the first piece where I put the magic square at the forefront. Also for the *Ländler Topographien* (for orchestra, 1978/79) I did quite a lot of calculating or counting. There was this book *Achttaktige Ländler aus Bayern* (1977) by Felix Hoerburger[63], and in each case he entered exactly at which note the axis of tonality tilts and how the melody behaves in relation to the harmony. These were parameters for me from which I could derive three indices. Then I counted each note of the Ländler exactly and worked out three tables with a harmony index, a melody index, and a rhythm index. The index was in turn a key for the instrumentation. This could have been done with a computer, but I calculated it all manually. I wrote this in the *Beginner Studio* during or between preparations for the concerts – it was like office work, factual and de-emotionalised. In the morning, when I had rest, I sang the sound and assigned certain instruments to the melodic cells, while writing it out was then just mechanical work.

I also thought of In Understanding Music the Sound Dies for 21 instrumentalists (1973/74), *there is also something like that, which points to these processes.*

Yes, *In Understanding Music...* the impulse structure runs over a so-called flow chart, which I had learned from Otto E. Laske. This flow chart gives the commands by which the music is moved in this or that direction. Compared to the *Ländler Topographies*, this is, so to speak, the opposite way, not an analysis of the melodic parameters of the melody, but rather a production mechanism to assemble the music from its smallest components.

[63] Felix Hoerburger, born in Munich in 1916, studied musicology and ethnology there. In 1941 he received his doctorate on the music of the African Ngoni, and in 1963 he graduated with a thesis on the dance and dance music of the Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia. From 1968 Hoerburger worked at the University of Regensburg as an ethnomusicologist in research and teaching (until 1976). Hoerburger died in Regensburg in 1997. He is considered the creator of the so-called "nordsüdneuhochschnubiglbaierischen Mundart".

So, the flow chart is a so-called virtual composition?

Yes; this knowledge comes from Laske. I used his mechanisms for producing computer music to compose a piece in the conventional sense. Laske's "flow chart" programme was grist for generating my grammar, so to speak, but I did not go all the way with Laske, just a route in reverse – along the lines of "I have lost the cadence, I have to work it out again for each piece." Early on, I found the use of underlying formal principles to be an antidote to spontaneous expressionism. But it is also a crutch because I cannot express myself any other way. People sometimes dress it up and say that it is politically meant against expressionism, but today I have to say that I envy composers like Wolfgang Rihm who do not need such crutches. Crutch art, handicapped composing.

I wonder whether it was even possible at that time to write pieces that were not interpreted by others politically or "socially," as they said at the time? Akkordarbeit for example, was certainly interpreted sociologically. Was that often the case with your pieces?

I left this phase of a politically-oriented art very quickly. *Einer ist keiner* for seven instruments and live electronics (1972) is already a bridge to psychologising; then came the confrontation with Wilhelm Reich and still later with Zen Buddhism. I was always looking for ways out somewhere. There were also biographical moments. My first wife separated from me. After that, that was in my first year in Cologne, my whole life began to falter. Then came the confrontation with psychology and Wilhelm Reich. The premiere of *Akkordarbeit* for piano, orchestra, and tape (1971) in Hanover in 1972, although scandalous, was a great success, and I was considered a hope of Neue Musik, someone in whom people were willing to invest. But I disappointed the hopes placed in me; I dealt counterproductively with the opportunities that were offered to me. But that probably brought me closer to life in real terms.

What I really want to know was whether you ever found yourself in a development where other people automatically judged your pieces sociologically or politically?

Orgon – so: *In Understanding Music...* (1973/74) – was certainly the attempt, which I always liked so much in the serialists, for example in the wonderful early piano pieces by Stockhausen, to begin something without preconditions, to start from scratch, to carve out a language ex nihilo. I longed for that, but it was, I must say in retrospect, an illusion. After that, I worked a lot with universals and archetypes. I had a heated discussion with Nicolaus A. Huber about these archetypes. The archetypes, as they were conveyed by C. G. Jung, are an archaic and rather unhistorical space-time concept, which presupposes unlimitedness. How is this supposed to go together with Marxism, which argues primarily in historical terms? Nicolaus A. Huber, as a Marxist, saw it differently.

I tried to arrive at phenomena that reach beyond a personal, subjective horizon without a study of history. Therefore, I was interested in a music that does not belong to the individual, but is accessible to several, possibly an ethnically-, regionally- or locally-bound music. Therefore, I studied some ethnomusicology in Amsterdam, collecting and analysing material on the music of foreign peoples in order to overcome these hypertrophic ego concepts of European music. This was political in that I was also concerned with a counter-position to the re-cultivation of the concept of genius. Of course, I made it extremely difficult for myself with that, because I no longer fit into the concept of the still-dominant avant-garde. These are the pioneers who ride into battle; and it was still about the individual composing hero.

With what I wanted, I was on the side of the losers from the beginning, because there was no echo for it. I only found this echo when I got to know "experimental music" in the USA. There were concepts of self-questioning ("questioning the ego"), for example in Cage, and strangely enough, at the same time, the memory of or proximity to a music that somehow seems personal to me and yet is not an expression of an individual style. Beyond the norms of the European avant-garde, I discovered a more credible world of my own in my encounters with American composers. It was through this listening around in the USA that I discovered myself as a composer in the first place. This basically includes a certain lyricism, which I found

in the naïve pieces of Cage, in Feldman, and even in pieces by Christian Wolff.[64] The political and the personal are linked in a very strange way. You could say that with my music, with the discovery of my musical language, I pointed out something that was taboo in the avant-garde – in this respect I was involuntarily political. The taboos included any music that had any folkloristic reference, however remote, while, in contrast, late romantic gestures were permitted within the avant-garde. This has to do, among other things, with their favouring of the Second Viennese School and their aversion to early Adorno, the Adorno of the *philosophy of new music*, to Stravinsky, certainly also to the late bourgeois origin of late Romanticism.

One then often, for example Harry Halbreich[65] , allowed only the worst possible association in relation to my music and stopped listening until the folkloric source material dissolved. At the premiere of the *Light Dances*, the *Silent Dances* and from *Wolkenort* from *Lokale Musik* in Darmstadt, there was even a brawl between a student of the flutist Pierre-Yves Artaud and the jazz saxophonist John Tchicai. Some Frenchmen loudly counted the beat with "un – deux – trois"; Harry Halbreich spoke of "neo-fascism". John Tchicai, who left the next day, wrote a letter, which cannot be found in the International Music Institute in Darmstadt, in which he complained about the intolerance of the audience. Someone asked Halbreich not to keep shouting the word "neo-fascist" and Halbreich replied, "If I could, I would shout even louder." Cool, Lachenmann said to me, "Don't love your enemies so much!" Basically, it was a success ... and all trial and error anyway, to get away from the avant-garde or to counter it.

You mentioned Nicolaus A. Huber earlier. Who did you have back then to discuss your compositional and aesthetic ideas?

Nicolaus A. Huber was ten years older; I admired him, but there was also such a small sense of awe. In Cologne, there was Clarence Barlow. Claude Vivier was too busy with his own projects. I could talk well with John McGuire, although he had a very different aesthetic than I did; with Herbert Henck conditionally, but neither liked *Beginner's Mind* (for singing pianist, 1975). It resulted in a certain strangeness. Wolfgang Becker-Carstens, editor at WDR, was sympathetic to me, but a real confrontation only arose with Ernstalbrecht Stiebler. I had the best conversations with him; he was very calm and could listen well. At that time, he was an editor at Hessischer Rundfunk, gave me assignments, and because of him and Stefan Schädler[66], I later even moved to Frankfurt am Main. I left Cologne in 1985, and with it my partner, to move to Berlin with another woman. After a year there, we separated again. Then I had a scholarship at the Villa Massimo (1987). There I met my current wife Nanne Meyer and we then moved together to Frankfurt in 1988, where I knew Ernstabrecht Stiebler and Stefan Schädler.

Schädler had already made a radio broadcast about me in 1980 or 1981 and a deep friendship had developed with him. He was a dramaturge at the Theater am Turm and gave me a lot of support there,

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[64] Christian Wolff, born in Nice in 1934 as the son of the Kafka publisher Kurt Wolff, came to New York in 1941, studied classical philology at Harvard University from 1951 (doctorate in 1963). From 1971 he taught at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, from 1976 as professor of music and classical philology. He began piano lessons with Grete Sultan in 1948. When he showed her his first compositions in 1950, she recommended him to John Cage. Wolff also met Feldman, Earle Brown, David Tudor, and Merce Cunningham at that time, as well as New York School painters such as Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, and Philip Guston. (Wolff, incidentally, also gave Cage an edition of the *I Ching* that his father had published). In this period of awakening after World War II, he said, people were striving for art forms that were independent from European norms and influences. In 1968 Wolff became acquainted with Cornelius Cardew in England, engaged in practices of improvisation, but also experienced a politicisation during the Vietnam War. As a composer, he was preoccupied with the question of the extent to which the reactions of performers to one another could become constitutive of a work, so-called "cueing." His growing political awareness was then also reflected in his compositions.

[65] Harry Halbreich (1931–2016), music writer, studied in Geneva and Paris (with Arthur Honegger and Olivier Messiaen, among others), taught in Mons, and was particularly concerned with 20th-century music. He advised Friedrich Hommel, director of the International Summer Courses in Darmstadt, from1981–94, advocating musique spectrale, but also revered Anton Bruckner.

[66] Stefan Schädler (1952–1994), was music dramaturge at the Theater am Turm in Frankfurt. There he built up a forum for Neue Musik in an exemplary manner, held seminars, and gave concerts with Morton Feldman and John Cage while promoting composers such as Chris Newman and Walter Zimmermann in a series of finely-made recordings. His pianistic abilities far exceeded those of his friends and colleagues. After his TAT days, he continued his writing work. He had completed a major work on the cyclical in pop music and a monograph on filmmaker Robert Bresson after studying sociology and musicology. His essays on new music show a high degree of reflection in a language that can be measured against Adorno's, yet slightly at cross-purposes with the latter's thinking. With discipline and relentlessness, he and Walter Zimmermann planned a John Cage festival in Frankfurt, a large-scale project that was carried out against much opposition in 1992. The festival and the almanac *Anarchic Harmony* are Stefan's legacy. His planned doctoral thesis *Time and Chance with John Cage* has unfortunately remained a fragment. (W. Z.)

arranging commissions for me. Stefan reminded me a little of my childhood friend who had committed suicide; unfortunately, he also died early, from AIDS in 1994. In Frankfurt I continued with Adorno and Adorno criticism. A few weeks before John Cage's 80th birthday, which would have been on 5 September 1992, we organised the *Anarchic Harmony Festival* with the HR and the Alte Oper. Malicious tongues then claimed that we had put too much strain on Cage and that was why he had died in the run-up to the festival, which took place from 28 August to 30 September. He was touring at the time, and was also in Frankfurt and in Perugia, among other places. He died immediately after his return from Europe in New York on 12 August 1992, as a result of a stroke.

Then, in 1993, I received the professorship for composition at the Berlin University of the Arts. There I have a small circle of friends, not only musicians, but also for example the philosopher Hannes Böhringer – and my students; they are a real boon at the moment.

You also did an interview with Michael von Biel[67] *back then. Did you know him well?*

Yes, he was a kind of cult figure for some people in Cologne. It was interesting that he studied first with Morton Feldman and then with Stockhausen – in that order – and then he studied with Joseph Beuys. In some ways he was perhaps further along than others; he did not appreciate the avant-garde so much, for example, but on the other hand he lived in hotels, consumed drugs, etc. In the *Beginner Studio* he improvised on the piano for nights on end. He could also draw; for his 70th birthday in 2007, a catalogue with his drawings was published, as well as a CD with his music. There is a conversation with him that first appeared in Feedback Papers. [68]

He was such a peculiar person, he was influenced by the Fluxus world: He hovered over things with the longing for a time that had passed and which he put into the picture in such a way that it seems like a quotation. And these shadows, the blurring of the contours, where he then also became abstract again ... and then these fine little drawings, where there is just such a stripe at the top.

Back in Cologne, sometimes a lady came by who was good friends with him and showed me things of his ...

Gisela Fischer? She drew archaeological finds and was somehow his muse. Dagmar von Biel, his wife, was probably not. Or was it Irmgard Koch?

Yes, it was ...

I saw them the other day at a concert by John McGuire; it seemed to me like an "angel concert", a meeting in heaven where we all met again ...

Fluxus, Beuys, Feldman, and Stockhausen – Michael von Biel had these four pillars, and that somehow gave me the courage to be different. That is what drew me to *Lokale Musik* – the idea of giving this space a transcendence, a sublimation. Then, of course, important for *Lokale Musik*, especially for the *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* for string quartet (1977), was Cage's *String Quartet in Four Parts* (1949–50) as well as Laske's "modal logic." – Michael was basically a primordial romantic at the time and had this abysmal (depressive?) side as well. In an interview he said he was related to William Blake. He radiated that as well. He was often dressed

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[67] Michael von Biel, born in Hamburg in 1937, completed a commercial apprenticeship in Canterbury after graduating from high school, which he abandoned in 1956 to devote himself to self-taught attempts at composition, and then studied music at the University of Toronto. Years of private lessons followed: Vienna (1958–60), New York (1960 with Morton Feldman), London (1961–62 with Cornelius Cardew). In 1961 Biel first attended the courses of Stockhausen and David Tudor at the Darmstadt Summer Courses; his *Book for Three* for two pianos and violin (1961) was awarded first prize there. Biel moved to Cologne in 1963 to work in the studio of the WDR. Continuing the Fluxus ideas, he created "performance music," happenings, and "world pieces" – "concert actions" that focus attention on the performance situation. After a stay as composer-in-residence at the State University of New York at Buffalo (1965–66), he again encountered Feldman in New York City. Biel became increasingly involved with drawing (action drawings, stencil drawings, collages, and landscape depictions). Studies with Joseph Beuys at the Düsseldorf Art Academy (1968–69) eventually led to a shift in his artistic activities. Since the mid-1970s, he has written only a few instrumental works at irregular intervals, but also *19 Pieces* for guitar, piano, glockenspiel, percussion, and synthesizer (1985). Michael von Biel has lived in seclusion in Tübingen since 2005.

[68] *Walter Zimmermann in conversation with Michael von Biel*, in: *Feedback Papers 1–10,* Cologne 1971–1978, pp. 315 –332. - Reprinted in: Walter Zimmermann: *Insel Musik*, Cologne: Beginner Press 1981, pp. 124 –133.

in old fabrics, in a velvet coat, and somehow not of our time. And in his music there were these "silly melodies" – a naïveté that impressed me in the midst of the Cologne new music hubbub.

Herbert Henck also took care of Michael and played his pieces as well. Herbert has this Janus-faced quality – he played incredibly complicated things like the *Sonata* by Jean Barraqué and on the other hand pieces by Frederic Mompou or Charles Koechlin.

The idea of "Beginner" –*Beginner's Mind*, Zen Mind – came through Dagmar von Biel, with whom I had Zen sessions, and through Shunryū Suzuki's book.[69]By the way, the name "Rainbow Concerts", which took place in the *Beginner Studio,* came from Michael von Biel and he also designed the cover of the record *Beginner's Mind.* He was also friends with the rock band Can and its member Holger Czukay, respectively, who had also played horn with Stockhausen.

David Johnson talked about ...

I had hardly any contact with Johnson, who was in the country with Mary Bauermeister; only now and then they came and had a child with them. Where is he now?

He was then, I think, in an electronic studio in Switzerland ...

A good friend was John MacAlpine[70], a lovely and reliable New Zealander. Also Debbie, Deborah Richards, who decades later – in 2000 – starred in my Wanda Landowska film. Then the group around Manfred Lexa. Lexa is the guitarist whose arm was run over by a truck ... Then there was Guido Conen, drummer; he was also the graphic designer of the *Beginner Studio* and wrote out the scores for Michael von Biel. And then Reinhard Oehlschlägel, of course, with whom I often went to his wooden house in Finland and with whom I argued so much – there I drafted the essay *Das Lokale ist das Universale*.

In Rome I once photographed Scelsi when he visited Nanne in her studio, and I then showed these pictures to Reinhard Oehlschlägel[71] and Gisela Gronemeyer and apparently also gave them a print. Years later they asked me if they could publish it, and although I refused, they put the photo on the cover of a Scelsi issue of *MusikTexte* and even credited me by name. That then led to the break ...

In our provocative phase, Stefan Schädler and I published several ads in Oehlschlägel's *MusikTexte* signed SZ. And in one of these ads, I replaced the object, "the opera houses," with "IRCAM" in Boulez's sentence "Blow up the opera houses!" because it had become an aesthetic centre of power. Then came the Donaueschingen Festival and *MusikTexte* wanted to acquire an advertisement. Josef Häusler promptly declared that he would not advertise in a magazine that called for assassinations ...

At one point John McGuire was completely broke and so was Feedback Studio, where John McGuire published his stuff. But we absolutely needed scores of *Frieze for Four Pianos* (1969–74). At that time, I wrote the programme *Anton Bruckner and John McGuire* for the WDR*. A juxtaposition*. There I went to the printer and explained that I absolutely needed 20 copies of the score for this broadcast. Feedback probably still has them today. We already had a somewhat anarchic spirit back then.

In the ensemble piece *Les Moutons de Panurge* (1968) by Frederic Rzewski – it was played at this festival at WDR Cologne in 1972, where *Aion* (for four-channel tape and smells, 1968/72) by Nicolaus A. Huber was

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[69] Shunryū Suzuki: *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind,* Weatherhill 1970.

[70] John Mac Alpine pianist from New Zealand living in Cologne, known especially through his interpretations of Chris Newman's music https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McAlpine

[71] Reinhard Oehlschlägel (1936–2014), studied chemistry and music for grammar school teaching in Braunschweig and Hanover from 1958 –62, musicology with Rudolf Stephan in Göttingen, philosophy and sociology in Frankfurt am Main (with Theodor W. Adorno, among others), but also completed recorder studies up to concert level (with Gerhard Braun in Darmstadt in 1965). He wrote music reviews for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (1965–69) and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (1970–71) until 1972, when he became an editor in the serious-music department of Deutschlandfunk, where he kept an ear open for thelatest developments in New Music until his retirement in 2001. In 1980, he provided the impetus for the founding of the Ensemble Modern, which he promoted through joint projects. In 1996 he initiated the "Young Musicians Forum for Composers, Performers and Musicologists", which he directed until 2002. In 1983, together with Gisela Gronemeyer, he founded the journal *MusikTexte*, a forum for current developments. With Gronemeyer he published source texts of various composers in the publishing house of the same name. He had a special friendship with John Cage.

also premiered – you have to beat the rhythm along. To do this, I filled a bag with glass bottles, tied it shut, and wrote on it "Voltage control WDR – New Music." Tim Souster[72] directed this performance. We sat down in front of the stage, Wolfgang Becker sat in the front row, and we had hammers with us and kept hitting the bottles until they were all smashed by the end of the piece at the latest ...

At the beginning of the scores of Akkordarbeit *and* In Understanding Music... *there are systematic lists, diagrams. This list was also reproduced in the programme booklet at the premiere of* In Understanding Music.... *Did you consider it desirable at that time that one should follow the processes of your music exactly?*

Yes, but there is a crack through this diagram for *In Understanding Music...*; it looks like it has been crossed out. The piece is called *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies*, which means that the moment you would understand the diagram, the sound would be gone. That is a paradox. On the one hand, you write a piece as accurately and positivistically as possible, and on the other hand, you realise that it is limited in what you can realise. As Feldman said, "Composers make plans, music laughs ..." You cannot construct a language that lives – there is always something dead about it. That is skepticism, too. The diagram shows a binary tree that keeps on branching out. So, it was also coquetry ...

There was also an orgone light object. In Cologne, I saw a light installation by Dan Flavin. Dan Flavin worked with coloured neon tubes, which, when the exhibition was dismantled, would all have been thrown away. So, I asked if I could have these neon tubes and used them to create an orgone light model; there is a photo of it somewhere. A blacksmith built this orgone model according to my ideas and hung it up at the premiere of *In Understanding Music...* during the pro musica nova days in Bremen in 1974, this on the podium behind the ensemble.

To get back to your question: The pulse structure that underpins *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies*, this metastructure of electronic pulses that Kevin Volans[73] intoned on the electronic organ, ...

... the markers ...

... yes, the markers; there is a pedagogical concept behind that. If you follow them closely, you could theoretically follow the construction of a piece exactly as you listen to it, but understanding – that is where I ultimately reached a limit with this piece. As Cage put it, "Peace goes beyond reason." You cannot construct real understanding positivistically. Later on I realised: there must be a balance between construction or closure and openness. There must also be a pause, air, and light. The listener must also be given the opportunity to pause and take a breath; he must not be constantly fed with information. His mind must be able to enter a state of reaction. This linguistic model of the triad, producer – product – recipient, developed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), must, in order to reach the recipient, contain gaps in which the recipient can enter his understanding. Or, there must be a certain amount of structures that are known to the listener. This is where it gets difficult.

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[72] Tim Souster (1943 –1994), studied at New College, Oxford, from 1961–64, met Stockhausen during the Darmstadt Summer Courses in 1964, and took composition lessons with Richard Rodney Bennett the following year. As radio editor of the BBC (1965–67), he promoted the avant-garde. He then devoted himself to composing and, having a special affinity for popular music, to "songwriting." In Cambridge, with Roger Smalley, Andrew Powell, and Robin Thompson, he founded the live-electronic group "Intermodulation", which performed works by Cardew, Riley, Rzewski, Stockhausen, and Wolff, among others. In 1971 Souster became assistant to Stockhausen in Cologne, succeeding Richard Toop, and in 1973 he moved to Berlin for two years. In 1975 he returned to England to take up a research fellowship at Keele University. He remained in England, composing for film, television, and the concert hall.

[73] Kevin Volans, born in 1949 *in* Pietermaritzburg, the capital of the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal. In 1973 he joined the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, where he studied composition and new music with Stockhausen and Richard Toop, music theatre with Mauricio Kagel, piano with Aloys Kontarsky, and improvisation with Johannes Fritsch. He remained in Cologne as a freelance composer until 1981. Volans belonged to a group of composers around Walter Zimmermann, who at the time sought to establish the notion of "new simplicity" as a counter-concept to post-serial complexity. In the late 1970s, Volans made four trips to KwaZulu-Natal and Lesotho to explore the sounds of the environment and of Zulu and Basotho music: This resulted in tape works such as *KwaZulu Summer Landscape* (1977/79), *Studies in Zulu History* 79/1977)and others ,followed by *White Man Sleeps* for two harpsichords (in special tuning), viola da gamba, and percussion (1982), and String Quartet No. 1 “White Man Sleeps” (1985/86) the "African Paraphrases" series of works. In 1986 Volans moved to Ireland and acquired Irish citizenship in 1994. His music shows a strong affinity to painting techniques, in which Morton Feldman, who became his mentor, encouraged him. He created *The Partenheimer Project* for simultaneous ensembles (2007(for visual artist Jürgen Partenheimer. Volans composed music for almost all genres, preferring transparent chamber-music textures.

If one builds a complex system from nothing but unknowns, then it can be that the piece becomes a totally artificial ornament. But if there is a common ground that is not historical, for example something that arises from a romantic gesture yet is archetypal, if such a thing exists – that was my search at the time – then a feeling of relief builds up in the listener. A certain redundancy must be there. Wolfgang Rihm took his redundancy from the history of music, which was not comparably present to me. So where should I get my redundancy? I developed and formulated my approaches to a common ground artificially, from a tabula rasa situation. For example, the end of the war in 1945: people wanted to start anew; everything that had gone before was traumatically occupied. A positive emotional feedback to what had gone before was missing. Let us consider Stockhausen. He was an ambulance worker and had terribly traumatic war experiences. He had to feed people with a straw whose faces were destroyed by shells.

He was crossing a courtyard at some point when a bombing raid started and was aware that he could be hit and dead within seconds. But he just kept walking and was lucky. Such dangers to life may have seemed at the time to be an almost "normal" risk against which people were somehow neutralised. But Stockhausen was deeply affected by the death of his parents.

We had this wartime generation as parents who felt they had been cheated of the best part of their youth. Women often waited for years until their husbands returned from the war and captivity. Then they were estranged from each other, often unable to take up the profession they had learned, and then it was "Forward!" and all about reconstruction, moderation, and economic miracles. The old Nazi judges returned to their posts and further on they had to pull themselves together. This generation was emotionally disturbed. Significantly, the next generation included Gudrun Ensslin and the Baader-Meinhof group.

5 ***Lokale Musik*** **– Novalis**

I would like to ask a few questions about Lokale Musik*. Did you develop this "phrasing matrix" with the intention of forming a kind of language?*

The paradigmatic piece for this was the *Quartets I–VIII for Orchestra (*1976) by Cage, which I also once analysed – the analysis can be found in *Anarchic Harmony*.[74] This subtraction technique made it possible to have melodies that are all at once anonymous, known, and unknowable. But it is necessary to have a rhythmic flow, without which it would not work at all. I first tried this out in the *Ländler Topographien* (1978/81). There is this idea on the one hand of the geographical distance to a landscape, as if one were hearing only fragments, musical language scraps, from far away. The other is the aggression, the territorial imperative that usually emanates from such music: this claim of ownership "here I am, you do not belong here" is filtered out of this music. The idea is that behind the aggressive, folkloric domain is a beauty that needs to be uncovered. I have tried to do this through an instrumentation matrix, breaking down the melody into three parameters, calculating a melody index, a harmony index, and a rhythm index. By the way, this technique of "phrase analysis" (*Phran*) comes from Laske. The first part of the *Ländler Topographien* is based precisely on this – the eight-bar patterns of the Ländler were analysed and this analysis was then turned into sound, inspired by Webern's orchestration of the Bach ricercar.

[74] Zimmermann 1992 / Stefan Schädler (ed.): *Cage. Anarchic Harmony*, Mainz: Schott 1992, pp. 117–132.

If a rhythmic part is very prominent, several instruments will be involved in playing that rhythm. If a rhythm is very anonymous, on the other hand, it will be barely audible. If the melodic swing is very prominent, several instruments are involved in representing this swing – up to the point 9.0, which is the highest index, and there all instruments of a group would play along. But this point almost never occurs; there are always gaps of some kind. And this results in a hocketing effect, that each instrument is assigned a melodic cell for eight bars at a time – always only for eight bars, then the group changes and the material changes, because the index changes and a new Ländler phrase is worked on. It is a rather complex note-distribution system.

The same applies to the harmonic changes. Indexed were the tipping points between tonic and dominant; they are sometimes found within the phrases, sometimes in the transitions. The more complex and frequent their occurrence in a melody, the more spectral the resulting sounds, including dissonant mixtures in long sustained sounds. It is arranged in such a way that the analysis of the phrases becomes more and more complex from the beginning to the end – due to the arrangement of the Ländler in Hoerburger's book from simple to complex.

György Ligeti reacted once to my music: He liked in this first part of the *Ländler Topographien* how the music becomes harmonically more complex towards the end. The construction ultimately follows a modular system, but is based on a series of melodies whose harmonic changes become more and more complicated, and thus the structure of the harmonic mixtures also becomes more and more complex.

If these matrices exist, how much freedom do you have during the composition process?

There was freedom in the nuances; in reality, it resembled a translation of what I had thought up beforehand, and I was glad that all three of the "pictures" were finished. The first part, *Phran*, is the inner landscape of these melodies, the second part, *Topan*, the outer landscape. For this purpose, I took geological maps of the places where each ländler originated, drew a line through them by means of a ruler, and noted the morphemes that I found when reading this map, the names of the mountains, valleys, rivers, and so on. From the processing of these rock morphemes then emerged, as in the first part, how many and which tones are there, how many and which instruments, and so on. In contrast to the first part, however, the reverse principle applies here, not the principle of hocketing and long pauses, but rather the long sound held out like a ribbon, which marks a horizontal layer, the course of a river, a layer rock ,or some such, so to speak. The third part, *Tophran*, combines the two preceding parts like a mosaic, causing the people in Donaueschingen who heard this part alone to yodel along. This third part alone, when I listen to it critically today, does indeed sound a tad too positivistic. As a composition, the first part is in fact sufficient.

Are the other pieces of Lokale Musik *similarly strictly organised as you just described?*

Here is a list of all pieces of this work group 5 (1977–81):

5.1 *Ländler Topographien* for orchestra (1978–79)
5.2 *Leichte Tänze* (1977–79)
Zehn Fränkische Tänze sublimated for string quartet, 5.2.1 (1977)
25 Kärwa Melodien substituted for two clarinets, 5.2.2 (1979)
20 Figurentänze transformed for six instrumentalists, 5.2.3 (1979) [75]
15 Zwiefache transcended for guitar, 5.2.4 (1979)

5.3 Stille Tänze (1977–80)
Erd-Wasser-Luft-Töne for trombone, piano, and Streichglasspiel, 5.3.1 (1979)
Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen) for percussion (one player), 5.3.2 (1980)
Keuper for string quartet, 5.3.3 (1980)
5.4 *Wolkenorte* for Harp with Voice, 5.4 (Meister Eckhart, 1980)
5.5 *Seiltänze* for cello and orchestra (2002/06)

[75] 1994: Version for button accordion, clarinet, and double bass.

5.6 *Epilog: Der Tanz und der Schmerz* for flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, fortepiano, and string quartet. After Martin Buber (1981; new version 2005). [76]

In *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* (for string quartet, 5.2.1, 1977), two overtone rows are distributed among the four instruments – first violin and viola, second violin and cello. The rows act like a net. The original notes of the dances are put into this net and all notes that do not fit into this overtone net are dropped. If you choose the overtone rows of *F* and *C* or *G* and *C,* then of course a lot gets stuck if you choose a piece in *C major.* And as you move further away from C in the fifth series, fewer notes get stuck. I have arranged the ten dances in such a way that the most common keys are at the beginning and the keys become more and more complex, although this folk music is only played in four, five, or even six keys anyway.

The piece for two clarinets (*Kärwa-Melodien*, 5.2.2, 1979) is based on the principle of difference tones;[77]if played correctly, one hears the original melody in the shadows. The third piece (*Figuren-Tänze* for six instrumentalists, 5.2.3, 1979) uses combination tones. The fourth piece (*Zwiefache* for guitar, 5.2.4, 1979) is a projection of the parameters onto each other; the guitar strings – one string is retuned so that there are six notes – represent the six notes of a scale without a leading tone. For example, whenever the *A* comes, a harmonic is played on the *A string* instead. Since there are only four rhythms, an eighth note is an octave, a quarter note is a flageolet in fifths, a dotted eighth note is a flageolet in fifths, and so on, transcending, so to speak, the parameters that become sound only.

In *Riuti* (for percussion, 5.3.2, 1980) – which belongs to the group of works called *Silent Dances* (5.3, 1977–80) – the field names were used, whose root word is "reuth" and whose tone letters were translated into drum rhythms, into a drum language.

What exactly is a field name in the percussion solo Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen) *(1980)?*

This is the name that people gave to the fields. Many of them have the suffix -reuth and show something of how people lived, something of this cycle of acculturation and abandonment; the field name "deserts," for example, means that a land that was originally desolate has been made fertile. A certain interpretive freedom in *Riuti* is that the player can sometimes say the field names aloud and sometimes not; otherwise, the piece is quite strictly worked-out and performed that way.

Erd-Wasser-Luft-Töne for trombone, piano and Streichglasspiel (5.3.1, 1979) is still one of my most difficult pieces today. It was played some time ago at the behest of Mathias Spahlinger in a concert at the Institute for New Music at the Freiburg University of Music. They did not fill the piano with earth, but instead took plasticine or similar material to dampen the sound. The trombone must be muted so that only the highest and lowest notes are allowed to sound, a kind of musical erosion technique.

The third piece of *Silent Dances* is the string quartet *Keuper* (5.3.3, 1977/81). I have already described this when I told about my childhood experience of playing over the sandstone. Here I used the originals of *Zwiefachen*, but I changed the playing techniques very quickly, in a dialectic of tone / melody - absorbing techniques / filters, to form a rough surface, the sandstone of Fürth.

Can one already speak of the technique of introverted virtuosity here?

Yes, I knew it would be difficult to play. But it was rather the attempt of a paradox, namely to turn a banal melody through a mill in such a way that at the end, like in Max & Moritz[78] (what is this referring to?), only grains, dust grains or granules remain. It is complicated to play without showing a virtuosic result.

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[76] The original 1981 version was scored for two clarinets, trombone + alto trombone, harp + voice, dulcimer, percussion, and string quartet.

[77] Difference tones belong to the group of combination tones that can appear as beats (additional tones or noisy sounds) when two different tones are sounded simultaneously. They result from the frequency difference of the output tones, whereby the most easily audible so-called "square" difference tone is the difference of the fundamental frequencies of the two output tones.

[78] Max and Moritz: A Story of Seven Boyish Pranks This highly inventive, blackly humorous tale, told entirely in rhymed couplets, was written and illustrated by Wilhelm Busch and published in 1865. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_and_Moritz

In the four works of the Light Dances *group, there is some kind of description for each: "sublimated," "substituted," "transcended," and "transformed." Did you want fancy words for them, or do these four determinations refer to different ideas?*

Sublimation, after all, is the working through or suspension, penetration, or displacement of a conflict, is it not? The process, in the case of the *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* "sublimated" for string quartet, goes from recognisability to anonymity: the ties to a place, to a location, are removed by voicing pure harmonics.

The designation "substitutes" for the *25 Kärwa Melodien* for two clarinets – the second work of *Light Dances* – is to be taken literally; the original melody is replaced by a two-part movement, that of the difference tones. In the third piece, the *20 Figure Dances* "transformed" for six instrumentalists, the original harmony of a folk music is distorted like a cubist painting. The original two-part movement is transformed by first-degree combination tones and second-degree combination tones into a six-part movement. The piece then sounds – unfortunately – a bit like "Augsburger Puppenkiste" (this one may also need an explanation).

What you had in mind with the folk music of a place is quite clear. But I am also interested in the idea behind the composition of music in which landscapes are communicated. After all, it is not about programme music. Is there any thought of a fixation to particular places? Is it about something like the essence of a place? And what exactly do you mean by a "geological map"?

That was also a reaction to my visit to John Cage in 1976, where Cage used Henry David Thoreau[79]'s diaries in *Renga with Apartment-House* (1976). In it there are drawings of landscapes that Cage gave in time brackets, which is a very peculiar idea, and then a large orchestra had to play that. The parts are therefore little partial lines of the respective Thoreau drawings. I did not go that far in *Lokale Musik*, but later in *Baile de la conquista* for flute, oboe, and percussion (1996) I gave the outlines of a volcanic landscape directly into the music.

Cage also has a map of Walden and Walden Pond, the area where Thoreau lived and which Cage used for his *Song Books* (1970). The area was also portrayed by Charles Ives in his *Concord Sonata.*

The idea of location, the idea of working out a *Lokale Musik*, has to do with David Henry Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature – The Spirit of Place* (1923)[80] , a very important book for me. This idea came to me in the USA, when I got to know the American view that the place is almost more important than the story. Feldman once put it this way: Europe had gone through something, for example, the plague in the Middle Ages, etc., as Voltaire describes it in *Candide* (1759), while the American settlers simply left their places and moved on; they left something behind. I was fascinated by the concept of transcendentalism as it appears in Thoreau as well as in Ives, which is to pack as many ideas or melodies as possible into something so that the experience of a transcendental dissolution of boundaries sets in, so that you yourself seem to embody several entities in the moment. This is a bit like John Ashbery "to go beyond one message".

Returning to the villages then stops this dissolution of boundaries and one sees, so to speak, a white landscape ... Everything is no longer connected, but one is suddenly thrown back into nature. I could only do this with this idea of the "white," as it were, unsullied or "pure" landscape, because Nuremberg, in particular, had been a centre of the Nazis. I have always seen the "local" as something that lies below or outside the national or exists relatively independently of it.

As philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) says, "The Local is the Universal," Pier Paolo Pasolini writes, "The peasant universe is transnational. It does not even recognise nations."[81] I have adopted that, and by looking at the local, I have tried to filter out the national, which I find to be an aggressive element. Gilles Deleuze talks about deterritorialisation on this point in *Ritornello.* And Cage speaks of using and not ignoring the territory from which one comes or in which one lives.

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[79] *Journal of Henry David Thoreau* (1906).

[80] German translation by Werner Richter: *Der Untergang der Pequod. Studies in Classical American Literature*, Zurich: Europa-Verlag 1992.

[81] Pier Paolo Pasolini: *Freibeuterschriften*, Berlin: Wagenbach 1978, p. 45.

How did the Franconian farmers receive you when you started asking questions about folk music?

My brother Robert and I collected material together around 1976 or 1977, originally for a radio programme about folk music. We took two paths – we asked farmers for old "tuning books" of folk musicians, searched in their houses, yards, in their attics and borrowed them, some were even given to us as gifts. The other way was to go to the inns when folk music was being sung and played there. We recorded that, and it could only be broadcast on Bayerischer Rundfunk at night during the new-music slot, because some peasants in an inebriated state had given off obscene content. Even then, this aspect occurred, that I had to sublimate sordid aggression, racism, etc.

Did they also react aggressively to you?

No, not at all, they felt honoured that it was for radio and were glad that I paid for their drinks! Folk music is often completely ruined just by the fact that it was given kitschy titles. It has also been used, for example, to make programmes for locals, etc., which are completely unbearable.

Did you find that you had reached a certain point, stylistically or aesthetically, after finishing Lokale Musik*?*

Yes, and the group of works *Vom Nutzen des Lassens* (Meister Eckhart, 1981-84) followed, right?

Not quite, before that there are the Schalkhäußer-Lieder *(for voice with piano or for band: voice, piano, harp, electric guitar, percussion, and recordings, 1979/84):*

I. *Muckn-Blues* (Fitzgerald Kusz);
II. *Carol's Dream* (Carol Byl);
III *Ami-Schickse* (Gabriele Schreimel);
IV. *Birthday Greetings* (Fiorenza Hohl);
V. *The guitar remained lying* (W. Z.);
VI. *drums away* (W. Z.);
VII *The Aztec Stone* (Herbert Henck);
VIII. *Miss TL* (W. Z.);
Interlude: Forty chords for Jon (without lyrics) -
IX. On the individual departure (Rolf Dieter Brinkmann);
X. *Krikel-Krakel* (W. Z.);
XI *Sang* (Flemish, anonymous);
XII *Quasi-Swazi* (W. Z.);
XIII *Thumbstraße 68* (W. Z.);
XIV. *No more being a dancing bear* (W. Z.);
XV. *Between the chairs* (W. Z.);
XVI *Du, ich moch die fei immer nu* (Godehard Schramm);
Encore: Kehraus Galopp.

I have to say that my mother's name was Schalkhäußer – and I always wanted to be called that because I think it is such a nice name, but my father said it would be too expensive to change my name. Besides, I already knew at 17 or 18 that Bernd Alois Zimmermann existed.

These songs are a side chapter in my life. *Beginner Studio* had already been established by then. John McGuire and I organised such "sentimental evenings" there. Until then I knew pop music only from a soul discotheque in Cologne, Camayenne, also Tim Souster, whose records by the Beach Boys I had heard so often that I was sick of them. Then in Cologne came John McGuire, who had all of Randy Newman's sheet music. So, I sang and played all of Randy Newman's songs. These songs – *The Rednecks*, *Let's stop the big ones*, *Short people have no right to live* or *Der Kindermörder in Düsseldorf* – I found fantastic because of their double identity, the identification with the enemy. That gave me the idea that as a composer I could slip into all roles and genres.

So, I began the Schalkhäußer cycle, which I first called Freunde (*Friends).* All the songs are portraits of friends– not the intellectuals from the world of new music, but the Cologne friends who helped me in the *Beginner Studio. Ami-Schickse* is the song I still knew from Nuremberg, about a young woman who was

friends with American soldiers. The song *Carol's Dream* is about traveling. With Manfred Lexa, who helped in the *Beginner Studio* and whose arm was paralysed as a result of a car accident – he had been run over by a truck – I drove to the place where this accident happened. He was into rock music and so I made a rock song (*the guitar stayed down*). Then the story with a sleepy drummer (*Drums gone*). *Miss TL* was created for Pilou, the daughter of ClarenceBarlow; there I used the Rāga after which her parents had chosen her first name, the Rāga "Pilou".

Der Aztekenstein is a song about Herbert Henck, where I use the children's song *Hänsel und Gretel* in various cancrizans and mirror forms. *Krickel-Krakel* is a song about Michael von Biel, with lyrics by me. Kevin Volans was in this circle of friends (*quasi-Swazi*) and John McGuire, who played horn in the recording of the song *Thumbstraße.* The record of *Sang* features the speaking voice of the Belgian Roland Blontrock from the *Beginner Studio* circle and so the Belgian national anthem comes in there. Then there is a song about a composer who was also a communist, Dietrich Boekle; Eisler's *Solidarity Song* also comes in there: *No More Being a Dancing Bear*.

Via one of my teachers, Werner Heider, *Zwischen den Stühlen* came into being. Strictly speaking, it is not a song, but a jazz paraphrase in the style of Thelonious Monk.

For this panorama of a circle of friends there was also a small band for which I orchestrated the songs. This version was performed on Radio Bremen in the presence of Teeny Duchamp and John Cage: Many people were horrified by this betrayal of New Music. Cage, on the other hand, said that it could always have gone further and praised this "diversity of art". For me, what was important at that time was, first and foremost,that I could play the piano and sing myself; it was a kind of recreational vacation, a "private life". Then came the "official life" with Meister Eckhart: *Vom Nutzen des Lassens* (Work Group 8, Meister Eckhart, 1981–84) was, so to speak, a reaction to *Lokale Musik* (1977–81).

Eckhart frames Lokale Musik *(1977–81); before that is* Gelassenheit *(for alto with portative organ and two guitars, prolog. 8, 1975); after that " Self-forgetfulness" (for voice with obbligato sounds (8th epilogue, 1984; rev. 1992).*

Selbstvergessen was premiered in New York in 1992 by David Tudor and other musicians from the Merce Cunningham Dance Company; the choreography was called *Change of Address*. It was a commission from Cage, by the way. The piece, as I said, moves more and more towards a dissolution, towards a blurring of contours.

Then came this positivist phase of the *star migration*, with which I agree least of all today:

Asterism (group of works 7, 1982-84)
Glockenspiel for one percussionist, 7.1 (1983)
Klangfaden for bass clarinet, harp and glockenspiel with klingstein, 7.2 (text ad lib.: Peter Handke, 1983)
Saitenspiel for 18 Instruments, 7.3 (Blackfeet Indians, 1983)
Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein for baritone, ud, qanun, nay, rabab, and percussion [riqq, daff, mazhar, darabukka (one player)], 7.3.1 (1976; rev. 1993).
Gaze – Beduinenlied for oboe and tape, 7.3.2 (1976; rev. 1993)
Mandingo - Koroharfe for mandolin, 7.3.3 (1976; rev. 1993)
Spielwerk for soprano, saxophone(s), and three ensembles, 7.4 (Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder / Novalis, 1984)
Tre Stanze for guitar, 7.3.4 (2005)

Then a lot of things started to change, and quite important things came out of it, matrices and so on.

Klangfaden for harp, glockenspiel and bass clarinet (Peter Handke, 1983) I still accept today, also *Glockenspiel* for a percussionist (1983) ...

*... this is such a transition away from "*Lokale Musik *...*

... and then *Saitenspiel* for 18 instruments (Blackfeet Indians, 1983). That was played once by Ensemble Modern. There I had this obligatory string sound for two harps and harpsichord. Then comes again this situation in which, like Scylla and Charybdis, I found myself facing two opposite poles or waymarks, one dissolving and one pointing toward something positive, but also slightly positivistic. When I think of the

unison melody at the end of *Akkordarbeit* (1971) and now again this final song of *Saitenspiel* (1983), where they all sing – that is very positivistic.

The most aesthetically questionable was this Novalis piece, where I got lost: *Spielwerk* for soprano, saxophone(s), and three ensembles (1984) – 25 minutes, four movements: I. *Wheel of Time*; II. *Air Figure*; III. *Dream;* IV. *Transformation*. The first movement with this turning wheel is passable; it has to do with the fairy tale of the "wheel of time". I learned afterwards that Xenakis, who was at the premiere in Strasbourg, thought it was very good. But the last movement, with its golden section proportions – Fibonacci rows projected onto the rhythms – with its frozen architecture, is too positivistic in my view today! But I do not want to talk my way out of it; I composed it, after all, and I find the piece really problematic because I did not have the courage to grasp Novalis in his fragmentary nature. With the piano concerto *Ataraxia* (1987/88) came later a similarly purposeful piece.

But these pieces are much better than you realise ...

Feldman was in the Beginner Studio at the time in 1984, staying at our house where I was writing these pieces, but I was hiding them from him ... it was kind of two worlds.

But I can imagine that, for example, Klangfaden for *bass clarinet, harp, and glockenspiel with Klingstein (with a text ad lib. by Peter Handke, 1983) is not so far from Feldman.*

Yes, purely superficially, but it's a total construct, these four-part asymmetrical canons. I have always said, "you have to find your own cadences," and discovering J. N. Muncey of Jessup's magic prime square was something like that, which was a breeding ground for me for at least ten years.

More than that ...
So, twelve or thirteen years. The last piece in which I use the magic square is the piano piece that Ian Pace has now played: *Wüstenwanderung*(1986). There are at most subsequent variant formations such as *Blaupause* from the cycle *Schatten der Ideen 6a: Blueprint* for piano (2003) and *Schatten der Ideen 6b: BluePause* for piano (2004).

Which makes it twenty years ...

At most that, because the *blueprint* is a straggler, with which I wanted to conceal that I was in crisis. Another offshoot and another offshoot ...

In Sternwanderung *as a cycle – I don't know the* Spielwerk *from it, by the way – .*

Thank God ...

... it strikes me that suddenly a wide range of authors come into play, not only the classics of German Romanticism Jean Paul and Novalis, but also French authors like Gilles Deleuze, Daniel Charles, and so on.

Yes, I also tried to find something among the French structuralists. These little booklets published by Merve were very important for me. Daniel Charles inspired me to write the piano trio *Garten des Vergessens* (1984) – the labyrinthine wandering or gazing around in the stone garden of the Ryōanji monastery.

This notion of roaming dissolves the memory of place, so to speak. There is the quote, also related to the moss garden or "moss turned to sand," that I like to use: "With its planar weaves and interstices, moss rhizomatizes geometries, produces simple and complex graphs that change, that are drawn by chance, in short, it dissolves the memory of the place. Through the moss, the place surrenders to oblivion as a vital force, force of time." [82]This is, so to speak, the detachment from the *Lokale Musik to* find a field that is no longer a local place, but a place where you show yourself.

[82] Daniel Charles: *Glossen über den Ryoan-ji*, in: Charles: *John Cage oder Die Musik ist los*. Translated from the French by Eberhard Kienle, Berlin: Merve 1979, p. 63.

That led me to the magic square that I found in *Scientific American* magazine; it was by a mathematician named Muncey of Jessup.[83] When I presented this in Darmstadt in 1984, a New York Jew, son of a rabbi, a very serious one, came and said that this was from Hasidic tradition and that he wanted to visit me sometime. I tried to get rid of him, but then suddenly he was standing in front of my door in Frankfurt am Main, where I was living at the time, and at first I did not want to receive him. I was afraid of an incriminating conversation about my use of the magic square and the question whether it had to do with Kabbalistics. Finally, I did open the door.

The quote from Daniel Charles makes sense to me, but why did you take up Novalis and Jean Paul?

Novalis was because he talks about chance. He finds fantastic formulations, for example for harmony as floating between opposites.[84] I have tried to realise this harmony of floating in my matrix; through this procedure the non-centered tonality thought came in. For example, two layers in *string playing*: the tonal centering is counterpointed by a second layer that points in an opposite or different direction. Both layers go side by side for a while, creating the illusion of a common tonal space. But then there is a sudden shift, a change of direction not logically syntactic, but mediated solely by the number network. Only, in the next step, I then unfortunately harmonised the Novalis anthroposophically instead of fragmenting it. I went down the wrong path.

But when did you start to deal with Novalis? Had you already read something by him earlier, or did you only discover him for yourself in the mid-'80s? And do you tend to read as much as possible by one author or is a small excerpt enough for you? And was Novalis somehow linked to Jean Paul for you from the beginning?

He came again and again. Still in DDR times, I visited Novalis' house in Weißenfels. It is a small castle that housed a children's library, and at the moment I looked out of a window there, I saw a construction machine destroying the wall around the castle park. In the small orangery there was an exhibition about Carl von Ossietzky and poets killed in concentration camps. Novalis was somewhat derogatorily referred to as a "Krautjunker" in the GDR; he was not that well regarded in DDR times. And when I was there for the second time after 1989, seven or eight years later, instead of the Wall I saw a small transformer house and behind it an ugly slab housing estate. But the stones that had been torn out of the Wall were still lying around. So, I carried Novalis around with me for a long time.

Jean Paul – I do not know anyone who describes landscapes as musically as Jean Paul, this sky-high jubilation – saddened to death, these vastnesses, something you only feel when you walk through such landscapes, especially through Franconia. To Jean Paul belongs this opulence and this incredible loquacity, the sideways, the interlaced as well asthe lexical, encyclopedic – a bit like Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759/67). I read in Bruno Walter's autobiography that he, probably also inspired by Mahler's first Symphony, had often read Jean Paul's *Titan*, but I think one should rather keep one's hands off making this novel the reproach of a composition.

Can we briefly return to the piano trio Ephemer *(1981)? There it is all about the opposition of solid and ethereal structure, of ordinario on the one hand and harmonics on the other. I would not want to reduce*

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[83] "According to a 1913 proof of J. N. Muncey, the smallest magic square composed of consecutive odd primes *including the number 1* is of order 12", in: Martin Gardner: *The Magic and Mystery of Numbers*, *Scientific American* 1984, p. 86ff.

[84] Novalis [Friedrich von Hardenberg]: *Fichte-Studien* (1795/96), Nr. 555: "All cognition should cause morality – the moral drive, the drive for freedom causes cognition. Being free is the tendency of the ego, - the ability to be free is the productive imagination – *harmony is the* condition of its activity – *of floating*, between opposites. Be at one with yourself is thus the conditional principle of the highest purpose – to be or to be free. All being, being in general, is nothing but Freyseyn – hovering between extremes that are necessarily to be united and necessarily to be separated. All reality flows out of this point of light of floating – everything is contained in it – object and subject are through it, not it through them. I-ness or productive imaginative power, the *hovering* – determines, produces the extremes, that between which is hovered – This is a deception, but only in the area of the common understanding. Otherwise, it is something absolutely real, because floating, its cause, is the source, the matter of all reality, reality itself". (Novalis: *Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe Friedrich von Hardenbergs, Band 2: Das philosophisch-theoretische Werk,* ed. by Hans-Joachim Mähl, München - Wien: Hanser 1978, 2nd ed. 2005, p. 177).

everything to this concept of dissolution, of the idea abolishing itself, as it were, but does it have anything to do with this symbolism?

It has more to do with later pieces like *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for cello and piano (1987/89) and with the parodoxy of difficulty, introverted virtuosity, the fact that something sounds easy but is difficult to play. It still has to do with *Lokale Musik* insofar as this "etherisation", the letting go of fixed structures, of the earth, is thematised again. The fixed structure that is in it is basically a piano reduction of the choral piece *Aus Nah und Fern* (for three choral groups and obbligato sound sources, 1977/81). These three choruses, each of which is sung or played at its own tempo, are placed in the piano – that is the place, "the place" – and the strings are busy, so to speak, evaporating this core, this place, and that is what happens: by the end, the solid core is gone, and the melody that is heard last is the song "Es fügt sich" from the *Spanish Journey of Oswald von Wolkenstein* (for baritone, ud, qanun, nay, rabab, and percussion [riqq, daff, mazhar, darabukka], 1976; rev. 1993). [85]

By the way, there was a prelude to *Ephemer,* which I have now removed, but which can still be heard on the recording[86]: the piano reduction of the prelude to *Gelassenheit* (for alto with portative organ and two guitars, Meister Eckhart, 1975), a guitar duet. *Ephemer* is a bridge piece, so to speak, with which I wanted to forget or leave behind earlier pieces. And the Cage quote on "ephemeralization" was very important to me. [87]

If we come back to Lokale Musik *at the moment:* Wolkenorte *for harp (1980) – we have already discussed the basic principle. But what does the title mean?*

It is about heaven and earth assigned to the number three or four, which I found in different cultures – a side work I wrote in collaboration with the harpist Gabriele Emde. Like seven wheels of different sizes, these melodies roll off and the harmonisation occurs by a faster wheel performing the melody seven times faster in extreme cases. The melody harmonises itself. All vertical sounds you find in it are "time segments" of seven spinning wheels of different sizes. The computer extract for this, as mentioned, was made by Clarence Barlow; basically it is an old Renaissance technique, an augmentation canon. The original version, by the way, was much longer. I took out the last section, which was too difficult to play. [88]It was called *Cicindela* for a while and then went into the harpsichord piece *Wanda Landowska's verschwundene Instrumente* (1998) under the title *Ein wenig Grazie.* Incidentally, in the harp piece *Wolkenorte* (1980), the harpist sings a text by Meister Eckhart in the prologue and epilogue.

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[85] Walter Zimmermann says in his introduction to the work: *Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein* is the first part of the project 'Music Stories about the Contact between Orient and Occident' and shows the process of acculturation among two cultures. Thus, the Wolkenstein song "Es fügt sich", composed in 1414, is juxtaposed with an Andalusian nouba. This suite is still played in Tunisia today, but was composed in Moorish Spain in the early Middle Ages. Wolkenstein describes his restless life of travel, which also brought him to Spain. Thus, the text becomes an occasion to play through the contact with the culture of Islam and to come across forms of acculturation whose structures are not fixed, but which materially took place. It is known that pretty much all instruments were adopted by Islam in the Middle Ages. Thus, the ensemble also plays on original instruments as they are still used in Arabic music today. The embedding of the Wolkenstein song (I. *Nouba exposed*), the courses of closeness and distance to the other culture (II. *Nouba assimilated*), and finally the processing of the influences into the own structure (III. *Canciones aflamencadas*) are not least criticism of ethnocentric thinking. Our (music) historiography is full of chauvinisms. Thus, the self-image of seeing the emergence of polyphony as a purely European process is parodied. Parody, after all, arises precisely through procedures of reshaping one musical style through contact with another. (Incidentally, a technique that took off in the 15th century and that Oswald von Wolkenstein had also used in his Kontrafaktur-Lieder)."

[86] Edition Theater am Turm, TAT 8201-03, 3 LP 1982.

[87] John Cage: *Diary "How to improve the world"*, LXXIV: "Ephemeralization; away from the earth into the air or: 'on earth as it is in heaven'." – In: *A Year from Monday*, 1968, p. 152.

[88] Nevertheless, the harpist Franziska Huhn recorded the complete *Wolkenorte* (1980) in 2008. Her recording appears on Mode Records as part of the complete *Lokale Musik* recording (mode 305/07, 3 CD 2019).

6 **Music Theatre**

A whole series of authors who inspired you in some way has already been mentioned. Now Peter Handke has been added to them.

Handke always had a certain way of dressing up his criticism, and I liked his lyrical language, with which he managed to speak as if Novalis were still alive after the tragedies of the 20th century. At the time, Handke meant to me a world of his own, strangely immobilised, as did Feldman.

My involvement with Handke later led to the opera *Über die Dörfer* (1985–86). I was reproached severely for doing that. I also like the piece because it describes my family situation, that of my parents and my brothers. In Handke's work, the drama takes place between three siblings, and it is about their parental home. The intellectual brother, who returns from afar, refuses to agree to mortgage the house in favour of the sister. At the end comes as deus ex machina Novalis in the figure of Nova with a very long final monologue.

I also visited Handke in Salzburg; he knew my music through the record edition of the Frankfurt Theater am Turm (1982). Back then I had more things in mind for music theatre, which were to be rounded up into a four-part work based on texts by Handke, for which Marlis A. Franke made the draft for a libretto. It was based on Handke's *Langsamer Heimkehr* (*Slow Homecoming* 1979), *Lehre der Saint-Victoire* (1980), and *Wiederholung* (*Repetition* 1986) – including *Über die Dörfer* (1981), that is, on four texts. The project failed, however. [89]

The music-theatre work or "dramatic song" *Über die Dörfer* was, like *Akkordarbeit* (1971), a feat of strength over which a partnership broke up. I still conceived the first act in or near Cologne; then came the separation, or rather I reached a point where I broke off all friendships and moved to Berlin. There I lived in one of the last ruins left standing after the war, a beautiful, dreamy-looking house on Grolmanstraße. Writing the score was very exhausting; I felt almost like a convict who had to make an act of atonement. This was also due to needing to follow the matrices, that is, carrying out the existing preliminary work relatively mechanically.

For the composition of the second act, I then went to Lauenstein, which is a small town that you reached on the route from Leipzig to Munich just after the DDR border at the time. It was a western enclave, surrounded by the DDR. There is a small castle there where Wilhelm Canaris[90] was imprisoned before his execution. In Lauenstein, I stayed in a small boarding house to write the second act – I was there for months, in Berlin every now and then in between. Then I received the scholarship for the Villa Massimo – and had no more strength for the piano score. In Hungary I then found a writer of piano reductions who, when he had finished the first act, was drafted into the army, so that I had to do it myself. The writing of the orchestral material was also left to me, since I had no publisher.

In the middle of it all, disaster: The performance was canceled; the piece was too difficult. I then called Reinhold Kreile, a lawyer, copyright expert and chairman of GEMA. He knew Hermann Glaser, the cultural director in Nuremberg, more closely and explained to him in a letter that it would cost more money not to

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[89] According to Stefan Schädler, the following was intended:
Slow Homecoming. Tetralogy based on Peter Handke
I. *About the Rooms* (Marlis A. Franke after Peter Handke, *Slow Homecoming*)
II. *On the Colors* (Marlis A. Franke after Handke, *The Teaching of Sainte-Victoire*)
III *Crossing the Threshold* (Marlis A. Franke after Handke, *The Chinese of Pain*)
IV. *Across the Villages* (Anja Weigmann after Peter Handke)

[90] Wilhelm Canaris (1887-1945), a submarine commander in World War I, later an admiral, headed a military intelligence service, the Amt Ausland / Abwehr in the High Command of the Wehrmacht, from 1935 –44. He had contacts with the conservative resistance and was involved in coup plots between 1938 and 1940. He was not directly involved in the assassination attempt on Hitler on 20 July 1944, but the Geheime Staatspolizei found his diary. On 9 April 1945, Canaris was sentenced to death in Flossenbürg concentration camp by an SS tribunal and hanged.

stage the event than to perform it. As a result, the performance took place over the opposition of the Nuremberg City Theater, with some of them making it clear that they did not like the ork. The non-participating chorus members were given free tickets to boo the premiere. There were tumults after the performance. At that time, however, I had the press on my side for once, while there had been eminent difficulties on the part of the house management.

But that was already your second opera; before that there was Die Blinden *after Maeterlinck (1984).*

Yes, for the premiere of *Die Blinden* in Gelsenkirchen in 1986 I received numerous rebukes, among others from Hans-Otto Spingel in the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*. [91]

How did you come to write an opera in the first place?

Well, I wanted to write an opera that was not an opera. I had gotten to know Feldman, the *Rothko Chapel*, Meister Eckhart, *Vom Nutzen des Lassens*, and then I admired the filmmaker Jean-Marie Straub [a bit unfair not to mention Danièle Huillet, no? They were always a team] and developed the idea of a static opera. Most people in my circle of friends found Straub boring, by the way, but I admired him a lot – his slow camera movements: how a sun changes the landscape when a cloud passes over it ... Straub then also gave me the courage to make such an extreme piece of music theatre. It had taken me a long time to find suitable material: *The Blind* (1890) by Maeterlinck, who had already described his play as a "static drama," six women, six men – I have told you that before ...

My aim was to cultivate something in the operatic genre that is otherwise taboo and marginalised; namely, I wanted people to stand still. The problem then became: the singers could not learn the score by heart. And the director had this stupid idea that he had the singers, who were playing blind people because they absolutely did not want to learn their part by heart, act invisibly behind the stage, so that the production was a failure.

... this CD production of Die Blinden [92]*" ...*

I owe this to Ernstalbrecht Stiebler, who understood the meaning of this opera and asked the choirmaster Manfred Schreier to produce the piece for Hessischer Rundfunk. That was a year after the premiere and I received the Prix Italia for this production in 1988 and was allowed to travel to Sicily to receive it. That was the second time I had been to Sicily. In 1986, the first time I was there, I had to read the reviews of the Gelsenkirchen premiere of *Die Blinden* at the foot of Mount Etna.

So, in 1988, after the composition of Über die Dörfer *(1985–86), which was not premiered until 1992 in Nuremberg, there was a renewed examination of* Die Blinden *(1984). Was there also a public performance in Frankfurt at that time?*

Yes, there was a staged performance, which was filmed and broadcast several times on television, in the Third Program of Hessischer Rundfunk. Jaroslav Adler, an abstract artist whom Nanne Meyer and I had recently met at the Villa Massimo , designed the set and costumes, Stephan Müller directed.

Über die Dörfer (1985–86) proved to be too big an apparatus, because the fine irony of the Sprechgesang did not work. The singers declaimed it in state-theatre voices and even covered the quiet sounds from the orchestra pit with their voices.

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[91] "Zimmermann, a busy musician, has absorbed and processed diverse musical and ethnological influences. His 'Static Action,' as he rubricates his piece, now premiered in the workshop of the Gelsenkirchen Musiktheater im Revier, identifies him as a musical nihilist. He shows himself to be a meticulous accountant of bare nothingness, human as well as musical.
But nothingness also has steps and slopes. To set this to music is one of the great musical challenges. Mahler, for example, faced it, fixed the nothingness in sound at the edges of existence, at the same time surrendered to it and 'confronted' it. Zimmermann, on the other hand, denies himself to it, places himself in voluntary isolation from the subject and from those who are to receive it. The monotonous lament of an almost seventy-minute psalmody about hope and futility does not do justice to the situation." (Hans-Otto Spingel, in: *Die Zeit*, No. 19, 2 May 1986)

[92] Deutscher Musikrat/Wergo WER 6510-2 (CD 1996).

So much effort and so much pressure, so much suffering, were alltied up with the first act that I wanted to hear the music again – thus the cello concerto *Subrisio saltat* / *Rope Dances* (2002/06) was created: It is the orchestral movement of the first act without chorus, with the difference that the cello – they are all orchestrations of a virtual original according to a vector principle – intones the original dance melodies, but with missing final cadences, so that a floating state is created, which on the one hand recalls the original, but on the other hand veils it again. Exactly: Subrisio saltat, the smile dances.

Could you explain that a little more?

Three squares play a role. You already know these projections and these angles. You will find this in the lecture *Caught or Serene*, which I gave at Darmstadt in 1984. [93]

My way of composing is paradoxical in the sense that I use a system in order not to be trapped in systems. This is so far my only solution to the problem of moving beyond the ego of the composer, who otherwise dominates the listener by acting out emotional content in his compositions. I am trying to design a path that I can share with the listener, that is, that I can follow in a similar way as a person listening in the audience. Therefore, I use methods to allow the music to flow in new directions all the time, and by doing so, I do not establish a single, specific way of listening. I call this process "non-centered tonality." It allows on the one hand the feeling of centeredness and on the other hand a simultaneous floating between different centres. My method is based on a matrix technique that I learned from books on traditional Chinese music[94].

The pitch square, also called "harmonic square" (Picture 1), shows a coordinate system of 12 x 12 tones: horizontally the circle of fifths in the Chinese sequence of ascending fifths and descending fourths, vertically a harmonic series up to the 12th overtone above each tone in the circle of fifths – this creates a harmonically homogeneous tonal grid.

By contrast, the magic square (Picture 2) is a coordinate system of 12 x 12 numbers to create a labyrinthine and highly unexpected sequence of the first 144 prime numbers yet ordered in such a way that all transverse sums add up to the same sum vertically and horizontally.

These 144 tones were projected onto the magic square at different angles, resulting in a different distribution of tones. Or to put it another way: by projecting two matrices at different angles onto each other, a "non-centered tonality" is created. One matrix is a pitch network, the other is a number network. The number net is a twelfth-order magic square consisting of the first 144 prime numbers; it determines the progression and parameterisation of the pitches, thus enabling the floating state of non-centered tonality. The pitch network, also a twelfth-order matrix,with 144 pitches, connects the most general tonal relations of the East and West. The x-axis corresponds to the generation of the twelve Lü of China: 1:1, 2:3, 8:9 (= 2:3 x 4:3), etc., thus always alternating the achieved proportion, sometimes 4:3, sometimes 2:3. The y-axis corresponds to Pythagorean number proportions, ascending from 1:2, 2:3, 4:5 ... to 11:12.

I project these two squares onto each other at 4 x 2 different angles. The first four prime-number squares, projected onto the pitch square, turn 90° each time to reach the next projection; the second four projections of the number square onto the pitch square produce – for this I turn the transparent foils – four mirrored pitch sequences. Thus, in ascending order of the prime numbers from 1 to 827 (= 144th prime number), I can generate eight pitch sequences from a pitch matrix of 144 cells each and thus produce a pitch sequence of non-centered tonality.

In the "bandoneon square" – a third one in addition to the magic prime square and the harmonica square – you will find practically all tones of the bandoneon gathered together, and since the bandoneon is designed to play tonal music comfortably, the tones are also ordered unsystematically, not according to the circle of fifths in the x-axis and the twelve harmonics in the y-axis of the coordinates as in the harmonica square. The bandoneon has three rows of buttons for each hand, each with twelve notes: there are 3 x 12 x 2, or 72 notes. These double to 144 because, unlike the accordion, the bandoneon produces different tones through pushing and pulling.

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[93] Walter Zimmermann: *Gefangen oder Gelassen*, lecture at the International Summer Courses for New Music, Darmstadt, 24 July 1984. - Cf. http://home.snafu.de/walterz/darmstadtlecture.html (accessed 17 December1 2018). Cf. also: Walter Zimmermann: *The Lost Harmonika*, Engl. transl. by Marc Sabat, in: *KunstMusik* No. 17, 2015, pp. 47–51.

[94] Walter Arnold Kaufmann: *Musical References in the Chinese Classics*, 1976.

The projection of the harmonica square on the prime number square results, as already said, in each case in a tone sequence of 144 cells. These are now again projected onto the bandoneon square in the eight angles including reflections, so that eight harmonic tones are generated from each of the 144 cells. These are parameterised by the numerical value of the respective prime number and so the harmonic-rhythmic network of a composition is created. For example 827 (= duration 8 x basic pulse 2 = basic pulse 1/8, if 1 = 1/16th), so this cell would last 8/8, 7 determines the pitch of the cell 1 = /, 3 = \, 7 = /\, 9 = \/ (with one-digit prime numbers only these four numbers occur).

That is what you calla vector.

The vector results from the projection of the squares onto each other. And in the opera *Über die Dörfer it* was also about the fact that one can achieve levitation.

Had you used this already in Lokale Musik*?*

No, in *Lokale Musik* Ländler were used. Here I used dances and melody notes related to tonic or dominant, I just left them out to make it sound more floating.

How long did it take you?

Two, three years already. So that is how the first act of *Über die Dörfer* came about. And in the *Cello Concerto* I now do something completely simple: the original is played *colla parte*. So, it is not new music that is being created there, but the opera is no longer being produced, after all, and I simply wanted to hear the piece again. The second act is coherent as an opera. The cello concerto *Subrisio saltat / Rope Dances (*2002/06) was created from the first act.

How did the epistolary opera Hyperion*(1989–90) come into being?*

Hyperion goes back to my acquaintance with Dietrich E. Sattler, the editor of the Frankfurt Hölderlin edition, whom I had met at the Villa Massimo. He suggested that I make an opera out of the epistolary novel *Hyperion.* From the beginning, I had the idea of including Sattler in the opera in the role of a hermit who recalls and represents the author of the letters, and even writes the letters. This physical writing of the letters is the only credible version of this epistolary opera that I can imagine in the meantime. All the recitatives with notes that are currently still in the score, the so-called "scriptura version", a semi-staged version, will not be sung, but written – this with the sounds of writing, of a scratching pen. The hermit writes down these texts noisily during the performance – if possible in Hölderlin's handwriting, which Sattler masters deceptively; this process is projected in real time onto the back wall of the hall.

I try to characterise the "alternation of tones", [95]which Hölderlin himself also described in his poetic theory – the heroic, the ideal, and the naïve – via three styles of singing. In addition to their solo parts, the singers also embody these three tones in a small chamber choir, as a motet choir. The plot is basically about love and war, Hyperion loses the beloved Diotima mainly because he goes to war. In the background, private experiences also play into this – my parental home, where business and private life could simply never be separated; somehow they always flowed into each other. And I, too, could never really separate love and work, composing and private life. Two marriages failed because I was unable to keep relationship and work apart – the first during *Akkordarbeit* and the second while working on *Über die Dörfer*.

So that was the inner motivation to make this epistolary opera, but it is at the same time my weakest opera, because it does not contain a genuinely new musical approach. At the end there is a film that shows

[95] "Doesn't the ideal catastrophe dissolve into the heroic by the fact that the natural initial tone becomes the antithesis? Doesn't the natural catastrophe dissolve into the ideal one, because the heroic initial tone becomes the antithesis? Does not the heroic catastrophe, through the fact that the ideal initial tone becomes the antithesis, dissolve into the natural one? Probably for the epic poem. The tragic poem goes one tone further, the lyrical poem uses this tone as an antithesis and returns in this way, in every style, to its initial tone or: the epic poem stops with its initial antithesis, the tragic poem with the tone of its catastrophe, the lyrical poem with itself, so that the lyrical end is a naïve-ideal, the tragic a naïve-heroic, the epic an ideal-heroic". (Friedrich Hölderlin: Sämtliche Werke. Small Stuttgart Edition, 6 vols. vol. 4, ed. by Friedrich Beissner, Stuttgart: Cotta 1962, p. 248).

Hölderlin's handwriting in the making, as if written by an invisible hand, simultaneously to the sung words of Diotima "When from afar ...". This is the conclusion of this opera about writing, to set the plot apart from the usual plot. The writing in *Hyperion*, the operatic machine of intimate irony in Handke's *Über die Dörfer*, and the order-tone theory in *Die Blinden* – these are the things that enabled me to do these three operas in the first place.

The collaboration with Sattler was fantastic, by the way; he is a person who builds up a very intense relationship with you; that is something you never get otherwise. He was also attacked from the side of official German studies and created a chronology of Hölderlin's life work by editing what Hölderlin wrote day by day. This came out in twelve volumes with Luchterhand.[96] He works like a man possessed, and his handwriting has come to resemble Hölderlin's. Incidentally, he has shown that the *Hesperic Songs*, [97]which are unfinished hymns in the Homburg manuscript, start somewhere, then continue after 15 pages and consist of 144 particles: 12 x 12.

This is a bit like Marcus van Crevel, the editor of Obrecht's works, who at some point started to investigate the numerical relationships in Jacob Obrecht. At first he was certainly right, then over the years he became more and more detailed and finally one began to doubt how far this goes ... [98]

Another question about Die Blinden*: Did you carry over Maeterlinck's text completely or only a selection, and in which language?*

It is almost complete; sometimes I have followed the French original (*Les aveugles*, premiere Paris 1891) and sometimes used the German translation by Stefan Gross, so I have jumped back and forth.

7 **Motherwell's Maxims – Morton Feldman**

Robert Motherwell had a maxim that I do not always follow, but which nonetheless remains on my desk: "No nostalgia, no sentimentalism, no propaganda, no spelling out, no autobiography, no clichés, no illusionism, no description, no predetermined endings, no charm, no relaxation, no mere taste, no obviousness, no coldness. Rather: immediacy, passion or tenderness, beingness as such, sheer presence, objectivity, true invention, true resolution, light, the unexpected direct colors." [99]

It is easy to formulate that ...

"No nostalgia, no sentimentalism, no propaganda" – agreed, I can stay away from that; what is "spelling out"?

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[96] Friedrich Hölderlin: *Complete Works, Letters, and Documents in Chronological Order. Bremen edition*, 12 volumes, Munich: Luchterhand 2004 (and Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 2004).

[97] Friedrich Hölderlin: *hesperische Gesänge*, Bremen: Neue Bremer Presse 2001.

[98] Cf. Marcus van Crevel's introduction to Obrecht's Missa "Sub tuum presidium" in the complete edition of Obrecht's works (Opera omnia Vol. I, Part 6, Amsterdam 1959), begun in 1953 and discontinued in 1964, with his introduction to the Missa "Maria zart" (Opera omnia Vol. 1, Part 7, Amsterdam 1964). See also van Crevel: *Strukturgeheimnisse bei Obrecht*, in: *Musica* 15.1961, 252 –255.

[99] Robert Motherwell: *What Abstract Art Means to Me*, in: Motherwell: *Collected Writings*, 1999, p. 84ff.

This refers to didactic explanations for our actions ...

Okay, I agree; what does "no autobiography" mean?

This means: an autobiographical explanation must not be a justification or an alibi for something that is missing artistically.

That means he is not interested in poetry that says "I suffer"?

If the statement is just that, then indeed no one would be interested. But if the statement opens up insights into contexts that mean something to other people, then it would make sense.

Clichés crop up very quickly, I think. Lachenmann once said that other composers would behave like tourists in his sound world. That is the danger to which a prominent composer is exposed; others make use of his stylistic feature. Is the imitation of a surface structure already a cliché?

It becomes a cliché if it does anything typical of the form. Even Lachenmann once said to me a few years ago about Klangschatten – mein Saitenspiel *(for 48 strings and three pianos, 1972), a piece I really like: "If only I had not gone so far ..."*
Gösta Neuwirth[100] and I noticed during a performance of *Mouvement (– vor der Erstarrung)* (1982–84) that it was, above all, a quite virtuosic piece in the end. Lachenmann, standing behind us, seemed to have heard this, turned around and said, not without self-irony, "Doesn't that sound like Reznicek?"[101] One can find remnants of such clichés in any composer, inspired by French music, for example, a fast and often yowling glissando or fast arpeggios.

What does "illusionism" mean for us musicians? Does it include flashes of sound like in English or Swedish orchestral pieces, is it a kind of empty elegance?

No; I think a hollow elegance is something else altogether. There is musical illusionism especially in Steve Reich, also in Ligeti the illusory rhythm, psychoacoustic tricks.

"Description" – that goes in the direction of programme music; that is where my music becomes endangered. It contains a lot of extramusical reproaches and meanings. *Akkordarbeit* starts from a descriptive situation, even if I only use it to materialize an idea – in *Akkordarbeit,* this idea is in fact the representation of an extramusical phenomenon.

Yes, but the point is whether you stop at the descriptive or reachbeyond it. There is an orchestral piece by Benedict Mason, Lighthouses of England and Wales *(1987). That deals, among other things, with the history of the representation of the sea in music. It would be descriptive if it were just about writing music that even grandma says, "How beautiful, that's an ocean, isn't it?" But when you put together formulations, even clichés,*

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[100] Gösta Neuwirth, born in Vienna in 1937, studied composition at the Musikhochschule (with Karl Schiske) and music and theatre studies at the University of Vienna. He received his doctorate in Berlin in 1968 with the thesis *Die Harmonik in der Oper "Der ferne Klang" von Franz Schreker*. He taught in Graz from 1972, then History of Music Theory at the Berlin University of the Arts from 1982–2000, and at the University of Freiburg since 2009. His students include the composers Bernhard Lang, Peter Ablinger, Georg Friedrich Haas, Arnulf Herrmann, Isabel Mundry, Hanspeter Kyburz, Orm Finnendahl, Enno Poppe, Oliver Korte, and Martin Kapeller. His musicological writings include a work on number symbolism in Josquin's music and investigations of Ernst Krˇenek. The fascination that athematic music exerted on Gösta Neuwirth forms the bridge from his own compositional activity back to the 14th and 15th centuries. His *String Trio. Essays on an Autobiography* (1953/76) shows Neuwirth's involvement with the trends of new music during the period in which this composition was written. Neuwirth is concerned with the mutability of subjective musical perception of time through "events" of changing density; he does not organise musical progressions through categories such as "memory," but in an act of listening that dwells in the here and now, which is modeled on works of the 14th and 15th centuries or the "pointillistic" phase of serial music.

[101] Emil Nikolaus von Reznicek (1860—1945), born in Vienna and died in Berlin, conductor and opera composer. His music seems to have been rooted in Wagner's musical drama, at times illustrative, yet gloriously orchestrated. Despite occasional expressionist, verismo, or even neoclassical echoes, his musical language reveals little distance from 19th-century traditions.

compare them with each other, analyse them, reflect on them musically, then for me it is no longer merely descriptive.

"Predetermined endings" – I also find them, I must say self-critically, in *Chord Work* (1971), *In Understanding Music...* (1974), in *Spielwerk* (1984) ...

But is Motherwell writing this with reference to music, to temporal art? Does it not rather mean, when I start, I do not want to know how it will end?

Philip Guston recounts that Morton Feldman visited him in his studio and asked when the painting would be finished. Then Feldman fell asleep while Guston was painting. And then when Feldman woke up, Guston decided, "Now the painting is finished!"

How does it relate to Motherwell's maxime "charm"? A charming piece, does that have to do with grace?

Charm obviously does not occur in Motherwell, but I would not discount that out of hand.

And "no relaxation"?

Yes, if that corresponds to a certain laziness.

"Mere taste"?

This is also true in music; if a piece alone satisfies good taste, then it does not have much to say.

What does "obviousness" mean? Is a piece "obvious" if its message is too clear? Or if the means are too clear? Would Alvin Lucier, when you know the glissando goes on for a whole piece, or Tom Johnson, when you know he is counting on for another twenty minutes, be too "obvious"?

I would say: no! The performance is "obvious" in a way; you understand almost immediately the idea of the piece and know about the strategies that come into play, but you do not yet know exactly what will come of it. This is more problematic with Steve Reich's phase pieces, which are fascinating at first and of which it is clear after a while how they work. But even so, it can be the case that the process of shifting between the phases, even if one knows the principle and therefore knows in principle what will happen, remains interesting and even fascinating in detail.

The last point is "coldness".

By that, I think Motherwell means a detached, somewhat cynical coldness. If it is only a matter of not being warm, then I do not agree with that. All those criteria are not the only ones, after all. I just wanted to start our conversation today a little bit broader than it has been. You just mentioned Feldman. Can you say more about his importance for you and your music?

In Nuremberg, I had heard Werner Heider's ensemble play Feldman's *The Viola in My Life 1.* Then I also bought some of his piano pieces that were published by Peters at that time. I liked them for their quietness and simplicity. Then I went to see him in Buffalo in 1974 or 1975. I went to his apartment and he was cleaning a brass grate that belonged to the fireplace. Then he called his girlfriend, who was having problems, finally disappeared into the bathroom for at least half an hour – and I sat around waiting. After that, he came in freshly bathed, sat down in the chair, and held court while placing me in the child's chair, a piece of Shaker woodwork, opposite him. I knew then that of all the people I portrayed in *Desert Plants,* he was the closest to me.

Also on a human level? Did you not find a large contradiction between his person and his music?

Of course I liked his music ... that Feldman could sometimes be a bit monstrous, I noticed only later, in Darmstadt in 1982 or 1984, when he paced up and down in front of the audience like a tiger and loudly

insulted a lady whose question he did not like. At that time he was puzzling to me. He was making a lasagna on a sheet about 40 x 30 cm; I asked "Who else is coming?" and he answered "Nobody". He was just an also-ran eater. He was dating Nora Post, the oboist, back then. She lived with him and I lived with her ... His directness was sometimes hurtful.

Friedrich Hommel (1929–2011), who had taken over the direction of the Darmstadt International Summer Courses in 1982, usually introduced his guests in somewhat long-winded detail. In 1984, he presented Brian Ferneyhough, among others, and in the same year Feldman was there, whom Ernstalbrecht Stiebler from Hessischer Rundfunk had suggested. Hommel now felt he had to present Feldman in as much detail as Ferneyhough, but he did not succeed because he simply knew too little about him. Then, in the cafeteria, either Brian would show up with his entourage or Feldman would show up with his entourage – they seemed like two lindworms avoiding meeting each other. When Feldman left, everyone else got up and followed him like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Once he brought five kilos of scores by Wolfgang Rihm, which Universal Edition had probably given him: "I like Wolfgang, his paths through the pieces ...", he commented.

My impression is that Feldman became so monstrous only in his later years. It was not that extreme before; it seems to have started only in the '80s.

Feldman was in the Beginner Studio twice, the first time with Eberhard Blum[102] and Jan Williams, the second time with Cologne musicians. On his first visit, Feldman also played the piano himself, turning the piano away from the audience and, because he could not see very well, writing the names of the notes on the white keys in pencil. Then this piece *Why Patterns?* for flute, glockenspiel, and piano (1978), which exists in two versions; in one of the versions, everyone plays rhythmically independently of the other at the end, and Feldman then suddenly continued playing alone at the Beginner Studio performance. Something similar happened much earlier, in 1972 or 1974 in Berlin. Feldman's *Piece for Four Pianos* (1957) was performed there, which I myself later played in Munich with Frederic Rzewski, Dieter Schnebel, and Christian Wolff. Each player has the same score. One begins together, whereby each may realise his own tempo, but all players should stop together. In Berlin it happened that only three players (Feldman, Wolff, Rzewski) stopped together, but the fourth continued to play for several minutes – it was John Cage!

Feldman's later piece for five pianos ("Five Pianos," 1971/72) is then again much more precisely notated.

1984 was the big festival at Beginner Studio in Cologne, with the premiere of Feldman's eighty-minute *Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano* (1980) by the Cologne Clementi Trio.[103] Herbert Henck played *Triadic Memories* (1981) in what Feldman called "the best performance" he had heard to that point. Beth Griffith sang Feldman's *Three Voices* for soprano and tape (Frank O'Hara, 1983). At one point I heard the piece on the radio and was quite horrified: they had recorded our performance, but were broadcasting only the tape! They did not even realise that it was a piece for three voices. Then I called and complained, which led to another disaster: the playback tape that John McGuire had recorded was then erased by mistake!

Then at the Theater am Turm in Frankfurt am Main, also in 1984 with Feldman, was the four-day festival *Future of Lokale Musik,* organised by my friend Stefan Schädler. Chris Newman[104] was also among

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[102] Eberhard Blum (1940–2013), flutist and visual artist. At the invitation of Morton Feldman, he was at the Center of (for?) the Creative and Performing Arts at the State University at Buffalo from 1973–76 and again in 1978. With Blum, pianists Feldman and Nils Vigeland, and Jan Williams (percussion), the ensemble "Morton Feldman and Soloists" formed in 1976. From 1975 Blum was also engaged in sound-poetic music pieces combining sounds and poetry, which contain speech elements and vocal sounds. His pictorial works show numbers, letters, and words, as well as geometric forms.

[103] Deborah Richards (piano), Daniel Spektor (violin), Manuel Gerstner (cello).

[104] Chris Newman, born in London in 1958, is an experimental border-crosser between the fields of music, painting, video, drawing, and literature, active as a composer, painter, author, and performance artist. He studied at King's College in London from 1976–79, moving to Cologne in 1980 to study with Mauricio Kagel. In 1982 he performed publicly for the first time with his own songs. In 1983 he founded the rock group *Janet Smith* and an ensemble that included Michael Riessler and Manos Tsangaris (LP recording at Theater am Turm in Frankfurt). In 1984 he met Morton Feldman. Newman began painting in 1989; subsequently, since 1994, he has created installations combining various media, live installations, and installation concerts. His paintings and drawings are represented in the Museum Kolumba in Cologne, the Neues Museum Nuremberg and the Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen. He lives in Berlin.

the participants. The lectures and conversations were all transcribed. From these I took the *30 Anecdotes and Drawings*, which, including Feldman's drawings, the *Drawings,* went into my Feldman volume, the *Essays.* He said about it, "Zimmerman is my producer, he always takes away the drawings when he thinks they are finished." He was drawing as he spoke, and I immediately took the drawings for myself so they would not get lost. The *Essays* were published in 1984 in an edition of 1000. For this I collected all the essays, interviews, and statements that could be found at the time. [105]

How close did you personally feel to Feldman's music at a time when his pieces were getting longer and longer, while being very subtly structured?

We were bowled over by these pieces, so to speak. The [first]*String Quartet* (1979) was played by the Kronos Quartet at *Beginner Studio* probably in 1980. I thought that was quite fantastic.

... after all, it only takes a hundred minutes ...

At the performance of the *Second String Quartet* (1982–83) at Darmstadt in 1984, I sat next to Feldman and it lasted five hours at that time – a crazy retreat also for the listeners. Very practical questions then arose, for example, whether it was allowed to go to the toilet once during the performance.[106] I analysed the *Second String Quartet in* the context of these Darmstadt Summer Courses, laid the score pages on the floor and marked the individual patterns in color, so that a vibrant sea of colours resulted from the recurrence of these patterns. When Irvine Arditti entered the room, he commented, "A few pages for such a long piece."

By the way, I was not at all involved in the cult surrounding Feldman. I championed his music at a time when he was not yet so famous. Even when the *Essays* appeared, he was not yet the cult figure he later became, even more so after his death.

For my music, I took something from Feldman early on that had nothing to do with the surface texture of his music: a certain calmness – lyricism, whereas so much new music seemed hyperexpressive at the time. He was like a focal point for me: here is someone doing something different, an alternative to what I knew as the general development of new music. Later, other elements came in: for example, in *Die Blinden* (1984) you see how to break up a sound through little ornaments, how to bring things back in other contexts; the mosaic principle of modular nesting I learned from Feldman – that is there in some of my pieces that are not composed with the aid of a magic square. The matrix, on the other hand – the square-rootprinciple: the proportions of the large form are contained in the proportions of the micro form – comes from Cage, after all, and was foreign to Feldman.

At these events in Frankfurt in 1984, we were talking about the recognition that music gets, and Feldman listened to a piece of mine: *Phran*, the first part of the *Ländler Topographien* (1978–79). He then somehow came to Mahler to tell me that he did not like the narrative in them, whereas they are not meant to be narrative at all. I remember him saying to Chris Newman, who was playing a piano piece of his, "Now play this passage a third higher; now play a fourth lower ..." He had an incredibly cultivated ear, and register positions were known to be very important to him. On the negative side, his provocative spirit seemed to me to mean that he attacked other people more often. Unfortunately, I also took over some of this quality, but today I try to think before I say something ...

In 1982, Friedrich Hommel's first year as director of the Darmstadt International Summer Courses, the kowtowing he did to the French, along the lines of "here is the future of music," struck me as rather unpleasant and in part absurd. Perhaps it was simply the composition of the group. The fact that Hommel sponsored certain people also provoked opposition. For example, a street musician I had picked up once played very loudly on a Scottish bagpipe in this small courtyard in front of Irvine Arditti's room. One could hear all kinds of non-European musical idioms during the breaks in this courtyard, which I played from a tape. Lachenmann came by and recommended a (folding fan?) to me to make the neo-colonialist picture complete.

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[105] Morton Feldman: *Essays* [bilingual edition: English – German], ed. by Walter Zimmermann, Kerpen: Beginner Press 1985.

[106] As James Avery (1937–2009), pianist and director of the Freiburg ensemble SurPlus, reported, Feldman did not mind at all if an audience member left a performance to run an urgent errand and then came back into the hall.

The Darmstadt Summer Courses used to take place every year. Have you been there every year since 1969?

1970, 1971, and 1972; then I lost that track, but came back in 1982, 1984, and 1988.

Did you come there in 1982 as a lecturer?

I was never really invited there as a lecturer. There were always at least two classes there – officially invited lecturers and self-promoters, by which I mean composers who were allowed to present their works. In 1984, I was allowed to lecture, and Wolfgang Rihm and Carl Dahlhaus listened.[107] And Rihm said, "You have an original voice like no one else" – and that is how it stayed. It probably meant, "Be careful that you do not get out of the corner you are sitting in ..."

In 1988 I was in Darmstadt again and Michael Riessler and the Arditti Quartet premiered my *Fragmente der Liebe* after Roland Barthes for saxophone or basset horn and string quartet (1987) – and *Wüstenwanderung* (1986) was also performed, two pieces after all. Ernstalbrecht Stiebler, who was able to exert influence on the part of the Hessischer Rundfunk, helped behind the scenes.

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Your teaching career, when did it start?

The *Beginner Studio* had started in 1977 and Frederic Rzewski called me one day and wanted to know if I would like to come to the Conservatoire de Liège as a lecturer. That was an hour's drive from Cologne or Kerpen, where I was meanwhile living with Gabriele Emde. I was able to use my French, and had there, among others, a 79-year-old composition student who wanted to finish Schubert's "Unfinished" and often fell asleep after only five minutes. Liège, Belgium and Germany were completely different in terms of working conditions and atmosphere. The fact that I always had to fill out a note about which students were there, "présent – manqué ...", saved me later when the administration of the conservatory claimed that I had taught too little and had to pay back part of the fee I had received from 1980 to 1984. Despite the sometimes somewhat chaotic conditions, I enjoyed my work there incredibly. In 1988, I then spent a short time at the Koninglijk Conservatorium in The Hague.

Wolfgang Rihm later brought me to Karlsruhe, where I had teaching assignments from 1990 to 1992. Nanne and I had moved to Frankfurt am Main after the year at the Villa Massimo (1987), and I was able to travel back and forth between Frankfurt and Karlsruhe comfortably. Dieter Schnebel then informed me that there was a vacancy at the Berlin University of the Arts, the successor to Frank Michael Beyer, where I received a professorship in composition in 1993.

I have been teaching since 1979. My ideal was not to repeat myself even as a teacher, and I have now [2004] done only two or three seminars twice for 25 years, which is still almost 50 semesters. There have always been new topics ...

(For continuation, see chapter 12 *Recap 2018*)

8 **Rome and Renaissance Emblems**

[107] Walter Zimmermann: *Darmstadt Lecture – Caught or Serene?* Lecture during the 32nd International Summer Course for New Music in Darmstadt, 24 July 1984. - https://beginner-press.de/darmstadt_lecture.

How did you actually come to the Villa Massimo?

You had to apply in Bonn. I was not doing well at the time; I was in a serious crisis and had to get out of Berlin somehow. I was lucky that it worked out. At the Villa Massimo, I met Nanne Meyer and we wrote songs together, which Nanne drew (see p. 295 [Am Ende prüfen!]). [108]

During this phase, very good pieces were created ...

Yes, this crisis meant that I had perhaps my best output. It started with *Wüstenwanderung* for piano (Friedrich Nietzsche / Ezra Pound, 1986), which had been written earlier in Venice. My then-girlfriend, for whom I had moved to Berlin, had a radio play project in Venice at the time. She was very dominant and demanded that I record the sounds of her high heels on the pavement.

So, she needed a microphone dog ...

So to speak ... This led to the fact that I had paranoid states at times and saw one of her lovers in every corner. In this situation I could only save myself by writing in my room with a ruler the *Wüstenwanderung*, a piece of twenty minutes. Ezra Pound also lived in Venice, and I visited his house there, setting his last words at the end of *Wüstenwanderung to* music: "Re USURA: I was out of focus, taking a symptom for a cause. The cause is AVARICE." - [109]"Usura" [use, utilisation, enjoyment] – that is the word Pound used to describe usury, interest, capitalism, and imperialism, and at the end of his life he replaced it with "avarice" – greed. [110]

The piano piece *Wüstenwanderung* is preceded by a poem:

> Where is my stop?
> Where I and you do not stand.
> Where is my last end
> which one i should go to?
> Where you can find none.
> Where should I go now?
> I still have to talk about God
> move to a desert.
> *Angelus Silesius*

In seven voices, the creation of the world soul is traced according to Plato's *Timaeus*, which becomes increasingly complicated and collapses at its own complexity, having become a machine. Seven forms of articulation, from tenuto to martellato, try to save an "I – You" through the network of seven layers, but they get lost in the machinery. The seven interval layers follow the proportion 1:2:3:4:8:9:27, an interlocking of duodecimes and octaves, a juxtaposition of the harmonic proportion 6:9:12 (*e3 – a2 – a1*) and the arithmetic proportion 6:8:12 (*e3 – b2 – e1*) (may need to explain that B is meant here?), which increasingly fills up to narrower and narrower interval layers until the whole tone row is attained, which finally breaks into a chromatic row. The piece is almost unplayable, since the superimposed layers, each of which passes through the piano space at its own tempo, cause a constant crossing of the lines; for a pianist to bring it to life verges on the limits of playability. This overload of demands corresponds to the path described – a path into error, into the desert that must be crossed. Along the way, a Nietzsche quote is spoken[111] and finally the aforementioned Pound quote.

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[108] Walter Zimmermann: *Nanne Meyers Lieder*, in: *Lufttexte zu Nanne Meyers Reihe der "Blindbände,"* Köln: Gimlet Verlag 2003, pp. 55–86.

[109] Thus ends Pound's 4 July 1972 preface to *Selected Prose, 1909–1965,* London: Faber and Faber 1973.

[110] William Blake also saw Usura, usury – institutionalised greed for power and money – as the greatest social enemy.

[111] Cf. fn 25.

Strange this reference to the right, earlier to Ernst Jünger and now to Ezra Pound, whom I also regretted, because he, a brilliant poet, lastly supported Mussolini and had to pay terribly for it. The US was alarmed because Pound's anti-Semitic and anti-American propaganda, which he had carried on in Rome, was to be considered high treason and punishable by death. Therefore, they interned Pound in a camp in Pisa, where they kept him like an animal in a tiny cage made especially for him, standing in the sun. A nurse ended this torture after three weeks and arranged for him to be placed in a tent where, after about three months of strict solitary confinement, he began to write again. It was there that the first *Pisan Cantos* were written. In July 1946 he was brought back to the United States and charged. He escaped conviction because he was declared insane and placed in a state sanitarium in Washington. It was not until 1958 that he was released at the instigation of admirers of his work, including Ernest Hemingway. He then lived near Merano in South Tyrol and died in Venice in 1972.

In any case, when I went to Rome, I had finally separated from my Berlin girlfriend – and had already lost many friends before that. It was in these circumstances that the piano piece *Wüstenwanderung* was written in Berlin and Venice, and then, after the separation, at the Villa Massimo, the *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton* for bass flute and piano (1987), in which a children's song appears.

It was written at the beginning of 1987, while I had already carried the Nietzsche poem around with me during my Berlin year 1986, my "Winterwanderschaft", and I broke free from the paroxysm of that time by writing this deeply melancholy piece. That it refers to a nursery rhyme is both stripping away something that has survived and entering something new. I found this newness in the drawings of Nanne Meyer, whose endless chains of associations have something of the Blochian utopia of childhood as he describes it at the end of his *Prinzip Hoffnung.* This duality of sorrow and happiness carried over into the structure of the composition. The bass flute scans the notes of a children's song with infinite slowness, grounding the dialogue between the two instruments. Among the songs collected in Nuremberg was "Mein Name ist Hase, ich weiß von nichts." The pianist whistles the original in short fragments. Otherwise, the song only appears in transformations, which finally give way to a new, bitter song, which stands at the other end of the "Winterwanderschaft" and does not lean on anything old. Nietzsche is silent atthis horizon.

This was followed by *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989), which also features a children's song: "Ich bin das ganze Jahr vergnügt". The beginning, maybe a page and a half of the score of *Ecchoing Green*, was written in Rome, then the piece stayed put and the rest followedin Frankfurt. I went through a valley of depression, then met Nanne and came out of it – I produced these pieces in such a condition.

In Rome, by the way, I really enjoyed seeing the Renaissance friezes in the palazzi and churches. For this I read *Allegory and the Change of Symbols in Antiquity and Renaissance* (Cologne 1983) by Rudolf Wittkower, who came from the school of Heinrich Wölfflin and Aby Warburg, collaborators of Erwin Panofsky. This inspired me to write *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for cello and piano (1987–89); the piece goes back to these Renaissance emblems.

Another key book was added: *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (1981) by Edgar Wind. In it there is the chapter *Being Mature is Everything*, where the image of the dolphin is explained with the anchor, an emblem of the fast and the slow combining. By the way, Nanne and I have a copy of one of these emblems– the youth balancing on a ball in the sea and blowing into the sails so that he does not sink – from the university library in Erlangen. [112]This book by Edgar Wind has accompanied me for years, not only in Rome, but even in Frankfurt. The stones – an aspect of eternity, the silence and tranquility of the ruins in and around Rome – helped to cure me. The *Pagan Mysteries* became important for the string quartet *Festina lente* (1990), before that for *Geduld und Gelegenheit* (1987–89) and then also for the string trio *Distentio* after Augustine (1992).

Festina lente for string quartet, WZ 17.1 (1990)

Festina lente – hurry slowly! – is a frequently used hieroglyph of the Renaissance, which has its beginnings in ancient Rome and can still be found today in stone-frieze fragments; so also in the Fontane delle Tartarughe, where young men put one foot on dolphins while they lift turtles over their heads into a fountain bowl with their hand: The fast is restrained, the slow is elevated. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* contains numerous pictorial hieroglyphs depicting the paradox of the simultaneity of the fast and the slow: a dolphin coiled around an anchor; a turtle carrying a sail; a

[112] Peter Vischer the Younger (?): *Fortuna amoris*. – See the cover of the CD Mode 150 with *Wüstenwanderung* for piano (1986); *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton for* bass flute and piano (1987); *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for cello and piano (1987–89); *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989): Dietmar Wiesner (bass fl.), Michael Bach (vc.), Peter Rundel (vl.), Hermann Kretzschmar (pno.). - Mode 150 (CD 2005).

dolphin tied to a turtle; a butterfly on a crab; a hawk with clockweights in its beak; a blindfolded lynx. Edgar Wind analyses these images (in: *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance,* Frankfurt 1981, p. 119): "These and countless other emblematic combinations were meant to symbolise the rule of life according to which one attains maturity by acquiring a strength in which speed and perseverance are equally developed."

A painting attributed to Mantegna also deals with these emblems and places them in an action context that can be described with the German idiom “die Gelegenheit beim Schopf packen" (grabbing an opportunity by the throat). There, a youth balancing on a rolling sphere and striving toward a woman who turns her head of hair toward him is held back by a woman standing behind him on a cuboid. The latter Patientia (patience) tries to keep the protagonist from "Occasio"' (opportunity), fearing that seizing the favourable opportunity might turn into "Pœnitentia" (remorse, revenge).

Indeed, there are numerous Renaissance illustrations in which patience, opportunity, and repentance appear together. These three terms headline the first three movements of the string quartet, which attempts to connect the fast with the slow on several levels. The first is that of the tempo, which is Slow – Fast – Slow in succession. The second is that of togetherness by deploying double-stopping techniques, which are maintained from the first to the last note, thereby endowing the piece with very difficult interpretive challenges. The double stops create the intervals: major whole tone 9:8 (204 cents), minor whole tone 10:9 (182 cents), major semitone 16:15 (112 cents), minor semitone 25:24 (76 cents), quasi unison 80:81 (Pythagorean comma), unison 1:1.

These intervals make possible the paradoxical interlocking of fast and slow: in the slow first movement *Patientia*, *the* narrow intervals create a fast pulse, that of interference and beating. This principle – fast inner vibrations at a slow outer tempo – is reversed in the second movement *Occasio.* There, above a fast outer tempo, the unison double-stops, the inner oscillations, are ideally suspended. This movement also cancels the quarter-note reversals initially still created between the instruments and strives toward a quartet unison, above the phrase translated into notes: "patientia ornamentum, custodia et protectio vitæ est." This passage forms the beginning of the third movement *Pœnitentia*, which takes up the character of the first movement, but as a fatal admission of the irreversibility of the attitude once abandoned.

The fourth movement *Regressus in Infinitum* is the opening of an inner space that replaces the conceded irreversibility of time, which does not seek a foothold anywhere while finding new fixed points in the untenable. Resembling the Zenonian paradox of Achilles and the tortoise, the distance between two double-stop glissandi in unison divides incessantly: a unison that can no longer be one as soon as it moves, constantly changing its tonal location. The few outbreaks into fast/loud territory always find their way back into the slow/quiet, whose interior spaces are increasingly, if one only directs one's listening to it, of an "unheard-of" density. All four instruments finally play their unison double-stop glissandi in "unison". An apparent unity on the outside only unfolds a veritable multiplicity on the inside. The unison, although prescribed, does not take place. On the contrary, the attempt to create it produces the conflicting vibrations and thus the tonal density of the beatings. This is how the attempt to make the paradox of the *festina lente* sounds.

Listening to this piece, then, also needs a detachment from the surface of the outer character, indeed a kind of counterfactual listening should be attempted. To sound out the fast in the slow, the slow in the fast. In this way, the listener could also actively engage in the, for the, against the paradox.

9 **Networks – Entanglements – Objectification**

It always amazes me how many of these ideas run into each other, how the projects and the relationships between them are constantly changing. Something that fits or seems to fit Ataraxia *then suddenly becomes another work, and so on. There seems to be such a labyrinth at work: Was this tendency toward labyrinthine entanglements or interconnections particularly pronounced in the Rome period?*

Yes, for example *Daimon* – I came to the concept of Daimon as life energy through the Renaissance book by Edgar Wind. *Daimon* was and still is the first part of *Ataraxia* for piano and orchestra (or for 13 instruments, 1987–88), but was premiered earlier by Frederic Rzewski in Rome in a concert by the Italian broadcaster RAI as a piece for piano solo. I still remember him sitting in front of the piano, taking a deep breath, and then hammering away.

Strictly speaking, the title *Ataraxia* is wrong, because the piece is not about "peace of mind", but about the exact opposite, to achieve – following an Epicurean thought –the state of mental peace after a performance of the piece. This piano solo, which Rzewski first played, later became the first movement *Prolog: Daimon of* the piano cycle *Aimide* (1987/2002).

Since reading Democritus I was looking for materialistic philosophers who formulated their thoughts so vividly that one can translate them directly into sound. Later I came to the concept of *clinamen,* which is related to my reading of Lucretius, the deviation from parallelism in falling, movement deviations of atoms – atomic rain; *declinatio* denotes the angle of such deviation.

Is this obsession by the daimon also evident in the piano piece Desert Migration *(1986)? Does this piece stand at the beginning of a new phase?*

Wüstenwanderung does not yet convey any world of ideas – at most the idea of the wandering and the labyrinth. The title, after all, comes from Ernst Jünger; it is the title of a little story by Jünger that I simply liked. And at that time, Jünger and Pound were a world of labyrinthine entanglement for me; the thoughts of getting lost and of *usura* [usury] and *avaritia* [greed] played into it.

Did you also mentally connect Friedrich Nietzsche with it?

Nietzsche was my reading during the Berlin year of 1986. Marlis, with whom I was living at the time, was a follower of Nietzsche and was desperate for me to write an opera about *Zarathustra.*

Again, the observation: there are a lot of ideas in the same sketchbook from that time, and the individual components between the different projects are constantly changing.

The only way I could get a handle on my projects was to put them in cyclical contexts, to classify them somehow.

With a certain distance, I can look back and classify my Berlin year 1986 as a phase of obsession in the sense that ideas took possession of me that – as I must say today – were deeply alien to me, along the lines of "Identify with the enemies!" Even before that there was this seductiveness, for example the episode with Ernst Jünger, that is, the quick following of what friends suggest ... I did not feel the barriers, the ego boundaries, or jumped over them and was immediately ready to follow others. I get totally involved in others, things that are foreign to me, until I either manage to work through it and get away from it, or it happens that I get totally caught up in it. (A third path would be positive appropriation, internalisation.) The break with Kerpen and Cologne, the loss of friends there, the new situation in Berlin, where I only met the friends of my girlfriend at the time, meant shaky ground for me. I always declared myself argumentatively against expressionism, but perhaps that was also out of the fear of not being able to resist this language. I just do not want to dictate the thread that listeners should follow. Feldman said that he appreciates this "path" in Rihm; that is precisely what I cannot do.

The thought of a music of the idyll, of the childlike was certainly also self-salvation – that is why I like Jean Paul, who has the childhood landscape somewhere. The childlike is still part of a centre for me that I want to express. And in fact I have not even started composing yet ...

Wolfgang Rihm is said to have said: If he wrote twenty pieces, two good pieces would be the result, but if he wrote two hundred pieces, twenty good pieces would come out of it, which is why he preferred the latter ...

But the problem of objectification or self-distancing in artistic work remains. I am in a phase of transition and would like to reach a point where I can also compose without constructive crutches – out of free decision, not out of a system or even a self-obsession. This is basically the yearning for free expression, which is also free from subjective arbitrariness. The expression of freedom, as Schelling defines it, means,

after all, the freedom to decide for good or evil ... There is no good or evil, but both are there in every moment, together and ready to break loose.

With these influences that have stormed upon you, you constantly speak of other people's opinions and refer to philosophers and literary figures. But the material of your music and your musical language are relatively uninfluenced by this ...

In this respect, I am independent, stubbornly independent.

If anyone could have influenced you stylistically, it would have been Feldman. But that is not the case, either.

Yes, even the piano piece *Abgeschiedenheit* (1982), which is perhaps tonally closest to Feldman, is based on a strict construction, that is to say on completely different premises. On the other hand, there are already some stylistic slips, such as the beginning of Act II of *Hyperion* (1989–90).

It may be that a composer tries something he does not normally do to find out how it works. Then it is a curiosity, but not yet an influence.

So why do I not let myself be influenced musically?

Because you are a composer and not a philosopher. That is the point.

To return to Dürrenmatt, who wrote a book about his unfinished projects, and to Desert Migration*, I have a question about the form, which in this case is teleological up to a crisis point – a mechanism that leads to the impossible, which is unusual for you as a form.*

There are worse solutions ...

Atypical for your music I would say, but therefore not bad ...

My mediocrity: I always get weak at the endings. *Akkordarbeit* (1971), *In Understanding Music...* (1973–74), *Spielwerk* (1984), *Wüstenwanderung* (1986), *Fragmente der Liebe* for basset horn and string quartet (Roland Barthes, 1987) – all these pieces have this unison at the end. Pieces that do not have it I find *contra naturam*. In the piano piece *Wüstenwanderung,* the harmonic horizontality is not subsumed in an overall sound at the end, but the individual line remains contrapuntal in this piece; one hears four individual voices. This is an interesting process, in my opinion. Perhaps that stupid swansong that then follows should have been done away with. It is like in *Wolkenorte* (1980), where there is singing at the end. But that is my provocative nature: There is too little singing in new music, so let us sing ...

So it is not that at the end of a piece there is something left to communicate only through words....

No, but the shouting out of this error of Pound, who at the end of his life no longer spoke, but had become mute.

That is what makes it different from the other sung closes... You talked about nursery rhymes and nursery rhymes in the Song in the Desert Bird Tone, *etc.*

In the late '70s I recorded children's songs in Nuremberg, some of which I then transcribed with all the mistakes the children made. From these, some songs became part of *Songs of Innocence* for string quartet with tape (1996; rev. 2004). The project *Kinderlieder* remained unfinished, *Das klingende Grün* (1979) was once finished, but I have since withdrawn it.

What is the symbolism, the function, of the children's songs in the other pieces?

The Ecchoing Green (for violin and piano, 1989) is based on the children's song "I am merry all the year." The song has four stanzas dealing with the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Now what

happened was that as the children sang it, they increasingly forgot the words. So, forgetting plays a role ... Now in my piece there are also four parts or stanzas that keep translating this song differently.

I took the title from a poem by William Blake – from the *Songs of Innocence* from 1789:

The Ecchoing Green

The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring,
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells chearful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say,
Such such were the joys,
When we were all girls & boys,
In our youth time were seen,
On the Ecchoing Green.

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest:
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.

First and foremost, there are different kinds of echoes – the echo of reverberation (or after-timeliness) and the echo of simultaneity through different kinds of intonation in the violin and piano**.** In the first part, the song "Ich bin das ganze Jahr vergnügt" is always there, but never quoted. In the second part, the text of the song is translated into one eighth-note per letter. Thus, the second movement must begin with three triplets "I am that"; then follows a quintuplet for "whole", then come four eighth-notes for "year"! The text is thus divided into equal rhythmic pulses in the violin, and the letters become deviations in intonation taken from the melody of the song. Here a b c did not become *a b c*, but the transfer of the letters into pitches was based on a key: the eight tone letters *a b c d e f g h* - the white keys of the piano – trigger deviations in intonation, intonational (de-tuning?) echoes, in the violin (see the table at the end of the score).
In the third movement, the same rhythmic principle practiced in the violin in the second movement now applies to the piano part, which takes place exclusively on white keys. In the violin, there are different fingerings, four-note chords corresponding to the black piano keys, with three loops running in parallel: speed of the bow, bow pressure, and bow attack. It is very difficult to realise these three different hues. In the fourth movement – which symbolises winter – these processes meet in a new song, an oblique, and broken, song.

Song in desert bird tone for bass flute and piano (1978)

The *song in desert bird tone* is based on the nonsense song "My name is Rabbit". It is also sung incorrectly, alienated in the voice of the bass flute. The first notes of the flute are immensely augmented, prolonged by fermatas, with the flute part sampling the melody; I then reached into my matrix box for the irrational durations in the piano part. For example, 563 has the checksum 14; 14 is 2 x 7, so the note after a seventh must be placed somewhere in the middle.

The balance between a melody that is an objet trouvé and the comparatively abstract piano movement was important to me. The violin part is in Pythagorean tuning, thus in pure fifths, which results in a difference of 24 cents – an eighth of a tone – between the respective corresponding notes of the upper and lower row.

Top row:
c g d ----a ---e---b---f#-c#1--g#-d#1-a#-e#-b#-fx1-cx1-gx1-dx1
Bottom row:
dbb asas ebb-bbb-fb-cb1-gb-db1-ab--eb1-bb--f1-c1--g1--d1 -a1---e1

The text of the children's songs was translated into music letter by letter; it is suspended in the music. For example: "I am happy all year" – "I" triplet, "am" triplet, "that" triplet, "whole" quintuplet, "year" quartuplet, "happy" octuplet –each projected onto the duration of the respective ictus of the nursery rhyme.

You had recorded a lot of children's songs at that time. Why did you choose these two: "I am happy all year round" and "My name is Rabbit"?

Mein Name ist Hase belongs to this collection that I recorded in Nuremberg. The second song, *Ich bin das ganze Jahr vergnügt* (*The Ecchoing Green*, 1989), was sung to me by Nanne in Rome when we met; she knows an incredible number of songs by heart and also wrote down the text of the four verses for me. Both belong to the group of works of the *Residua*, the "Remnants". The first Residuum is the Before and the second is the After or Since. And *Residua* in turn has a reference to Beckett.[113] Residua are leftovers that have been left behind from larger contexts. I originally wanted to write more Residua, but then it was these two. And after that, or even at the same time, came *Geduld und Gelegenheit* (1987–89).

10 **In Walter's Library**

To what extent did you drag your library with you when you moved? Did you take the most important books with you and otherwise always start collecting again from the beginning?

I had various cellars. In the Beginner Studio in Cologne there was a dry cellar in the front building, which I continued to rent and packed with books, sketches, and materials when I left Cologne. I had this basement from 1984, when I left Cologne behind, until I moved to Frankfurt in 1988 and the books went there. In 1986 I had taken to Berlin only the essentials; I was "allowed" to read only Nietzsche at the time, anyway. And in Berlin there were also enough bookstores where I could stock up. From 1988 on, most of it was gathered in Frankfurt. I had also stored some of it with my parents. Then, in 1993, all the books came to Berlin.

And what else is in Seidmar? [114]

There I have my original manuscripts in a fireproof metal case. I have also meticulously kept the letters – they are all there in the attic. Some of them are also mental odysseys, materials that revolve around finding

[113] Samuel Beckett: *Residua. Prose poems in three languages*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1970.

[114] In Seidmar, located on the Jura plateau of Franconian Switzerland, Walter Zimmermann and Nanne Meyer lived in a former schoolhouse from 1988 to 2014. After that, this second home was moved to the Uckermark, to Annenwalde (Templin).

a material. [115]At the end of his life, Friedrich Dürrenmatt did not write an autobiography, but a book about all those of his materials that came to nothing.[116] Maybe I could do that one day, too ... But behind that is the mania to think things through in such a way that you have already composed them and then you need not do it anymore.

We will look at the books that are here later. But there are probably quite a few that are not here. Are the older books still in Seidmar?

We can best solve this by going chronologically through my literary worlds. My case resembles that of Michael von Biel, who first studied with Feldman and then with Stockhausen. That is how I got from Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* (1966)

... so vice-versa ...

and then ... perhaps to Cage. As I said a few days ago, this childhood friend and I went on intellectual excursions together into the then-newly-published books from Suhrkamp's science or theory series. The cover was white back then. It was also called the "white series" and, as I said before, I had always bought them diligently. There was *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (1968) by Habermas, and also Erik H. Erikson, published in the same series, on developmental psychology (*Identität und Lebenszyklus,* 1966, 2nd ed. 1973). Then Wilhelm Reich, we already talked about that. And Marx, *Das Kapital* I read. Then everything that was around it. Herbert Marcuse, *Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft* (1965): I even experienced Marcuse personally in Cologne at a symposium at the end of 1970. Then, via Wilhelm Reich, this crazy American psycho-stuff finally came to me: "altered consciousness," etc. That is all contemporary. Then there were also collections of university studies about "Altered States of Consciousness", trance states, and all kinds of stuff as well as "brain research" and, what was very fashionable at that time, biofeedback. It was now presented at MaerzMusik as if it were the latest thing. I knew that already in 1973/74.

... and David Rosenboom, who used neurofeedback in his compositional work ...

... yes, Rosenboom, such stories, they did that. And that went on. A lot of ethnological literature then came. Also Gregory Bateson, *Ecology of the Mind*.[117] Then a lot of anthropology, especially the American anthropologists, behaviorism also plays into it. Then Vygotsky, *Thought and Speech*. Then the [118]syntacticians were of interest, whether that was Ferdinand de Saussure or Jean Piaget. I became aware of Piaget, at least in part, through Otto Laske.

And through Laske came Noam Chomsky, whose writings I had studied before. Then it was again about "Human Problem Solving", that was the name of these books. They were published in a university series and are now stored in Seidmar. These authors tried to solve the problem of human thinking, to formalise thinking, so to speak, through such flow charts [diagrams that illustrate processes]. From there I went on to psychological and Zen Buddhist things. Finally, I came back to Meister Eckhart. This renewed interest in Eckhart was triggered by Cage, who also quotes him in his writings: Daisetsu Suzuki and finally Shunryū Suzuki, when the piano cycle *Beginner's Mind* (1975) was written.

And from that came the examination of German Romanticism, with Novalis, and from that, in turn, the "Lokale Musik," which – I cannot unravel now exactly how it was connected – in any case only arose out of my experiences in America. And the literature that came after that – well, if you go on now via

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[115] In 2010 Zimmermann's manuscripts were given to the Archive of the Academy of Arts, Berlin.

[116] *Labyrinth. Stoffe I–III* (1981) and *Turmbau. Substances IV –IX* (1990).

[117] Gregory Bateson: *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology,* Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press 1972; Engl. as *Ökologie des Geistes. Anthropological, Psychological, Biological, and Epistemological Perspectives,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1981.

[118] Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky [Lev Semënovič Vygotskij]: *Denken und Sprechen*, Russ. Original edition 1934, Engl. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1964 (abridged), Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer 1977.

Sternwanderung (work group 7: 1976, 1982/84, 1990), the next one was probably already *Die Blinden* (after Maeterlinck, 1984). That is clear. I have already told you about my Nietzsche phase (Work Group 11: *Desert Migration,* 1986 and others).

In Rome I then studied the school of Erwin Panofsky and Aby Warburg, that is, the writings of art historians who were particularly concerned with the Renaissance. That was very important in Rome, where pieces like *Geduld und Gelegenheit* (1987–89) and *Festina lente* (1990) were created. Then I read Augustine and found there the reproach to *Distentio* (1992). Then, after Rome – the preoccupation with pictorial symbols lasted quite a long time – at some point Wilhelm Worringer, who had written *Abstraction and Empathy* (1907), joined in. Worringer sees the origin in "abstraction", in symbolic abstract geometric forms to ward off fear, and the development up to the Renaissance as "empathy" with, and imitation of, nature. Then came a whole phase about ornament: the Austrian Alois Riegl is a classic of the 19th century; he set the "will to art" as an analogy to the Hegelian world spirit, finding the objects for it on the Museum Island.[119] And based on the objects of different times and cultures, one could study their principles. The description of the ornament also belongs to this, in addition there was this Englishman ... (looks for the book) ... Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, who collected and arranged ornamental motifs; the volume is from the 19th century and first appeared in 1856.

Yes, I know the book. Were you also interested in Ernst Gombrich, for example?

No, Gombrich not so, but Wilhelm Worringer, who, as I said, wrote *Abstraction and Empathy.* That was on the periphery of *Geduld und Gelegenheit*, *Residua* (work group 14: *Song in the Desert Bird Tone* for bass flute and piano, 1987; *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano, William Blake, 1989), *Festina lente*. By having these art historians address pagan customs in the Renaissance, [120]I naturally came back to the Greeks. These were then the atomists: Epicurus and Democritus. Marx wrote his doctoral thesis on Democritus, [121]and the ancient materialist philosophers somewhat naïvely but precisely described how they think, what their perceptions are.

And then there is also, triggered for example by an atomic rain, the principle of the *clinamen*, that suddenly two parallels, caused by an arbitrariness, deviate and form vortices. That was the principle also in *Ataraxia* (1987–88) that one perceives how small, very thin objects detach themselves from the objects and fly towards one. At that time, at any rate, one thought that these were very small objects. That is to say, this materialisation then gave me the opportunity to bring that into the materialisation of the piece as well – after this Democritus and Epicurus, then, the *Clinamen* (*I–IV* for six orchestral groups, 1996–2001).

Diastasis / Diastema (for two orchestras without conductor, 1991–92) – that comes from Plotinus: the "emergence" of time. Then there was a phase in which I studied Augustine and other philosophies of time. Plotinus: the diastasis, the disjuncture of time, this detachment. Then there were also all kinds of research

[119] Alois Riegl (1858 –1905) developed the principles of monument protection and supported Schinkel's classicist concept of the Museum Island, which had been built in Berlin at the time.

[120] Elsewhere Zimmermann mentions Edgar Wind: *Pagan Mysteries in the Ranaissance*, London: Faber & Faber 1958; Engl: Heidnische *Mysterien in der Renaissance,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1981.

[121] Karl Marx: *Differenz der demokritischen und epikureischen Naturphilosophie*, Diss. phil., Jena 1841.

on late ancient philosophers. One[122] was called Simplikios (Simplicius of Cicilia).[123] There were always these disputes between Aion and Chronos , representing eternal time and measurable time. And Simplikios somehow developed a third time that is between the two. This has to do with the question of context: how is eternity perceivable in time, or does eternity have a chronometric time? There is also this quote from Anaximander, which Heidegger translated. Only Heidegger's translation is a bit strange. Then words like: "Un-Fug" come out of it and that reads then ...

Heideggerian style.

Well, I read Heidegger a lot; I also subscribed to the complete edition. In Rome I often read the edition of his lectures on Parmenides and the one on Heraclitus, as well; the reading was always connected with a certain curiosity, but – similar to Ernst Jünger – from a somewhat skeptical distance. It was fascinating in parts, but Heidegger's private language – that is: that he had to translate everything into his language – was ultimately very suspicious to me.

It is striking here that you have not mentioned any book about music or composers so far. Is it indeed true that such books did not play a role for you at the beginning? Maybe apart from this book about harmony in Debussy, which you have already mentioned, but in general not ...?

Yes, I have now only mentioned the books that were very important for my craft as a composer. From the very beginning, I tried to ignore music history and searched, so to speak, for the principle, "we have lost the cadence, but we have to create new cadences – for every piece" (whose principle is it, by the way?). This is all an expression of my search for cadences, so to speak, for "underlying formal principles on which music is built." These were then for me, of course as a musician, attempts to look for principles in other traditions and to experience a reflection that one projects back to sculpt the sound in a certain way ...

Maybe that is one of my secrets, why my music is always described so strangely, that it cannot be compared with anything. Because it was always formed by something extramusical. Whereby it is of course not as extramusical as one thinks, because the music also goes back to these principles. In this search, I landed, so to speak, at the bottom of the principles of music, that is, the principle of movement or time or the metaphorical and the intelligence of thought. As I said before, I used to follow archetypes to some extent. But unlike Nicolaus A. Huber, I never got into C. G. Jung, whom I always found a bit turgid.

You are right, as far as the books are concerned, there is no music. But we can also show this parallel line now: There was the confrontation with Debussy very early, then very early also with Machaut. The early

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[122] Plotinus: *On Eternity and Time (Enneade III 7)*. Translated, introduced, and commented by Werner Beierwaltes, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 3rd ed. 1981. Cf. in particular the commentary on II, 41, pp. 265–267: διάστασις ουν ζωης [diastasis oun zoes]: "'Disengagement of life (disintegration, extension, distance, detachment)' is an essential element of time, which qualitatively interprets the formally seeming succession, especially through the concept of life." Related to this, then, are the readings as the extension of life within a "sensuous" world, or as the "dissociation of the life of the spirit gathered in itself into the life of the soul determined by succession." Ossia: "Towards the One, the spirit, and the soul, *diastema* (state) or *diastasis* (act) is the basic feature of the sensuous world and thus of space and time. Or: the extended-being, the detachment of space and time justify the detachment (differentiation) of the sensuous world as a whole."
After Plotinus (204/205–270), Augustine (354–430) famously speculated about time in the 11th book of his *Confessiones*. On the term *Distentio*, see also Zimmermann's commentary on his composition of the same name, the second work in the series "On Time" after *Festina lente.* The five movements of the string trio *Distentio* are inspired by five passages in Augustine:
I. " ... distentio est vita mea" [My life is divisive expansion] (11, XXIX, 39).
II. " ... distenditur vita huius actionis meæ" [The life of this activity of mine then splits me] (11, XXVIII, 38).
III. "An vero, si cessarent cæli lumina et moveretur rota figuli, non esset tempus, quo metiremur eos gyros et diceremus aut aequalibus morulis agi, aut si alias tardius alias velocius moveretur, alios magis diuturnos esse, alios minus?" [If the celestial lights were still, but a potter's wheel turned, would there be no more time? With what would we then measure their rotations, in order to be able to say, they ran evenly or – if it rotated once more slowly and once more quickly – the one period was longer, the other was shorter?]. (11, XXIII, 29).
IV. " ... et tumultuosis varietatibus dilaniantur cogitationes meæ, intima viscera animæ meæ" [My thoughts, the innermost bowels of my soul, are torn apart by the turmoil of manifoldnesses ...]. (11, XXIX, 39) 29, 39.
V. "at ego in tempora dissilui, quorum ordinem nescio" [I, on the other hand, am fragmented in the times whose context I do not know]. (11, XXIX, 39).

[123] Erwin Sonderegger: *Simplikios: Über die Zeit. A commentary on the 'Corollarium de tempore'*, Diss. phil, Zurich. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1982

polyphonists have always fascinated me very much, then of course also the ars subtilior. And at the age of 13 I also had a huge Richard Strauss phase, but that was ante natum, so to speak ...

But this is about music itself, not about books ....
In this I am a strangely uneducated person: out of instinct I have tried *not to* learn harmony, so as not to educate myself. Because with very many people who are incredibly good at it – like Mathias Spahlinger, for example – I notice that they become idiosyncratic and want to act against it, so to speak. Okay, you can say that I tried to conceal my ignorance. But it is so peculiar; there are poets who can pull all the stanzas and sestinas, the historical forms, out of their sleeves – like Joseph Brodsky, perhaps, who was incredibly well-read in this. And there are people who are not interested in such forms at all, which does not mean they do not know them. For example, John Ashbery; his poetry, after all, has nothing of any historical form or traditional poetics. For me, this tabula rasa history is important – as well as all the principles of Stockhausen, which I have somehow internalised. This starting from scratch, this "beginner's mind feeling": even if ultimately the piano cycle *Beginner's Mind* (1975) comes close to tonal music, it is not written out of a tonal consciousness; on the contrary, someone who has internalised tonality could not have written something like that at all. He would have reacted dismissively before such proximity, but I did not see this proximity at all at that time. Of course, one can criticise this ahistorical view. It also has to do with the fact that I have always somehow skirted around such a historically-oriented musical education ...

... as did Xenakis, who never bothered about this point of view. But books about new music, for example the "Darmstädter Beiträge", you have read them, right?

Yeah, sure. For me, the first volume by Ulrich Dibelius, *Modern Music after 1945*, was a kind of bible immediately after it came out, especially with the music examples. I think it was published in 1965, when I was 16 years old. I looked for ages at the notations by Pousseur or Stockhausen that were in there, and thought to myself, this can not be true! These crystalline overlays, I found them incredibly interesting, and, as I said, I also saw the notations of Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke* early on. So Dibelius' book was quite important for me. I even still have the first edition, that was practically my book zero. Here it is, already yellowed paper. It was 1966. I studied it carefully and looked at the music examples like revelations ...

So for example Kagel's Transición *or Berio's*Circles ...

Yes, that was incredibly important; from there I went on, so to speak ...

These are examples of scores that are striking as imagery, but they do not seem to play any role at all in the notation of your music. That impressed you at the time, but you did not want to imitate it at any time?

No. I could not have done that at the time, because I had not understood it all yet. I was 16 years old in 1965/66. Then I also bought scores: the *Requiem* (1963—65) by Ligeti, which I even had bound; *Passaggio* (1961/62) by Berio, the *Gruppen* (1955/57) by Stockhausen; I already had his *Klavierstücke*. Then his *Zyklus* for a percussionist (1959) and *Telemusik* (1966). All that at a young age, around 18/19, 20/21. So that was my fodder, the serialists. What remains of it, though, is the serial approach. For me, serialism was always the tool of the zero hour, the tabula rasa. This extreme systematisation in serialism was the call for me to pursue such pieces as *Akkordarbeit* (1971) with an incredible theoretical effort. Or also *In Understanding Music...* (1973–74) – that I thought my way into literature in this way is basically a further thinking of serialism, not from the view of a compositional technique, but that one arranges material – thoroughly investigated – not even so much musical material, it can also be thought material. So, I transferred serialism to thought material, from tones to metaphors or crystals of thought.

Later I also had the idea the other way around, that certain thoughts can be materialszed as music. Ideas like *Distentio*: "The stretching of the hand to a glissando with a flageolet on the neighbouring string" would be a materialisation of the idea of *Distentio*, of stretching. The more, the greater the intentio [tension, tenseness, strain], the stronger the expression, and the less the intentio, the more it seems relaxed or serene. That os the sort of thing I have tried to map directly. Whereas in serialism numbers went into sound, I replaced the number was with a modal thought complex, thought knot or whatever you want to call it.

Was that the case from the very beginning?

Yes, so if you look at *Akkordarbeit* now, it is programme music with strong procedures of analogy. That is of course the opposite of the abstract ideal that the early serialists had. They did not want to have any allusion at all ... I made attempts to discover building blocks for a composition in literature and in other areas and worlds of thought –and this instead of the historical building-blocks. I shared that with the serialists, a certain isolation from history. But it comes back to you anyway, so to speak – like a regressive impulse according to the principle of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale of *one who went out to learn to fear*. He sought to fear, went out into the world, and had all kinds of experiences.

I think you found your way to Gertrude Stein very early on through Helmut Heißenbüttel?

I discovered *As a Wife Has a Cow in* an anthology of contemporary texts that Heißenbüttel had edited.

So, in addition to these scientific and factual books, you had also read literary books ...

Yes, in literature at that time I found the formal texts very interesting, for exampleGertrude Stein. [124]I also got that a bit from Werner Heider, my teacher, who was interested in Eugen Gomringer, [125]the founder of concrete poetry, he liked people like that.

Concrete poetry in England also included visual poems by Ferdinand Kriwet that[126] *could be viewed.*

Yes, exactly. Kriwet was also represented in Neue Musik. That includes what is lying here right now: Hans G. Helms' *Fa:m' Ahniesgwow* [a book in a slipcase with a 17 cm record].

That was on the table two years ago when I was here; I was going to ask you if that Helms had a permanent position.

It is one of the oldest books I had. There are books that you always carry around with you… Do you know Hans G. Helms?

Yes, that was very topical at the time ...

... and I also thought it was great that Hans G. Helms[127] was the only one who had something to oppose this idolised Bernd Alois Zimmermann. You know that argument about *Die Soldaten*?

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[124] Walter Zimmermann: *As a Wife Has a Cow. Seismography of a text by Gertrude Stein for* piano four hands (1970).

[125] Eugen Gomringer, born in Bolivia in 1925 to a Swiss father and a Bolivian mother, studied national economics and art history in Bern and Rome from 1944–52. From 1954–57 he was secretary to the architect Max Bill at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm. From 1977–90 he taught as professor of the theory of aesthetics at the Düsseldorf Art Academy. With the visual artist Dieter Roth and the writer Marcel Wyss, he founded the magazine *Spirale in* 1953 and edited the book series *konkrete poesie – poesia concreta in* 1960-65. In 2000 he founded the Institute for Constructive Art and Concrete Poetry (IKKP) at his home in Rehau, Upper Franconia. His extensive collection of concrete art and poetry formed the basis of the Museum für Konkrete Kunst in Ingolstadt, which opened in 1992.

[126] Ferdinand Kriwet (1942–2018), radio playwright. In 1959–60, Kriwet wrote a book without an end or beginning, with the entry succeeding at every point: *ROTOR*. His radio work began in 1961 with the spoken text *Offen (audio text 1)*. This was followed by *visual texts* that left the traditional medium of books and were published in exhibitions and on billboards. In parallel, Kriwet developed theoretical manifestos on acoustic literature, which became the basis for his radio works. He composed image and sound into *text films, which* were shown in mixed-media shows in art galleries churches, and cinemas. His work includes painting, sculpture, music, texts, poetry and mixed-media, visual and concrete poetry, and interdisciplinary speech communication. The sound material for his *audio texts* comes mainly from radio and television, a sonic pool that he arranged according to semantic and musical-rhythmic aspects and combined with media quotations to create auditory collages.

[127] Hans G. Helms (1932–2012), writer and composer, social and economic historian. Worked with Gottfried Michael Koenig in the WDR electronic music studio from 1957. Advised by Werner Meyer-Eppler, the Bonn phonetician and founder of information theory, who had already assisted Herbert Eimert and Stockhausen, he conducted sound analyses and phonetic experiments with Koenig, which were supplemented by linguistic studies. A circle formed in Helms' apartment that included the musicologist Heinz-

No, I do not know.

It is quite interesting. Helms thought, from a Cagean perspective or from this attitude of a sound poet, that *Die Soldaten was* simply an old-fashioned piece, and that was a slap in the face for the Cologne people who were just trying to canonsze him. There was, of course, a great deal of coquetry involved, this provocative spirit. This was played out in *Melos* 1967 or 1968, there was a famous exchange between Bernd Alois Zimmermann and Hans G. Helms. [128]

And which of the two did you identify with back then?

I knew *Die Soldaten* very early on because I had bought the score and the Wergo records, too.

... which was only mono ...

Yes, and I listened to them often at home on my record-player. So very often. And it was always like a gigantic thicket and I tried to grasp it again and again; I also had *Wozzeck* in Karl Böhm's recording and the score, I bought it very early. And I also knew *Lulu*. Listening to *Wozzeck* and reading the score was a revelation for me. I was maybe 17, so very young, and I sat there all the time trying to enjoy this *Wozzeck.*

I did the same with the Böhm recording.

Yes, that's a great piece. And then, Bernd Alois Zimmermann was a tad too hysterical for me there. Those high tenors, do they have to be? I found in the whole of *DieSoldaten* a great divergence between the beautiful orchestral writing and the very woodcut melodic writing, totally without inner necessity, quite contrary to Berg's melos ... Feldman used to say "notes but no music".

For me, the musical writing in Die Soldaten is *still derived, at least in part, from Zimmermann's Stravinsky phase. You can observe it in the score.*

Yes, really? But this style of singing has nothing to do with Stravinsky.

No, but the rhythm, which contributes somewhat to the stiffness.

Ah, yes, that may be so. But as I said, those were then musically my early influences. In 1970, at the age of 21, I was in fact already so far along that I had an overview of modernism from studying the scores and playing the music. So I played Op. 24 (*Concerto for Nine Instruments*, 1934) by Webern on the piano with the ars nova ensemble Nuremberg, also some other pieces, including *Klavierstücke*by Stockhausen, albeit not publicly, just for myself as best I could. *Klavierstück VI* (1954–55), however, was not. It was somehow too epic for me, too difficult with this zigzagging tempo. But all the others I played through, as you read it, not concert-ready, but genuinely, and I enjoyed that incredibly. So, at 20 or 21, I went to Cologne and I had already done my self-taught studies. You were not there then; then there was a big part of skepticism to the

Klaus Metzger, the composers György Ligeti, Franco Evangelisti, Wolf Rosenberg, and Mauricio Kagel. This circle strove for an analytical reading of James Joyce*'s Finnegans Wake*. Against this background, Helms composed *Fa:m' Ahniesgwow*, which was followed by the *Stories of Yahud and Daidalos*, the latter as a collaborative work with Hans Otte. In the US and Canada, Helms investigated computer and telecommunications technologies and automation in industry, commerce, and administration, and their effects on the world of work. He analysed the effects of new technologies on the concentration of capital, on transportation, and on urban planning. In 1989 Helms returned to Germany and settled again in Cologne; in 2003 he moved to Berlin. In 1993 he resumed his artistic work as a work in progress with the literary-musical *Münchhausen project* in conjunction with which he pursued research on fascism and studies on the history of the development of Jews in Eastern Europe. He wrote about capital concentration, urban planning, and the consequences of electronisation in all areas of society.

[128] Hans G. Helms: *Voraussetzungen eines neuen Musiktheaters*, in: *Melos* 34.1967, H. 4 (April) and Bernd Alois Zimmermann's reaction: *Die Notwendigkeit, eine Invektive zu verfassen* in the November issue of the same year.

point of self-sacrifice. Well, I could have made a wonderful career of a composer who had a piece like *Akkordarbeit*, a publisher, etc.. But my path was more complicated.

How could you have been promoted better back then?

Yes, I probably should have just ... good question ... maybe, I do not know, was Bernd Alois Zimmermann a good teacher? I never got around to it.

Yes, I think so.

If he had lived on, I probably would have studied with him ....

Johannes Fritsch was with him. Clarence Barlow, too, to some extent, but very briefly.

But maybe my impulsiveness or my inner energy was somehow too demanding for me to surrender to a teacher like that. Today I always wonder how long all the students stay in a music conservatory. You are still here, what do you like here? What is it?

But when you studied ethnomusicology, you also read books by Jaap Kunst , and...

Jaap Kunst I still have there. I have also given away many books, among others on African music. I knew Habib Touma (1934–1998), a Palestinian, whom I got to know through Kagel in this "psychiatry course" in Bonn. I was in contact with him several times after that. He wrote this book about Arabic music, published by Heinrichshofen's.[129] He introduced me to the culture of the Nubas, as well. He went back to Israel, tragically, very late, and then died a year after his return. So, Habib Touma and also Marius Schneider, whom I never met personally, only through correspondence. I was already very inspired by his writings, because I always thought that the polyphony that he compares between the ancient cultures – the non-European cultures and the European Middle Ages and the Renaissance – means a broadening of Eurocentric thought. I thought that was great. He is suggesting, yes, that the Pygmies have as complex a counterpoint as Jacob Obrecht ...

While I think that is a bit exaggerated, but sophisticated it is ...

Well, of course, I also found that exaggerated, but somehow it was great that he had this thought at all. At that time I did not know that there was racist thinking behind it. He said that there would be a circle around the world, the megalithic cultures, and whereverthere were megalithic cultures, there would be polyphony ... back then I thought that was a great opening up of thought. At that time there was no awareness of multiculturalism at all, very different from now. It was taboo for strange people in musicology or ethnomusicology in Cologne to think that way ... Schneider was for me the bridge, so to speak, between medieval polyphony, Renaissance polyphony, and non-European music. Of course, I was also interested in polyphony in non-European music. And in traditional Balinese and Javanese culture, the nature of polyphony appears primarily as the result of a social structure, for example, that everyone contributes only a few pieces of the mosaic to create the whole. The whole is more than the sum of its parts.

Yes, it is like this in Bali, that the inhabitants of a village all take part in it, so they have a role within a performance ...

Yes, exactly. And this kind of conviviality, that everyone gives only small pieces of the mosaic and not one plays a solo melody, led to the *Ländler Topographien* (for orchestra, 1978–79). The *Ländler Topographien*, the way the web of voices is split, is directly related to the experience of this hocket-like polyphony. The hocket, as it is in Machaut's work, this juxtaposition of small particles, fascinated me incredibly because it dissolves the principle of primary and secondary voice. It sort of makes the primary voice and the secondary

[129] Habib Hassan Touma: *The Music of the Arabs*, Wilhelmshaven: Heinrichshofen's 1975

voice the same, they are everywhere. I thought that was really, truly great, as a remedy against this expressionist culture, against the red thread that leads through the piece, the violin solo or whatever. Whereas Alban Berg's violin concerto is a masterpiece ... I do not mean this enormous piece, either, but rather criticise the attitude that is often behind such solo concerti.

Yes, I understood that as well. As far as your ethnological studies were concerned, was there a balance between theory, social significance, performance practice, etc. in relation to this non-European music?

Yes, I learned a lot in terms of a different understanding of the subject, for example that of the musicians of folk music – one African harpist makes music the way you make a piece of cloth, a textile. He plays it by knitting the structure, that is it. There is no particular emotional involvement. Their songs have lyrics and meanings, of course, but they do not interpret them in an entirely emotional way. They act relatively independently of the content and contexts; they are not "detached" but they are "non-attached to emotional affects". They have a non-subjectifying, a super-subjective attitude, so to speak. I found that incredibly instructive.

My entire aspiration in music always went in that direction. I tried to achieve something through a kind of polyphony like that, which then led into a non-centered tonality, into a polyphony – several layers reflecting on each other – about which I then always said: "The listener has to find his way, it is not a dictation." I learned from that way of making music without copying it; it was my principle early on. I was always looking – I may have internalised this from Chomsky – for a deep structure that must be reached in order to understand a piece abstractly. That is, you do not need to quote music if you understand things abstractly. I go to the abstract level and dive into another musical layer. That was then also the case with the other pieces like *Akkordarbeit* (1971) or *In Understanding Music The Sound Dies* (1973–74): that you just go back behind the principles of, for example, a piano concerto. So at least it was an attempt that did not always succeed. I have already told you about my unsuccessful pieces, which often become a kind of drama towards the end. They are not only investigations, research pieces, but also contain a kind of teleology. And that is what I find most terrible, truth be told. That is a weakness that I gave in to again and again. That goes all the way to *Fragments of Love* (1987), there is a stretta at the end. Terrible that that somehow does not stop. I feel that is a weakness.

Surely you do not think of your compositions as mere investigations?

No, but they have a lot to do with such a dimension that a lot of research was done beforehand to find a new language. But then at a certain point I became too impatient, so I dropped out in the end because of impatience.

Another question about the balance, so to speak. When you went to America decades ago (from 1974) or when you recorded all kinds of music in general as field recordings – no matter whether it was Native Americans or nursery rhymes or Franconian peasant songs – what was the most important thing for you? Did you basically understand it ethnologically or as material with which one could compose?

With the project *Island Music*, I wanted to compare four island cultures. The project or question was how music is created in isolation: in a black ghetto in Pittsburgh, in an Indian reservation, in an oasis in Egypt, and in a rainy area in Colombia. But the last one was not done. Instead, I came back to my own area, so to speak, to Franconia. The idea then proved to be a somewhat artificial one; the materials themselves would have contributed nothing to such a comparison from within. My interest in non-European music and non-European cultures then led to some pieces, after all. [130]

[130] These include the following works, which Zimmermann refers to as "transcriptions": *Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein* for baritone and an ensemble of traditional instruments [Nuba ed Dhil, Tunisia]; *Gaze – Beduinenlied for* oboe and tape [Bedouin Song of the Siwa Oasis]; *Mandingo – Koroharfe* for mandolin [Kora / Harp Music from Mali] (all 1976; rev. 1993). Also the group of works *Randonnée: Northwest-Passage* for clarinet in *E-flat*, high trumpet in *F,* violin, double bass, percussion [Arctic]; *Streifzüge* for pianist with speaking voice [Pilgerwege]; *Parasit / Paraklet* for clarinet and string quartet (with tape) [Balkans] (all 1995); *El Baile de la conquista* for flute, oboe, and percussion (1996) [Guatemala]. *Monade / Nomade 1: Dit* for violoncello piccolo and tape) [Papua New Guinea] (1998). Later: *Silk Road*. Experimental film and electronically transformed music of the Silk Road (2001); *Das irakische Alphabet* for bass flute and voice with drone sounds (Joachim Sartorius, 2005) [Svaras, northern India]; *The Dialogue of the Two Roses* for three female and three male voices with vfoloncello (Edmond Jabès, 2005) [Egypt]; *The Grass of Childhood* for voice and

When asked which music was the most important to me, I named the music of the guqin, which is the Chinese zither, a complex, philosophical instrument that has hardly any resonance. You cannot hear it more than ten feet away; it can be plucked in a hundred different ways and has a hundred different ways of making the sound fade away – and the history of the instrument contains a cosmology. Then I mentioned Javanese gamelan music from Yogyakarta, the string quartets of Haydn, Chopin's mazurkas ...

... what a nice choice ...

... and the naïve pieces of Cage.

Okay.

You can take them to the famous island. But in this episode, you can already see a little bit of what I am looking for. You can perhaps bring it down to a very simple denominator: I would know what I would like to compose, but I am not allowed to. And for me to be allowed to do it, I must come up with all kinds of justifications as to why I am doing it, you know? Avery transparent, childlike innocent music, for instance,or whatever we want to call it, is simply not sanctioned in our music business.

Sure.

You can see from my class how interested the students are: Ferneyhough, Lachenmann, Spahlinger– Nicolaus A. Huber already no longer – are among the peaks of the avant-garde, so to speak. And then I always notice: every student still wants to surpass this summit ... I could hardly counter this; in fact, I talk to my students about everything, but not about my own musical world.

That is a shame, I would say.

They do not ask, either. Well, if someone asks me, okay! If someone does not ask me, all the better. I do not want to create little Zimmermans ...

Zimmermanns ...

Or Lachenmann dwarfs ...

There is a charming comment on this by Robert Platz, whom I asked a few years ago at Darmstadt about how the young composers were composing right now. He cleverly answered: "There is this triangle Ferneyhough, Lachenmann, and Feldman. Ferneyhough, because he's incredibly complex. Feldman, because he composes things so quietly that you can hardly hear them. But especially Lachenmann, because his scores, if you could hear them, would sound ... chchooar ... [makes a noise]. They form a kind of permeable triangle in which the young composers then disappear ..."

You can add Xenakis ... When you come out of a percussion concert by Xenakis, you hear almost nothing. I remember a performance of *Pléïades* (1978) in the Darmstadt (Baar-?)Sporthalle. And Feldman was there, who liked Xenakis, by the way.

To come back to the books. When did you start collecting entire series of works, collected writings, etc.? I have the impression it started very early with Suhrkamp and with the non-fiction books, a systematic reading, so to speak. I am of the opinion that you could be interested in writer X and then buy everything by him, which you also see all around here. When did that start?

ud or dulcimer (Fuad Rifka, 2006) [Lebanon]; *Chantbook of Modified Melodies* for double string duo (VI.+VI. I Va.+Vc.) (2011) [Svaras, northern India].

Well, yes and no. In the '70s, as I've said before, the German-language book world was still reasonably manageable. Every fall you had a new Handke, a new Habermas, a new nonfiction book ... And Handke had for me – like the filmmaker Jean-Marie Straub on the other side – a quiet and lyrical way, like Feldman's music. In fact, this encyclopedic collecting came not from the desire to have everything, but rather from the desire to follow the spirit of the time, that is, the place where thoughts are produced. And then I realised at a certain point: aha, Habermas, Adorno ... what is going on there? They do not like any stories. They do not like Nietzsche. Adorno does not like Stravinsky. Suddenly, when I read closely, I noticed the dislikes of these people, their aversions. Then I got curious about the flip sides and started reading all the things they did not like.

With Adorno, that would have to be quite a lot, almost the whole world ... (laughs).

I found Adorno's aversion to Stravinsky in the *Philosophy of New Music* quite disgusting. One need not like Stravinsky, but that one writes him a psychiatric report, so to speak, hebephrenia, schizophrenia ... well, I found that impossible. One must never forget that Adorno very early [1934] praised male choirs with settings by Hitler's youth leader Baldur von Schirach. [131]

Oh, I did not know that.

Yes, well, I mean, the man is not so kosher, either. He was also so upper-middle-class – and then with this Marxist smock, that did not fit somehow. Of course, in Berg he praises the transition as a quality, so to speak ...

... "Master of the smallest transition" ...

Yet it is an extremely middle-class concept. Well, you must know that, too. Of course, the brilliance in which he writes is beguiling – in contrast to Habermas. Habermas writes dryly; I honestly did not like reading Habermas that much. And precisely because it became so dry, this science series became dull at a certain point.

Today you have not yet mentioned the modern French ...

Yes, I bought Lévi-Strauss very early on. In a piece by Luciano Berio – I cannot remember which one now – there was something from *Le cru et le cuit* as a reproach. [132]

*In "*Sinfonia*"(1967—69), for example, it is quoted.*

In *Sinfonia,* ah, yes. Then, of course, I immediately looked up Lévi-Strauss and bought these four volumes *Mythologica.* And realised that this suddenly had to do with Wagner again. But then I was already repelled by these kinship structures; I never quite understood that, either, why everything has to be traced back to incest.

Did you [133]*read* Tristes Tropiques *back then?*

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[131] Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno: Rezension zu:] Herbert Müntzel: *Die Fahne der Verfolgten. Ein Zyklus für Männerchor nach dem gleichnamigen Gedichtband von Baldur von Schirach*, in: *Die Musik* 26th Jg, 2nd half of 1934, p. 712. - Again in: Theodor W. Adorno: *Musikalische Schriften VI* (= *Ges. Schriften Bd. 19*), Frankfurt am Main 1984, 331–332.

[132] Claude Lévi-Strauss: *Mythologiques I. Le cru et le cuit*, Paris: Plon 1964; Engl. as *Mythologica I. Das Rohe und das Gekochte*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1971.

[133] Claude Lévi-Strauss: *Tristes Tropiques*, 1955; Engl. as *Traurige Tropen*, Cologne / Berlin: Kiepenheuer & Witsch 1960.

Yes, yes, *Tristes Tropiques*. There was a beautiful edition by Kiepenheuer & Witsch, with a red cover. Well, I almost did not read it. The French ... at some point this volume *Rhizome* by Deleuze and Guattari came out from Merve, and[134] I read it immediately.

Earlier than Roland Barthes, for example?

Barthes, that is a good question. Yes, I mean, it was earlier than Barthes, and of Deleuze & Guattari I only had the *Rhizome* volume at that time. But Barthes, of course, I then found. There is this one volume on Schumann and Schubert where he criticises Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau.[135] We had a housewarming party here in the apartment many years ago. I had also invited the publishers of Merve to that, and my colleague, the musicologist Elmar Budde, who was a friend of Fischer-Dieskau. May I introduce: Hans-Peter Gente,[136] publisher of Merve – Elmar Budde: "What, you translated this Barthes? Then what did you do with Fischer-Dieskau?" Mr. Budde was horrified that a German translation of this essay had appeared in the Merve edition.

In Le grain de la voix (Rhizome) *it is almost forbidden to listen to Schubert's songs with Fischer-Dieskau's voice, something like that ...* [137]

Of course, I was very interested in what he was saying. And that about the bodies in Schumann.[138] And then, of course, there was this "Lexicon" *Fragments of a Language of Love*[139] – a revelation for me. I had a much bigger project in mind with that, but – typical of me – the moment it would have become physical, I called it a day. So it got stuck practically in the sign-like, in the translation of signs into music, so to speak. That was [140]Barthes. I then left him.

To stay with Barthes for a moment. Did you read almost everything by him back then?

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[134] Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari: *Rhizome. Introduction*, Paris: Minuit 1976; Engl. as *Rhizome*, Berlin: Merve 1977.

[135] Roland Barthes: *Die Rauheit der Stimme* [orig.: *Le grain de la voix*, 1972], in: idem: *Was singt mir,* der *ich höre, in meinem Körper das Lied,* Berlin: Merve 1979, pp. 19–36, on Fischer-Dieskau in particular. pp. 25–30.

[136] Hans-Peter Gente (1936 –2014), publicist, co-founder and managing director of Merve Verlag in Berlin-Schöneberg. After a Marxist-oriented initial phase, mainly contemporary French philosophers, including Roland Barthes, Gilles Deleuze, and Michel Foucault were often translated for the first time and published in Germany. In addition, there were writings of systems theory (Niklas Luhmann, Oswald Wiener, Heinz von Foerster) and of John Cage.

[137] "F. D. rules today almost unrestrictedly on the whole sung long record; he has recorded everything: if you love Schubert, but not F. D., Schubert is *forbidden* to you today: Example of that positive censorship (by abundance) which characterises mass culture ...", op. cit,
p. 28.

[138] Barthes: *Rasch* [frz. 1975], in: idem: *Was singt mir, der ich höre, in meinem Körper das Lied*, Berlin: Merve 1979, 47–68. - 1979 followed still *Aimer Schumann*; (dt. as *Schumann lieben*, in: *Der entgegenkommende und der stumpfe Sinn,* Frankfurt *am* Main (edition suhrkamp 1367) 1990, pp. 293–298.

[139] Roland Barthes: *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1977; Engl. : *Fragments of a Language of Love*, Frankfurt am Main: Syndikat 1979 and more.

[140] Zimmermann composed in 1987: *Fragmente der Liebe* nach Roland Barthes for saxophone or basset horn and string quartet, – I. *Emanatio*; II. *Conversio*; III. *Remeatio*. – Premiere Darmstadt 1988; 20'.

No, no. I do not think that is true about the encyclopedic completeness ... I did try to research in all directions what he was active in. That he wrote a book about Cy Twombly[141], for example, and also one about Japanese characters. [142]Then *The Pleasure of the Text.* [143]Then this *S/Z*. [144]

Yes, have you read that, for example? I think that is fantastic, as a one-time task: He analyses every sentence and every word of a story by Balzac. Extraordinary. Balzac's short story Sarasine *has to do with a transvestite or hermaphrodite. He analyses each sentence with announcements, the function of each sentence content in relation to the whole, including each word. Strange; it is a thing that someone can do only once. It is superfluous to do it again then. But to read it through once as a concretisation of a theory, I found that fabulous.*

Yes, I have it here, but I have not read it ... Important then also was this one by Derrida writing about writing (look for the book): *Writing and Difference (*1972).

Writing and the Difference *(1967)*

... and in it again the chapter *Freud and the Scene of the Writing* with the section *The Orbit and the Difference*. There was this notion of the "Wunderblock" with Freud. When I was a child, some people had a wax tablet: you make drawings or write something and then pull a sliding device over it to erase it again. But in the wax underneath, the engraving remains. And this is what Freud used as an analogy to memory. The impressions that one has forgotten are still there as an engraving in the memory. And that is what Derrida picks up again here. It is a complicated text; here it is also about this kind of delayed perception, the after-perceptibility with which the perceptions taken in at the moment are imprinted in memory as permanent traces. [145]

Then I also read Derrida's discussion of Husserl, *La voix et la phénomène.*[146] With Husserl, the presence – that is, of the moment – is scientifically produced, so to speak, through this concept – what is it called with

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[141] *Cy Twombly. Non multa sed multum. Wisdom of Art*, Berlin: Merve 1983.

[142] *L'empire des signes*, Paris: Skira 1970; Engl.: *Im Reich der Zeichen*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1981.

[143] *Le plaisir du texte*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1973.

[144] *S/Z. Essay on "Sarasine" by Honoré de Balzac*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1970.

[145] Sigmund Freud: *Note on the "Wunderblock"*, in: *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 11 (1), 1925, pp. 1–5. - Collected Works vol. 13 , pp. 387–391. - Study Edition 1975 , vol. III, 364–369. - Freud called the wax tablet with cellophane cover sheet a "Wunderblock", because it stimulated him to insight into neuro-physiological processes of perception and, connected with it, to the explanation of the mental perceptual apparatus as well as a theory of memory and the consequent emergence of time perception. Freud had observed fluctuations of the perceptual system, which he tried to explain by a "periodically occurring inexcitability of the perceptual system" or the "discontinuous functioning of the system *W – Bw*".
If memory is fixed in the form of writing on a sheet of paper, it remains unchanged and can be reproduced. On the other hand, the surface of the paper is limited, and the "permanent trace" fixed in this way loses its value when "the interest in the note has died out after some time and I can no longer 'keep it in mind'". If, on the other hand, it is noted on a wax tablet, the "recording surface" is unlimited, but the recorded trace must be overwritten and destroyed in order to lay a new trace. Freud found it "not too daring to equate the cover sheet consisting of celluloid and wax paper with the system *W -–Bw* [perception – consciousness] and its stimulus protection, the wax tablet with the unconscious behind it, the becoming visible of the writing and its disappearance with the lighting up and passing away of consciousness during Wahmehmung (perception)."
He supposed that "occupation innervations are sent in rapid periodic bursts from the interior into the completely permeable system *W – Bw* and withdrawn again. As long as the system is occupied in such a way, it receives the perceptions accompanied by consciousness and passes the excitation on to the unconscious memory systems; as soon as the occupation is withdrawn, consciousness ceases and the performance of the system is suspended."
In other writings, Freud assumed, on the one hand, "permeable perceptual neurons" that do not resist the pathing, and, on the other hand, inhibiting, "retinal" perceptual neurons. The latter, according to Derrida, "oppose contact barriers to the quality of excitation" and thereby preserve a track that has already been pressed in. These neurons have a psychic quality; they make memory possible. "In the difference of the tracings consists the real origin of memory and thus of the psychic." (Derrida: *Writing and Difference*, 1976 edition, p. 308). "The trace of memory is not a mere trajectory that could always be reappropriated in a simple presence. It is the inconceivable and invisible difference between the trajectories. So one already knows that psychic life is neither the transparency of sense nor the density of force, but the difference in the work of forces." (p. 308f.)

[146] Paris 1967; Engl.: *Die Stimme und das Phänomen*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1979 .

Husserl? - of the Épochè.[147] So: one has to switch off everything around and produce a kind of scientific situation in order to be able to name the moment. This is what Derrida criticised. He says there will always be a "différance"[148] between the perception and the reaction to it. This difference is quite important. There is no such thing as this perception of the moment. There is, so to speak, a field, a broad sphere, in which the moment takes place. And there he meets again with Plato. There is something "at the time" it is said, not "in" the time, but "at". And as a composer you experience this all the time. In the moment in which you write, you think of a time, which not only only does not coincide with that of the perceiver, but is also your very personal time. And there is always a "difference" between this time, in which you write something, to the perception of time, which it then stops again when reading. [149]I dealt with this in connection with the time pieces *Festina lente* (1990) and *Distentio* (1992), where I then again made such seemingly absurd determinations. That the glissando is the past or the harmonics the future and the pizzicato the present moment. I mean, that is fictitious ...

Basically, however, I also noticed that theorists like Derrida think too finely. That simply cannot be transferred back to music. It has no model character for anything in music, and that is why, although I have read almost all of it, I have not back-translated it. After all, I am always looking for models that could function as back-translation possibilities.

... according to what can be realised ...

That is too finicky; poststructuralism is no good for me because it describes exactly what it delivers in little boxes or rhetorical boxes. At least I have dealt with it.

Up to Grammatology*(1967; Engl. 1974) or even beyond? Many of us gave up when* Glass *(1974) appeared, where Derrida juxtaposes quotations from Hegel and Genet ...*

I have quite a bit of Derrida here, and then I read *Spurs – the Styles of Nietzsche* (1986). That is about Nietzsche, though all I can remember is him talking for pages about a phrase of Nietzsche's: "I forgot my umbrella." But he is still an incredibly fascinating thinker, and incidentally he wrote one of the best studies of Heidegger's fascist language. The [150]way he talks about the flame and the spirit in Heidegger, the way he unravels that, is absolutely great. Then came *Dissemination* (Vienna 1996), there are some more beautiful essays in that book, but it is so intricate, you cannot ... at all.

Michel Serres is less complicated in this respect. I was able to occupy myself with him again in such a way that pieces emerged from it. This book about communication *The Parasite* (1980; Engl. 1981) ...

... which became Parasit / Paraklet *(for clarinet, string quartet, and tape, 1995–96)*

... and there is also this French one where Lucretius plays a role ... *La naissance de la physique dans le texte de Lucrèce* (1977). What*Le Parasit*e is basically about is that communication also has to do with disturbance and that background noise is always such a disturbance. The basic parable – this is probably a fable by La Fontaine – is that two mice are eating crumbs on the table and then they hear the owner open the door. The

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[147] As a method, the term "Épochè" [Gr. ἐποχή – restraint or ἐπέχω – to stop, to hold back] in Husserl characterises the phenomenological reduction by which the preconceived judgments about the external world are first deprived of validity in order to arrive subsequently – setting aside actual existence – at insights into the essence of the object under consideration (after https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epoch%C3%A9, December 2018).

[148] A made-up word by Derrida, formed from "différence" and "differant," also translated as "difference."

[149] Derrida, who likes to call this particular difference "Differänz," thus aims at the "deferral (*différance*)" that he recognises in connection with chapter VII of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams (*1900) and its article *The Negation (*1925) as a "detour, thought-push (the unity of Eros and Thanatos)." (Derrida, 1976 ed., p. 343) Ultimately, this is also about resistance and the "discontinuity of the current of innervation" (Freud) observed at the wax tablet, which makes memory and consciousness possible. Cf. also Plotinus' treatise *On Eternity and Time*, especially section 8 on "absenteeism," the extension of time into the other (?).

[150] Jacques Derrida: *De l'esprit. Heidegger et la question*, Paris: Ed. Galilée 1987; Engl: *Vom Geist. Heidegger und die Frage*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1988.

sound of the door makes them disappear. The parasite here is a noisy drone, but the fact that this background noise can disturb, transform the music also plays into it. And then it is like this: *parasite / paraklet*. Parakleitos is the helper, too. So I used the noise as disturbing, but also as helping. For example, in communication: when we get totally stuck, the phone rings and we go. After that, we have solved the problem, because then we are talking about something else, anyway. This also occurs in *Parasit / Paraklet*, where in the second part I hint a bit at this Balkan story through folk melodies from Bosnia, where there is also crackling fire in it and so on. Thus,there is also a parasitic sound in there, which disturbs so: chhhh chhhh. And by the way, this is also a sound that I have from Colgate, a computer sound.

You were also reading Jacques Lacan at the time?

Yes, of course, I also read him, mediated by my friend Stefan Schädler, who appreciated him very much. There I found especially this essay on Saint Teresa, the volume *Encore*, that is *Seminar No. 20* (1972/73; dt. 1986). I found that quite important.

You had a Teresa project in mind at the time ...

I saw in Rome, coming from Termini Station, this fantastic church, Santa Maria della Vittoria, which has on the side such a small chapel, the Cornaro Chapel, with a small bay window to the outside, where the light comes in from above: In this niche there is a statue by Bernini depicting Teresa of Ávila, the "Rapture of Saint Teresa", executed around the year 1646. To this came the idea of folding, *le pli*. And in this context came again this ornamented history, the Gothic figures. You know my film *Silk Road* (2001) with the Gothic figures from the Cologne Diocesan Museum. And in the preparatory phase there was also a book on this, that is how I came to Gilles Deleuze: *The Fold.*

I do not know that.

This is also available in English; I can get it for you.

No, I will get that at the university, anyway, when I get back to Sydney.

There is this book about the folds and ornaments: *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*.[151] By the way, in college, in a collaboration between my composition class and architecture students from Benedict Tonon's class, I did two whole semesters on ornaments, where we also thematised Adolf Loos' formula "Ornament is Crime" ... You see, in the front there I wrote in *Monade/Nomade.* That is the name of two of my compositions from the cycle *Randonnée*. [152]By the way, "Randonnée" is a term by Michel Serres, who also dealt with Leibniz. [153]

Deleuze refers to the baroque house and to the monad, a Leibnizian concept.[154] At the end of the book it says:

> "The problem is still to inhabit the world, but Stockhausen's musical dwelling, Jean Dubuffet's plastic dwelling, do not leave the difference of the interior and the exterior, the private and the public: they identify variation and trajectory and surpass monadology by a 'nomadology'. Music has remained the house, but what has changed is the

[151] Gilles Deleuze: *Le pli. Leibniz et le baroque*, Paris 1988; Engl: *Die Falte. Leibniz und der Barock*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2000 - "The fold that goes to infinity is characteristic of the Baroque. And at first he [the Baroque] differentiates it according to two directions, according to two infinities, as if the infinite possessed two floors: the folds of matter and the folds in the soul. At the bottom is matter ..." (p. 11).

[152] *Monade / Nomade 1: Dit* for cello with voice and fixed media (1998); *Monade / Nomade 2: Quattro Coronati* for violoncello piccolo (ossia: cello) with voice (1999).

[153] Michel Serres: *The Leibniz system and its mathematical models*, Bd. I: *Stars,* Bd. II: *Schemes, Points,* Paris 1968, 31990.

[154] The "monad" is the name borrowed from Neoplatonists such as Giordano Bruno, "which Leibniz gives to the soul or subject as a metaphysical point" (Deleuze, *The Fold,* p. 43).

organization of the house and its nature. We remain Leibnizians, although it is no longer the sounds together that express our world or our text. We discover new ways to fold and new envelopes, but we remain Leibnizians because it's always about folding, unfolding, folding again." [155]

The allegory of the Baroque house, which has two floors, runs through the volume and has a curious structure: namely, one of the public and one of the private, one of the outside and one of the inside. Here is a sketch of this house: downstairs is a "common room with 'some small openings,' the five senses." Upstairs, a "closed private room, wallpapered with a canvas 'subdivided by folds'." So, practically marbled wallpaper, which they had back in the Baroque era. I have written here in the margin: "apartment – store". This is an association with my[156] childhood. In the apartment, which was above the store, I played the piano. Here is the Baroque house, so to speak, as an allegory that I identified with my parents' house, where the separation between family and business never worked. And Deleuze makes it clear from the beginning that there is a communication between these floors – the folds of matter and the folds of the soul. I thought, yeah fantastic, this is maybe a book that describes that well.

And then, in the end, there was a lot of Boulez in it: these trajectories[157] of music, which play a very big role in Boulez's work. And then I realised that I had ended up with ... Then I thought, no! And I realised that this ornamental project associated with the Teresa project was going nowhere. It was then somehow a project that was only thought of in this way. In the final chapter, *The New Harmony,* Deleuze returns to Rameau and also, basically, to the *trajectoires*, the diagonal mediations between the horizontal and the vertical. First, he writes:

"But it is precisely to Baroque music that it belongs to *draw harmony out of melody* and to establish again and again the higher unity to which the arts refer as to just as many melodic lines: it is even this elevation of harmony which constitutes the most general definition of the music called Baroque." [158]

Then Deleuze speaks of the "vinculum," the fetter of the basso continuo, relating Rameau, who discovered that melody is subordinate to bass progression, to Leibniz:

"This subordination implies something other than the prestabilized harmony, namely the vinculum, which acts as a 'basso continuo' and prepares a key. So we could say that every ruling monad has a vinculum, a basso continuo, just as it has a key that carries its internal consonances." [159]

Why does he have to use these old terms now for something that can possibly be said more abstractly? Out of principle and out of system, Deleuze says, following Rameau, of harmony:

"When the Baroque house becomes musical, the upper floor contains the vertical harmonic monads, the internal concordances that each produces in its respective rooms, the correspondence or concentration of these concordances. And the lower floor extends along an infinite number of horizontal melodic lines, one taken in the other, embracing in sensuality their variations and developing at the same time their continuity; for the upper floor folds on the lower one, according to the key, to realise there their consonances. In the melody, in fact, the harmony realises itself." [160]

The top floor is the harmonies and the bottom floor is the melodies and the ways they work together, so to speak.

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[155] Gilles Deleuze: *Le pli*, Paris 1988; Engl: *Die Falte*, Frankfurt am Main 2000, p. 226.

[156] Ibid, p. 13.

[157] A trajectory is a path of motion, a curvilinear course, calculated from several functions, sometimes also referred to as a "path". According to the dictionary: "a curve that intersects all curves of a given set of curves at a constant angle".

[158] Ibid, p. 209.

[159] Ibid, p. 221.

[160] Ibid, p. 222.

Then here comes Boulez. It is about *Pli selon Pli* with the text of Mallarmé, which is folded according to a new text-music relationship:

> "The text is folded according to the concordant sounds and enveloped by the harmony. The same problem of expression still animates music, as far back as Richard Wagner or Claude Debussy, and today John Cage, Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Luciano Berio. It is not a problem of correspondence, but of 'fold-in' or 'pli selon pli'. What has happened that the answer, or rather the different answers given since the Baroque, are so much different? The solutions are no longer in the concordances, because the problem itself is under changed conditions: new Baroque, neo-Lebnizianism. The same construction of the point of view of the city continues to evolve, but it is neither the same point of view nor the same city, and shape and plan are in motion in space." [161]

At the end, it says that monadology and nomadology, that is the *trajectoires*, are the decisive new thing, which Deleuze also sees in new music. But at this point I also thought, you come out with Boulez and then it is nothing for me.

At least at that time you had the habit of not only reading an enormous amount and underlining some of it, but also pulling it out in writing and rewriting it. Why did you think that was so important?

Yes, exactly. Excerpts. I used to do even more ...

Often pages long. Mostly with large letters.

Yes, I will get you a book that has such records in it. Of course, there are several of them.

Sure, with a notebook like this ...

There are these different cycles ... "Simulacra" I had called it at first. Simulacra - that goes back to the Roman poet and philosopher Lucretius, a term of the atomists. These are the elements that come at you. But the term simulacra is also used by French authors, by Pierre Klossowski ...

... but also Jean Baudrillard.

Baudrillard, exactly. I believe that Deleuze's book on sense – *Logic of*[162] *Sense*) – after thirty-four *series of paradoxes*, there is also a chapter on Plato *and* one on Lucretius in the appendices entitled *Trugbild und antike Philosophie* (Simulacre *et philosophie antique*): *Trugbild*, that is a simulacrum. Plato, plus Lucretius and the mirage. And here in the Lucretius excerpt there is the section *The Clinamen and the Theory of Time* – there we have it again ...

Then came the Ataraxia and Pathé project, then Echo and Narcissus, Tyche and Automaton. Tyche and Automaton is a very important pair of terms, it comes from Aristotle. I found it in Lacan; he shows in the repetition compulsion [163]how Tyche and Automaton get each other out of this repetition compulsion. Sort of like a sudden coincidence: when a phone rings and frees us from a deadlocked discussion. It is like progressions of melodies preformed by magic squares, which in themselves are *not* driven by their own repetition impulse, when they are in balance with the ego drive and thus become a very floating piece of music. That is why some of my pieces are more machine-like and others are more subjectivistic. The balance of both is the optimal thing, in fact, yet I do not always get that right ...

Yes, and then it just starts, then I always excerpt all these writings. Oh, suddenly a very concrete magic square comes in here. That is this Euler's Springer square.

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[161] Ibid., p. 224f.

[162] Gilles Deleuze: *Logique du sens*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit 1969; Engl.: *Logik des Sinns*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1989.

[163] Jacques Lacan (1987 [1964]): *The Four Basic Concepts of Psychoanalysis. Seminar XI*, ed. by Norbert Haas and Hans-Joachim Metzger, Weinheim: Quadriga 1987, p. 60.

Then here Barthes, in whom I found various rhetorical figures.[164] Then Aristotle. You see what else I have there. Yes, I am doing that to work my way up slowly to such a larger complex. Here you can already see different phases crossed out. Tyche, Chronos, Aion as concepts of time, Simulacra (mirages) and Eidola (images flying into the eye) [165]illustrate movement in time and can thus be translated into musical structures. This was the environment of *Ataraxia* (1987–88) as I paraphrased it.

Then comes the next piece: *Hyperion* (epistolary opera based on Hölderlin, 1989 90). Somehow there wasn ot that much.

You copied for me other sketchbooks that have pages and pages of excerpts and quotes on dozens of pages.

That was especially in the early days, with the early stuff.

*But also at the time of "*Ataraxia *there are many things here.*

Yes, every piece is also a kind of learning process for me. I try to find out something. Ultimately also about myself. I would not do it otherwise, if it did not fascinate me so much.

When you set yourself a task, you know or understand it better by writing it down. Is this an expedition of some sort?

Now that I think about it carefully, it is an attempt to solve a riddle inside me – at least *one* riddle – that I just do not understand: it is this riddle of expression itself. Why am I so hesitant to trust spontaneous expression? Why do I not trust spontaneous expression? Why do I think that if I were to produce it, only clichés would emerge? Why do I have to hedge my bets with so many unbelievably formal decisions? I believe today: they are not formal decisions at all. I think what happens is that the mind is conditioned and cornered in a way by this constant excerpting and pondering, where a piece then slowly forms itself through the excerpting and that piece gradually takes on a distinctive shape –like modeling a sculpture whose outlines slowly emerge. And the older I get, the longer this takes – probably because the terrain on which one then wants to express oneself becomes more and more precious, because one does not want to keep repeating oneself. So, these terrains become narrower, and ... I am not doing work out of a dull office history, but with this excerpting I am learning and building; I am conditioning myself.

I could be quite wrong, but may ay oneassumethat you have, in fact, come back to ancient thinking via the modern French? In a way, it looks like this ...

Yes, yes, with Deleuze, but also in a Baroque way. One thinker we have not talked about yet and whom I carried around with me for an incredibly long time – and then absolutely nothing came of it – is Spinoza. I came to Spinoza through an article by Gilles Deleuze. In this little Merve booklet, he writes something at the end about the musicality of Spinoza's thinking; there it says in the chapter *Spinoza and us*:

> "In the plan of a musical composition, in the plan of nature, the most intense and comprehensive individual is that whose parts vary in an infinite number of ways. [Jakob Johann von] Uexküll, one of the most important founders of ethology [comparative behavioural research], is a Spinozist when he first defines the melodic lines or counterpoint relations that correspond to each thing. when he then describes a symphony as a higher immanent unity that assumes vastness ('natural composition'). Throughout *Ethics* this musical composition occurs and constitutes it as one and the same individual whose relations of speed and slowness do not cease to vary – successively and simultaneously. Successive – as we have seen with the various parts of ethics associated by varying relative speeds,

[164] Roland Barthes: *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1977; Engl. : *Fragments of a Language of Love*, Frankfurt am Main: Syndikat 1979 and more.

[165] Eidola are little pictures (groups of atoms) flying into the eye, which, according to the teachings of the atomists Democritus and Epicurus, detach themselves from objective reality, reach the sensory organs and thereby make perception possible. According to Democritus, all objects are constituted by the union of atoms, which differ from each other by shape, order, position, size, and weight. All things continually emit groups of atoms (eidola) which, by contact with the sensory organs, make sense cognition possible (according to Wikipedia, 11 May 2018).

up to the absolute speed of thought of the third genre of cognition. Simultaneous to the extent that the propositions and scholia do not follow the same track and compose two intersecting movements. Accordingly, *Ethics* is a composition whose parts are all carried along by the speed of magnitude in the farthest movement." [166]

Spinoza's *Ethics* consists of doctrines with proofs and scholia, that is commentaries, whereby the scholia have a quite different poetic impression than the doctrines. It is akin perhaps to Prelude and Fugue. The scholia are sort of preluding, are freer, comments on something. So, fugue and prelude, or better postlude, because the tenet comes first. These theorems and proofs, they have something solid. And then there is always a Scholion, which is translated here as "Note". The whole thing is built up in five books and is a fantastic composition in itself. It [167]would then be a gargantuan undertaking to depict the entire *Ethics* in music. So, I have "inherited" a certain megalomania from Wolfgang Rihm, but with me it is like this, with me the megalomania turns out to be so great that I do not even get to compose, in contrast to Wolfgang, who always transforms it very beautifully and fluidly.

But did your interest in ancient or old writings, which initially came through modernity, did this interest then become autonomous? Did it become autonomous, so to speak, or is your interest in antiquity always mediated by modernity?

On the one hand it was Heidegger, through him I came to Parmenides and Heraclitus. Then through Serres to Lucretius and Democritus, through Marx I also came to Democritus. Then through Deleuze to Leibniz, through him also to Lucretius and Spinoza; through Lacan to Aristotle or Tyche and Automaton. Plato, *Timaeus* – that came with the *Wüstenwanderung*(for piano, 1986), but how did I know Timaeus' Discourse on the Origin of the World Soul? I think that came more from the study of spherical harmony and planetary distances and their musical correspondences. This was already there, so to speak, in the music of the Baroque and Renaissance. Theorists like Kepler, the *world Harmonics* (1619), had already illustrated that the planetary distances produce scales, also musical scales. So, this Plato story did not come about through contemporary philosophers, but everything else, actually, yes.

And then later or more recently, what about Giordano Bruno?

Yes, Giordano Bruno and *The Shadows of Ideas*, originally *De umbris idearum* (1582). There was a book on this that was newly published.

That was secondary literature, though not written by thinkers like Derrida, Lacan, etc., but by an art historian, right?

Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory*.[168] She was first mentioned by Morton Feldman, and that is even in my book on Feldman, I think.[169] Francis Yates was quite important to Feldman. So I naturally became curious about that, and that is what led to the involvement with this fantastic book. And that triggered this whole cycle *Schatten der Ideen* (1992–2001). In Yates, there is a chapter on Bruno: *The Secret of Shadows*. And there is also a chapter on Raimundus Llullus (*Lullism as the Art of Memory*). But I have dealt with Llull (c. 1232/33–1316/17) only now during my guest professorship in Barcelona (2003).

The noises of this city are so annoying. I became quite sick there and then found around the corner of the hotel a small bookstore with literature from Mallorca. Llull was from Mallorca. And I went in there and read. And then I went to the university and found out about Llull, or at least I tried to, and I was able to make photocopies or buy secondhand books. I thereby gradually acquired a Llull library. Then I was in Freiburg;

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[166] Gilles Deleuze: *Spinoza – Philosophie pratique*, Paris: Éd. de Minuit, 1981; Engl.: *Spinoza – Praktische Philosophie,* Berlin: Merve 1988, p. 164f.

[167] Cf. the German translation of Spinoza's *Ethics* by Otto Baensch, which has been in circulation since 1905.

[168] Frances A. Yates: *The Art of Memory*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1966; Engl: *Gedächtnis und Erinnern. Mnemonics from Aristotle to Shakespeare*, Weinheim: VCH 1990, Berlin: Akademie Verlag [51999].

[169] Morton Feldman: *Essays,* ed. by Walter Zimmermann, Kerpen: Beginner Press 1995, p. 205.

there is a Llullus Institute there, which I also visited. I had a larger project in mind, but it got stuck. I composed only one small piece – with viola (*Taula & Novo Ben* for viola and voice, text: Ramón Llull and Biagio Marin, 2003). It was supposed to be the beginning of something bigger.

Now we may come to an interesting phenomenon. What ultimately stopped me is the formalisations, because what would have resulted in Llull would have become a kind of translation again: Composition as transcription of combinatorial tables. I would have gained again, so to speak, a new magic square, new "wheels with combinatoric wheels." But my mind is striving elsewhere. So, I am trying to get to the bottom of this puzzle of expression. And that is why I have been reading poetry for some time now ... Nanne also thinks I'm in a transitional phase, because I never used to do that. I cannot read novels, anyway. I have no patience for novels. Nanne always needs to tell the novels to me.

Although, how is that, is the Proust edition from Nanne or did you just buy it and Nanne read it?

I always wanted to read it; I also read great passages from it, but I never finished it. I have no patience to read a novel in its entirety. And I will tell you quite clearly why: it has to do with my greed for music, which keeps me from reading anything other than what has to do with music. My mind is virtually poisoned by the addiction to useful reading. It is not a self-sufficient pleasure, but a slaving away at the essence ... Utilitarian ... Next book, next book. Oh, maybe – no, it is terrible!

... if you read Derrida or Lacan, for example, then only as far as it is useful for you? But I have the impression that you read everything in these books ...

Yes, because such theoretical things do not involve a time limit, whereas reading novels for me involves some kind of time dictation; they are also usually less experimental ...

But novels are not a kind of competition to scientific books for you?

It depends on how well other people know how to capture my imagination. Novels are no competition for science, but you must trust an author completely to follow him or her through an entire novel. Rarely do I finish reading a novel; many times I just do not feel pushed to read it all the way through. With poetry it is different; for example, with John Ashbery, Roberto Juarroz, or Antonio Porchia[170], a few poems in a row feel like they are in a single breath, like a piece of music, whereas with novels you are often completely cut off from a flow of time comparable to music. You are reading weeks of it or something. Maybe that is also a *déformation professionelle éminente*. Maybe one day I can really trust that some other approach than this utilitarian one would be of use, that some other things are working in me without my knowledge, telling me if I read this, it will do me some good or not.

*A completely different question. You spoke of harmonics and pizzicati, etc. in "*Distentio *that would represent, say, past, present, and future. You described that as "absurd" in a sense, and you almost always tend to portray such things as "absurd in a sense" after the fact. But this can be only partly true, because you do this again and again and for example "*Distentio *is nevertheless one of your favorite pieces ...*

[170] Antonio Porchia: *Voces completas / Gesammelte Stimmen*, Berlin: Tropen Verlag 2005 – This resulted in the large-scale piano cycle *Voces abandonadas* (2005/06). The 40-minute piano piece "is an attempt to translate the 514 aphorisms of Antonio Porchia's book of the same name into sound emblems, most of which last only one measure, often only a fraction of a measure or only a fermata, and merge seamlessly into one another. For the composition, the sentences were reflected in the same order as they appear in the original. The form emerged as a secondary process, generated by the semantic references of the sentences to each other. A process that occurred because musical links were created for the synonymous and metonymous concatenations. Repeatedly appearing form-founding word fields are: 'everything', 'nothing', 'time', 'waiting', 'love', 'eyes', 'moment', 'evil', 'pain', 'good', 'minute', 'years', 'eternity', 'stars', 'small', 'big', 'less', 'more', 'remove', 'circle', 'one', 'mine', 'tomorrow', 'today', 'hold', 'fall', 'dream', 'life' 'chains', 'flowers'.
The compositional process took a year and proceeded diary-like, without constructive guidelines, reacting directly to the respective sentences. The successive sentences were often of a contradictory nature, so that the music always had to articulate itself over cliffs of meaning. In the process, it becomes perceptible that the initially disparate soundentences begin to speak their own language as the piece, which lasts about forty minutes, progresses. The abstracted, condensed sound emblems become building blocks of a kind of musical logic, which, however, in turn reveals the logic of the sequence in Porchia's book, just as one can recognise a landscape in its structures only from a spatial distance." (W. Z.)

Of yours!

Of yours, of mine too! You have always described Distentio *like this, also the day before yesterday. It is one of the pieces that you consider successful!*

Ah, yes. So, yeah, exactly. They are two different things. It is absurd because philosophy is both more distant from and closer to the reality it describes compared to music. Music, on the other hand, in order to become a model for something, needs to take a step behind it. Thus, philosophy is on point to a greater degree than music can be if it refers to it. That is the absurdity.

So why should I take a step back if, rhetorically speaking, I want to create a self-contained composition? Because I need a tool! A tool must have a somewhat raw surface in order to work with it. Feldman used to say, "You have to know, the piece has to speak from the stage to the public." That is not meant pedagogically, but is meant to give the piece a certain kick. That is very important. And in a context where the present, the future, and the past are constantly slipping into each other or even eluding each other – there is nothing fixed; to create such a process, you need to freeze things. One must symbolise them. There the philosopher is already much further along, he stands above the symbolic, to which I still must bring it back. That is why I think it's absurd.

The more abstract a literary reproach is, the closer it might be to the genuine capacity of music, if one believes the theory of the abstract. Suppose one had a poem, "The morning seemed to me like a tremolo." To this a composer would say: oh, it already says what I have to do ... (imitates tremoli). He would have landed, so to speak, in a cheap imagery theory. Or how do you translate images like "The summer embers burned on the house" into music? How can you do that, with harmonics? (creates sounds) ... with a high-pitched trumpet? I guess that is how it went, there is an image in there right away. But of course that would be, as they say, a bit of cheap imagery, or what do you call such a way of translating images into music?

Well, you do not transfer this ...

Yes, what my kind of mapping is trying to do is something different. I am tempted to say – what would you call it – an abstract, is there? There are people who say there is no abstraction in music.

*I would not put it that way. I would say there is no abstract level. There is only one level. I would say the relationship of the literary or philosophical reproach to your piece fascinates me. When I hear a composition like "*Distentio *– there are very many ways to hear this piece. Now, when it happens that I learn about the philosophical background of this piece, it is immediately in my memory. But that does not mean at all that every time I hear a pizzicato in this piece, I assign it to the past or the present or something. That would be absurd. To count that I hear 23 pasts and 17 different kinds of futures would not be helpful.*

17 pasts, 34 presents and no future ... (laughs).

*For example, with Bach: you hear a cantata again, but suddenly you recognise all the symbolism in it. That is not so different from the circumstances in "*Distentio. *You are aware that it is there when you first discover it. A certain motive, for example, a certain way of expressing something ....*

In one of Bach's cantatas, for example, Christ's crown of thorns is represented in three-part counterpoint; the counterpoint "knits" a crown of thorns, so to speak. This is how Bach abstracted, or how would you put it?

We would say: he extrapolates ... that is probably the word we are looking for.

Not interpolate, but extrapolate?

Through the text, out of a certain idea of the text, the music is extrapolated, opened up, so to speak ...

But in this context it is a certain image, the image of braided branches ...

Yes, I would use "extrapolate" in that sense.

And what would be the difference between such a transmission and the, let us say, translation of a poetic mood picture? "The desert sun glows on the hut, inside sweats a poor peasant" (Klaus Huber) ...

That is what I would call an emotive illustration ...

So, what is the difference between illustration and extrapolation?

The example from the Bach cantata allows analogies to your compositional work as well, but ultimately it is not important for the reception of the piece. Especially with Bach, one will not say, "Oh, there is a crown of thorns depicted." A professional musician and composer will notice that and enjoy it. But the point is whether the music is good or not. An illustration, on the other hand, if this emotional state would not arise, would no longer have a significant function except for the transfer of the pictorial impression. With your music or also with Bach, we cannot speak of an abstract level, that is not the case.

But there is this problem of modernism that it has given up something – for the sake of modernism – that was actually freer and more avant-garde, namely the emblem, which has been suspended in a rhetorical figure, so to speak, and is much more mobile and interpretable, so to speak. In that sense, it opens up more access for more people in different projections, inductions, or deductions. It is almost something like a prismatic glass, a clearly decipherable emotional gesture, which can be found in sublimated form even in Boulez or Brian Ferneyhough, these dense gestures.

So, it is a strange balance that I am looking for, whereby I admit and open-heartedly say that I use extramusical models. But they are not programme music comparable to *The Moldau* or otherwise illustrative in some way. Rather, they are thought crystals that get a representation insound – not as an end in itself, but in such a way that you might somehow get something, for example, expressed as a "stretching of the soul" via glissando. So, I need templates that function like spiritual "signposts" – as signposts for the future. They can play a role for me personally, but maybe they are also of a general nature. And the sounds are interpretations of these signposts or thought crystals. With that I try on the one hand to give the sound a new dimension, and on the other hand the sound tries to illuminate these signposts in a new or different way. I do not know if these signposts should perhaps already be somehow in the consciousness of the listener? And how is it different from programme music? "No, my music is abstract", that is what people like to say today.

One of the difficulties is that there is certainly a difference between illustration and symbolism. If I now know, for example, that a certain figure within a composition by Bach or within a composition by Zimmermann has a symbolic meaning, then that is something quite different for me than an illustration or programme music.

But do you not think, for example, that this modernism has given up something, this, shall we say, high art of casualness? Well, that is no longer true with Beethoven. But that you do not, so to speak, beat something into someone with your fist, but rather just put it kindly on the table and say: here! Yes, I find that much of the new music is a kind of confessional music, even the completely apolitical: "Open my shirt and look at me ...!" Or this Hölderlin, how it is always so empty, for example, also in the great Hölderlin songs by Wolfgang Rihm – with the terrible opposition of the cry and the silence; these songs are so extreme!

Yes, Rihm is an extreme case ...

... but he can do what he does very well! He can.

He does it well, but always gives me the attitude that you are right with him.

Yes, yes, but it is so ...

Let us see or hear these differences ...

This addiction to the extreme outer limits ... perhaps it comes from Rimbaud, but where does it go? I mean, there is an emotion there, of course, I am comparatively underdeveloped, I am "third world" there. Yes, really! I am no longer an ecstatic.

Yes, but neither is Ferneyhough ... And there is actually at least one case in Ferneyhough's work that could be compared to your thinking: the piano piece Lemma – Icon – Epigram *(1981) – an excellent piece that also takes the Renaissance as a starting point, so to speak, namely emblemata or also "images of thought", which Ferneyhough became aware of while reading Walter Benjamin. Ferneyhough then discovered the emblemata of Andrea Alciato (1492–1550)*, *for which there are rather enigmatic texts, whereby the relationship of the image to the text is not at all clear. The text is a sonnet or something at the end, which brings the two closer in line. For Ferneyhough, it was almost self-evident that even if he were to try to unify both elements, in a sense, a simpler explanation could not succeed in the end. So there is an introductory part intended as enigmatic (*Lemma*), then secondly an iconographic one, also based on Benjamin's text "Short Shadows" (*Icon*), and then an attempt to bring this together in a way that does not succeed (*Epigram*). My point: In this case, thinking is not so far from what you do. Not identical, of course, but comparable as a reaction to models, models of thought, etc. of the present, of the past.*

What do you think, to round off or conclude this once again, where – I have also gone down many wrong paths – do you think that studying poetry makes sense now that it is about something completely different? After all, it is no longer just about philosophical things, but also about poetry and ultimately about poetics as such. Also the "poetic making", the poiesis, this time buds from a less thing-like preliminary stage, which turns into huge excerpts en masse, but here in a kind of "imagining" of a reaction.

My impression is, considering your study of poetry or in response to your special situation at a special moment – so my basic feeling is, you now come back to structures that you have already used before. At the same time, we do not agree in judging to what extent or to what extent your previous work was crutches or aids. I have the impression that your opinion sometimes simply changes, too? You are probably now in a situation where you want to develop further for one reason or another and tend to have a relatively negative view of this kind of pre-structuring. You are looking out for other inspirations. That is fine, but I also immediately perceive of structural thinking as a sign of strength, not weakness.

Could it not also be that we accumulate reflexes in our lives and our own reflexive energy is so high that one day one spontaneously gets into writing and realises that all these things are at hand without such extensive constructive preliminary work?

Could be, but I do not have this spontaneity fetish ...

... Ashbery is very spontaneous ...

He also works in a different medium, I cannot really imagine a poet who spends twenty years of his life writing sonnets and then suddenly comes to say, oh I know now that I should not do that, sorry.

So, you think I should go back to Ramon Llull despite my doubts about these combinatorial things ....

I can imagine a situation where intensive work in a particular field brings a flood of combinatorial thinking and combinatorial possibilities, so that one drowns in it. But you could stop it, not because it is wrong, but just so that the tide ebbs a little bit. And we sacrifice something to hell before we can work again, and during that time we are looking out for something else instead of just standing there waiting for the tide to go away. It is much more productive to look thereafter in other directions. The problems are probably bigger than what we call "weariness." At a certain point in our lives, we feel surrounded ...

This magic square must also be replaced by something else ...

You are in a similar situation to Stockhausen a few years ago when he completed his Licht *cycle. It was perfectly clear that he had not yet exhausted all the aspects that his material gave. And he thought about it, but found no use for it. We said to him, "You know what you want to do with this material, because obviously there is a lot left in it. Sit down and start, now! But then it did not work and he realised it was over, finished. On the other hand, he does not stop spontaneously writing downmusic. He sits down and comes up with something ...*

Maybe I should approach the Llull project. I have the books here and could do my little retreat with them. There would be first an epistemic reading, not a mechanistic one. Maybe I should then refer to these reading fruits first and not immediately start up these gears and get them running, although I must bear them in mind. That might be a new idea.

This could be a very good idea .... And at the same time, do not stop reading all the stuff you like. You have it at least in your head like Monteverdi with the prima and seconda pratica.

Good! The seconda pratica is song-writing ...

The prima pratica is the old structuralist polyphony, which is so wonderful, and the other then much freer and almost avant-garde, but both were ultimately much more ...

But was the seconda pratica truly avant-garde, was there not also a melodicism that came from everyday life and was thought up from the melos of language?

Yes, in part, but what does that mean? Seen in this way, it was a quasi-everyday melody, used in a radical way. I know quite wonderful examples of Lassus, such quite extraordinary Moresche*, which come from everyday life and yet express the spirit of their time.*

Prima and seconda pratica, a good solution to the composing blockages!

Monteverdi was forward-looking but above all through the seconda pratica ...

Polyphony and homophony, a wonderful combination ...

Yes, but more impressive was the seconda pratica, while he transformed the prima pratica in the later books of madrigal.

But in late Beethoven, for example, there is a dialectic, so to speak, of prima and seconda pratica, of the contrapuntal and the lyrical-melodic. This dialectic of prima and seconda pratica gave depth to the music. Today we have composing people who have only themselves, but no cosmos around them. And perhaps because of this lack of transcendence, the avant-garde has somehow regressed ...

There are, in fact,a lot of people who it may be hard to believe are moving forward, and that has to do with the fact that they fear nothing more than taking an apparent step backward.

... so, let us go eat now. I think we have earned it. Thank you for all your patience!

Thank you, a pleasure!

11 **" ... A Certain Tenderness." Song-Cycle**

on poems by Mikhail Lermontov and Osip Mandelstam (2015–16) [171]

[171] Conversation with Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer on 7 July 2017, ahead of the premiere of the cycle on 30 September 2017, as part of *musica viva* at the Allerheiligen-Hofkirche in Munich. Slightly shortened, this programme note appeared in advance in a special supplement of the *Neue Musikzeitung*.

Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer: *Your twelve songs plus epilogue – 13 in all – were given the overall title* vergebens sind die Töne*, but strictly speaking they are two cycles for baritone and piano: five Lermontov songs (2015) and seven Mandelstam songs (2016).*

For me, a motto for the entire cycle is this quote by Pier Paolo Pasolini from his essay on Mandelstam: "Light-footed, clever, witty, elegant, even exquisite, cheerful, sensual, always in love, honest, clear-sighted, and happy even in the darkness of his nervous illness and political horror, youthful, almost boyish, bizarre and cultivated, faithful and inventive, smiling and patient, Mandelstam has given us one of the happiest poems of the century."

Because of a critical poem on Stalin ("We the living no longer feel the ground") Mandelstam was exiled with his wife Nadezhda to Voronezh, then to Siberia; he died in a holding camp. If you read the essays and poems he wrote there, it is incomprehensible: he wrote light-footed, bright literature about Dante and the Italian Renaissance – in a gulag. Ignoring the suffering in the face of death, he remained steadfast. Stoically, within the peril, he kept his art of light-footedness and did what he wanted. I was very impressed by that.

How did you come across Osip Mandelstam?

I had a *spiritus rector* in the whole project, that is the writer and Slavist Felix Philipp Ingold, who[172] translated both Lermontov and Mandelstam. With Mandelstam, I felt a closeness to the lightness that is also present in my pieces. I did not use translations that were free and prosaic, but rather, as far as possible, those that retained the original prosody and rhythm of the verses. I found the latter more poetic, and they also allowed me, after first setting the songs to German, to incorporate the original language as an alternate version. I used translations by Ingold, which I find quite soulful, but also by Ralph Dutli and by Paul Celan, who translated one of the poems I chose into German. Anton Safronov then helped me with the Russian version and the development of a phonetic transcription.

And how did you come to Mikhail Lermontov?

The Mandelstam songs were preceded the year before by the Lermontov songs. Lermontov, who was also repeatedly banished in the 19th century – he was in the Caucasus – had a similarly upright attitude as Mandelstam. His criticism of tsarism and serfdom was not broken by it, on the contrary ...

The day I started composing *The Star*, the first song – 20 October 2015 – I recorded from the Internet the course of the day over 24 hours and traced the star map on music paper; we know this from Cage. We read the star map from right to left: The red dots are fixed stars, which became the vocal part. The other connections became the piano part – but not as it is written here, I rhythmised that. Also, the pitches are graphically only approximately adjusted, I shifted them slightly harmonically, so that there is a sensual coherence. There is a manuscript where the singing voice and the piano part are on top of each other; I have then pulled them apart – and in such a way that the whole poem is performed as the singer's monologue, which the piano part then follows *"starry-eyed"* as an independent piece, as it were, as a starry sky without singing.

So it remained within the genre of songs with piano. What is your relationship to the genre?

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[172] Felix Philipp Ingold, born in Basel in 1942, poet, writer, translator. Ingold studied comparative literature and Slavic studies in Basel and Paris. He taught the cultural and social history of Russia at the University of St. Gallen (1971–2005), and at the same time worked as a lecturer at the Zurich University of Technology. In 1992–93 Ingold, who lives in Zurich and Romainmôtier, was a fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. He has translated works from Russian (Gennadi Aygi, Osip Mandelstam, Marina Tsvetaeva, Joseph Brodsky, and many others) and French (Edmond Jabès, Francis Ponge, René Char, Pierre Chapuis, and many others).

I have always struggled with Lieder – this historically highly charged form and also the separation of the performers: There is a singer standing in the hollow of a grand piano, and there sits the song's accompanist. That always seemed too pathetic to me, so I used to have instrumentalists sing ... It was my maxim that the songs all have a certain tenderness that does not betray my world, which is where I come from.

It starts with a difficult vocal solo; it should not be too loud. The ear adapts: when you sing softly, the listener goes towards the music and not vice-versa. The five Lermontov songs are called *Star – Light – Shadow – Banished – All*. These are titles that somehow denote a character ...

... also stages of an evolving or at least somehow interrelated process ...

Yes, so there are also certain bridges and transitions between the songs. By the way, behind the title of the second song *"Light"* is the famous poem *Prayer – Molitva*. It was often set to music, among others by Glinka. I avoided listening to these settings and tried to find niches that have not yet been grazed upon within the genre of songs with piano. I could only encounter this world through a rigour in which I interpret the musical setting.

Did you think of a cycle from the onset?

Axel Bauni suddenly stood in the doorway of my house in Annenwalde (Templin) in the Uckermark and asked if I would compose something for his "Liederwerkstatt" in Bad Kissingen. The Kissingen Liederwerkstatt 2016 had the motto: Setting Russian poets to music. I was delighted to take it up, because in the Uckermark I live near the former Russian garrison town of Vogelsang, which, hidden deep in the forest, is slowly decaying. Several songs were the remit, but that it would become so many, I did not know then.

Lermontov cycle: At tempo quarter-note = 40, this second song on the poem "Molitva" is extremely slow ...

This is based on an asymmetrical canon, but it is not comprehensible. If the pitches were played in the same ictus, they would be identical, but since each note has a different duration, it is like two snails overtaking each other. The singing voice forms a third voice – italmost resembles a three-part virtual canon. There are notes disappearing in the pauses, which is another reason why the canon is only virtual. There are repercussions of notes, responses, or echoes; individual notes come back later, catch up to them; this also creates cohesion.

The third song *Shadows* is sung almost in a whisper; the baritone sings a diatonic melody that is relentlessly disrupted by these transverse bell harmonics in the piano. The shadows distort the diatonic structure: simple on the one hand, nasty on the other, because there is no support in the piano.

What is shadow for you?

Shadows I call the attempt to capture the object once again through a different perspective or also to project it onto new surfaces: *Schatten der Ideen*. These pieces also have something childlike; they try to seize the first thought – so no psychoanalytics!

The fourth song, *Banished*, is based on the poem *Clouds – Tuchi,* which Lermontov is said to have written on the eve of the journey to his Caucasian exile. For this song, I studied some Georgian music, for example, there are these yodels that roll over – from the head to the chest voice, they are called *Krimanchuli*.

The fifth song then brings cosmic dimensions into play ...

Not necessarily, but it is a cosmic song, "my house stands everywhere", so it belongs to the universe. Here I wanted to reverse the song, the genre. It is a piano epic into which the singer intersperses notes – a cosmos that runs like a Pythagorean world machine. The conclusion is then a verse from another poem "but, oh in vain are the tones, because no one ever sings it to the end". This is also the overall title of both cycles. The singer holds the world together as it flies apart .

The second cycle on Mandelstam is from a year later ...

... strictly speaking a hundred years later. Seven songs: "Weave" –"Wasp" –"Glass" – "Honeycomb" –"Enamel" – "Sound" –"Sail" ... So to speak, you scarcely thematise the sorrowful or political aspects, etc., but rather the structural ones?

Strictly constructive, to avoid anything that goes in the direction of romantic posturing. But *Wasp*, for example, is a song against Stalin, the Wasp stands for Stalin. You have to think about that time, when people thought that poems could be dangerous. Perhaps I can explain the structures a bit with the first Mandelstam song, *Tissues (Fabric/Weave?)*. The seventh song, *Sails*, is a variant of this poem; the two together form a kind of bracket, with the motif of the cradle being important in the seventh song. Both poems are taken from Mandelstam's cycle *Octaves* (1933–35) – the first four lines are identical, the second quatrain forms a variant. There is, by the way, a quite wonderful essay by Mandelstam about fabrics, nets, weavings, also carpets.

"When, after ... delayed breaths, the sigh is finally released": One should know that Mandelstam was asthmatic. I have consciously tried not to bring anything asthmatic into it, but on the contrary to remain undramatic, to represent the longing for release from asthmatic pressure, free breathing through simplicity. Like many Russians, Mandelstam was certainly a good chess-player. I have built a chessboard of eight modes, each with eight notes, into which the game is squeezed, the pitches taking a different path than the durations. This initially results in a strict two-part mode – only the left hand in the piano and the singing voice – and I treat these like chess pieces: in the piano the knight once sideways, twice straight, and in the singing voice the queen, which can move both diagonally and horizontally.

"How gladly I hear the song of the world axis" – in the song *Wasp* I have composed the world axis, also contained within this chessboard, partly with other pieces, the bishop and rook in addition to the queen. In the three-part movement, these seemingly random interjections of the piano then take place: these are the barbs, and the wasp stings without impressing the singer.

The poem *Glass* became a mirror canon; the four-part piano movement is like a rounded glass, the "glass of eternity", standing there in its laconic beauty, while the singer represents the breath, the "drawing on the glass": silence, joy, being allowed to breathe ...

Honeycomb – in Annenwalde there is a beekeeper who sometimes gives us a honeycomb: the bees do not initially construct the honeycomb as a hexagon, but build cavities, curves; only from the cohesion with the neighbouring cell do the hexagonal surfaces arise that are typical for the shape of the honeycomb. I have brought the principle of the honeycomb into hexachords, where six corners create three diamonds twice – this becomes a waltz. Moreover, there is the aspect of tumbling, of drinking one's fill in the nectar ... In a different refraction, some motifs return: "Crystal of the window", "Tissue", "Frost of eternity".

Enamel – again a pattern, this time on the plate as before the drawing was on the glass; a strict simple movement that gropes ... And again it is true: the beauty of the drawing, the delicate web makes you forget captivity and death.

Sound– like *Enamel* a very early poem, practically only a two-line poem – basically a bucolic scene, in which the singer sings a very high falsetto and the piano has a naïve accompaniment; there again a new, an ideal world opens up ...

I have inserted *Sail* – it is like the tissue that emerges when the sigh is released after a few breaths ... wide-stretched sails in eighths and sixteenths, a challenge to the precision of the performer, the opening of the asthmatic body ... I do not thematise the drama, but rather the healing ...

Zman – Time, the thirteenth song, is an epitaph for my brother Gerhard, three years younger, who died of leukaemia last year (2016?). The text is not by Mandelstam, but by his translator Felix Philipp Ingold, and was translated into Hebrew by Eliav Brand: "To mourn is to be all ears ... for the sound that is missing." I have based the melodic arcs on the stresses of the Hebrew language.

This kind of cantillation reminds me of something ...

There is a connection with *Aimide*, and specifically with *Svara*, the last of these three piano pieces –chant formulas in narrow intervals that hearken back to the Indian recitation of the Vedas.

The language should not be forced into a rhythm but allowed to express itself. That is the principle of all songs, each of which has its own individual design: That the existential distress in a "noli me tangere" piano movement occurs non-expressively. I always try to find a construction which I then leave and to which I find my way back again: longing for rigour in a world in which people think they can understand the

concept of freedom as they like. Freedom only comes from great discipline, Cage has already said that. My motifs: the fabric, the drawing on the glass, the honeycomb as a protection and at the same time an occasion for drunkenness, a pattern on the plate – enamel is the porcelain of ordinary people; the beauty, the delicacy forgets asthma and death.

12 **Recap 2018** [173]

You live in Kreuzberg 36, analways very stimulating, completely, unmistakably mixed multicultural district, at least to me. Have you ever thought of composing something for the people who live here?

I already had this phase in Cologne, with the Beginner Studio, where everyone could come if they wanted to. You need a place for that, and where should it take place here? A lot of new music used to take place at Ballhaus Naunynstraße, then also at Bethanien on Mariannenplatz. In the Saalbau Neukölln and later in the Genezareth Church on Herrfurthplatz, the accordionist Gerhard Scherer organises a small festival every year with new music andimprovisation, the "Neuköllner Originaltöne". My colleague Nils Günther has a small group that does concerts with new music here in the Emmauskirche and on the Maybachufer, into which the audience streams in as it happens. Yesterday there was a street party with music outside – so I thought I had better close the windows.

There are Filipino composers, including Jonas Baes as far as I remember, who performed something like Görlitzer Park in their homeland – in a mass event where the boundaries between performers and audience blurred because everyone, by turning on their Walkman or portable radio, could participate. That was decades ago, and I would like to ask whether something comparable would still be possible here and today ...

There was a phase when I organised things like John Cage's *Musicircus* in Bonn; we did that there on the market square, with as many groups as possible playing at the same time. This was preceded by the realisation of this concept by Cage – it dates from 1967 – in a circus tent at the Federal Garden Show in Bonn, for which John Cage, David Tudor, and Teeny Duchamp[174] also came. I mobilised the entire Cologne "underground" to go there – 500 different groups or individuals played in that tent. It was ninety minutes of chaos, in keeping with the concept of having as many different groups of different provenance play in an enclosed space at the same time. To my knowledge, the tape was never broadcast by WDR, but it radiated this tremendous euphoria that was in the "hall." By the way, the acoustically underprivileged were amplified by microphone operators walking around. It was an intense effort, unrepeatable. On the market square in Bonn it was then no longer so crowded. Organising something like that requires a lot of strength, I am too old for that now. By the way, Daniel Ott does it very well now in Rümlingen, he stages the landscapes ...

On the way from the subway to you, I observe many people, Africans, Arabs, also Turks, who are musically active on the street with or without an instrument, singing or just passively playing music, a huge potential ...

I know that, and even enjoy it, but I prefer to stay incognito, you do not always have to intervene creatively. It is like a village here, but no one knows what exactly I do musically and I think it is good to have a certain anonymity.

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[173] Conversation with Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer on 23 June 2018.

[174] Alexina "Teeny" Duchamp (1906 –1995), art dealer, marriedfirst (1929–49) to Pierre Matisse, son of Henri Matisse, then to (1954) Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968).

Since 1980 you have taught in Liège and Brussels, in Karlsruhe (1990–92) and from 1993 until your retirement at the UdK. What exactly did you do in the 20 years at the UdK – which topics, which forms of work – project work, teaching or lectures, individual lessons as well? I would like to know more about that.

We always had the seminars on Tuesdays, in which everyone participated, and they were under the respective semester theme. Let us take John Cage, for example, I still remember the semester in the year of his 100th birthday (2012) quite well. I always made a point of having as many scores at hand as possible, especially scores that were not commercially available. Therefore, I asked the publishers to lend us the materials for study purposes, and I also always reliably returned them at the end of the semester. In the case of Cage, the transparencies are particularly interesting, as they can be placed one on top of the other and thus illustrate how they can be combined with each other. Especially with Cage, having the original materials is important. Then I asked individual students to prepare a paper or invited guest lecturers such as Chiyoko Szlavnics, who talked about *Ryōanji* (1983–85). Or Dieter Schnebel, who introduced Cage's biography.

My great help was Anton Safronov, whom I consider a very good teacher and who comes from the Russian school. Safronov, whose theory teacher in Moscow was Yuri Cholopov, reduced scores to the essential structures in the form of pmini-scores, which became the basis of the analysis. Anton produced about 20 such mini-score analyses of the Second Viennese School and of authoritative works of the postwar avant-garde, first handwritten, later using computers– I always found this very helpful. As an extension of my teaching, Safronov was then given a lectureship.

In the very early days, in Karlsruhe, I also made excursions – we went to world premieres of operas in Amsterdam or later from the UdK Berlin to Hamburg for Lachenmann's *Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern* (1990–96, premiere Hamburg, Jan. 1997) – but with the travel expenses it became very complicated and at some point I doubted whether it was so much use and whether it was not enough to study the operas in Room 310, which had previously been Isang Yun's room, on the basis of the scores. After a certain level, much or almost everything, could be reached digitally.

I am so grateful that Isang Yun acquired these music boards at that time, on which one could write with chalk. There are no other rooms at the UdK with these movable boards on two sides, which Yun enforced at that time. I really liked to use the blackboards to make thinking – concepts, musical thoughts – vivid. I also had the students sing; I wanted them to write down their musical ideas and sing them, so they could put their thoughts directly into practice. I did not want to lecture from above, but rather to get them out of their shells as much as possible. There were group lessons and then, of course, individual lessons; individual lessons are still the central thing for composers. Some feel better in private lessons, that is a question of personality type. There is always such a provocative, gently aggressive element to it. To get a student to do anything at all, you have to cajole him or her a little. In my opinion, the most difficult thing is to sense what works for one student and what does not work for another, where someone shuts down or is grateful, so to speak, that he or she is being asked a question that he or she has been expecting for a long time. With every student you have a different cosmos in front of you. The teacher senses special abilities in the student that are buried, more than he often sees in himself – this is then usually a projection, sometimes even a double projection, because one can only say what one would see in oneself ... It was also difficult to deal with this difference of very diverse, also culturally-shaped expectations of individual students, so that they can behave naturally. The Asians, in particular, often brought gifts, which I generally did not accept – just as I never used to have my own works performed in the Beginner Studio.

It was also part of your teaching that you invited composers to lecture on their own work; I remember Mauricio Sotelo and many others. Did your students also receive lessons in composition?

Of course. Hartmut Fladt, in particular, was a popular teacher here; everyone went there. And Anton Safronov. For me, sight-reading was always important. When I said, "Please play me your piece," they would look quite astonished and say, "But there is no piano in that piece." Nevertheless, I insisted that they try to play their piece from the score, and even if it went so slowly, they should do it vividly.

Can you name some of your students?

Daniel Seel, Nils Günther, Sarah Nemtsov, Tom Rojo Poller, Nurit Jugend, Avi Berman, Liu Huan, Wang Can, Peng Yin, Alejandro Moreno, Yonghee Kim; Sebastian Claren also, who then moved to Spahlinger.

Were there selection criteria for which composers you covered and which you did not?

I tried to have a certain objectivity there as well; I also had Lachenmann, Spahlinger, Nicolaus A. Huber – we once had a whole semester on his solo pieces, a springboard for getting to know the instrument on the one hand and Huber's way of composing on the other. We had a whole semester on Messiaen, his opera *Saint François d'Assise* (1975–83), on *Chronochromie* (1959–60); the point was to get to know his mosaic-like way of composing better, which, by the way, is completely opposite to that of Debussy. Then I used that to bring into focus the cultures that Messiaen brings into it – the rhythmic doctrine of South Indian music, which follows mosaic-like additive principles quite in contrast to North Indian music, which is more informed by the melismas ofits culture, partly Islamic.

Then I analysed the *Sixteen Dances* by Cage, also a compositional method of small, self-contained aggregates that are combined with each other; I discovered another manuscript by Cage, the original version of the *Sixteen Dances* for piano (1950–51), which was probably used for ballet rehearsals and was also used when no orchestra was available. Reconstructing and transcribing this was quite a fuss – I did an edition for Peters; Wang Can helped me with the fair copy. Ursula Roelcke premiered that, and in the meantime the *Dances* also appeared on a DVD under the title *Jig for John* (on Testklang, 2013). So there is also the aspect of the exploratory entering the equation ...

For me, it was always important to find pieces to which one could make detours. For example, one of my favourite pieces by Stravinsky came to mind: *Agon* (1953–57), to which one can introduce dance forms from the Renaissance and Baroque and make comparisons to historical instrumentation. The transition to dodecaphony is also already in there, the later numbers of *Agon* are already twelve-tone.

Then we had *Stele* by György Kurtág and – Stockhausen: We had a whole semester on Stockhausen with the pianist Frank Gutschmidt. He did a musical representation of the *Licht* cycle at that time. We went through the whole *Licht* structure, had the scores there as well, and listened to the individual "days." I mean, Richard Toop was also there at that time.

You have traveled a lot, sat on juries and held guest lectureships. What was important to you? Were you able to give impulses, did you receive impressions?
You have been to the USA repeatedly, but also to Barcelona (2003) and Madrid (2005), as well as to Shanghai (2003) and Beijing (2003 and 2009).

In China I had an honorary professorship at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, there I taught some of Wenchen Qin's students in 2009; Lachenmann was also there, with whom I participated in a symposium. My student Peng Yin went around with me and Nanne to show us the country and introduce us to his parents; I am also very interested in qigong and his father was a qigong teacher. We then also went to Chenjiagou, where the Chen Taiji forms come from, which I have been practicing for several years. Without this recompense, I would hardly have been able to accomplish so much. Soon the *Chan Mi Gong* textbook will be published, which I had translated from Chinese with a team.[175]

The fact that I have been to Israel more often has mainly to do with Yinam Leef, who is now the director of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. In my homeland, near our schoolhouse in Seidmar, there was a synagogue in Ermreuth that attracted me to do a concert there once. At that time Dorian Keilhack, a pianist who lived in Erlangen, and I got the Bayerischer Rundfunk to invite composers from Israel and present their pieces in a concert: Ari Ben-Shabetai, Menachem Zur, Yinam Leef. Later I was invited to a symposium at the Ruben Academy in Jerusalem; there the discussion with Marius Schneider began when the musicologist Prof. Ruth Katz showed me a letter addressed by Marius Schneider to Robert Lachmann, signed "H. H.". This was the trigger for at least two years of research, the result of which is the publication *Tonart ohne Ethos* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag 2003).

In 2012 I was invited by the Meitar Ensemble to a lecture concert with *Dialogue des deux Roses* after Edmond Jabès for six singers and four Baroque instruments (2011); it was an impressive performance in the small theatre East-West House in Jaffa. The singers were working in parallel on a Bach cantata project,

[175] https://www.lotus-press.com/Themen/Qigong/200/Chinesisches-Chan-Mi-Qi-Gong

where I was able to experience the difficult rehearsal conditions. Everything was not structured so well, but much was changed ad hoc; rehearsal rooms were sometimes found in the kitchen of one of the singers, perhaps not unlike the Bach era, where there was also no high-speed music business.

Finally, I was invited one more time in the summer of 2017 to a portrait concert in Tel-Aviv, with the Meitar Ensemble playing an entire evening of my music – a great honour and highlight of my long relationship with musicians from Israel. This was followed by recordings in a studio in Jerusalem. I met again the composer Avi Berman and the family of Nami, Tanya, Adam, and Daphni Leef, the latter an activist of the student movement.

Is there any connection to Judaism in your family or were you mainly interested in the Jewish culture that was largely destroyed in Germany during the twelve years 1933–45?

For sure, there was a certain attraction. Reading Gershom Scholem also played a role; he wrote an essay about the last Kabbalists in Germany, one of whom came from my birthplace Schwabach.[176] Scholem introduced us to a way of thinking that had been suppressed and forgotten. Concepts from Kabbalah – the *tikkun*, [177]the vessel that can be repaired. That man can repair his broken vessels I think is such a wonderful thought. Then there is the concept of *zimzum*.[178] I used that in a speech for Dieter Schnebel's 70th birthday, which mixes truth and poetry, a fictional encounter between Schnebel, a composer, pastor, and high-school teacher in Frankfurt, and the 19th-century Kabbalist Franz Joseph Molitor. During a walk, Schnebel listens through the open window as Molitor lectures on the self-restraint of God. When I gave this lecture[179] , Dieter was sitting in the front row and did not know at first whether this encounter had really taken place and he had forgotten it or whether I wanted to take him for a ride. And Dieter wrote a play called *Zimzum* at that time.[180] *Zimzum* is God's withdrawal; God expanding and at the same time making room for something new to emerge – fantastic. It is represented by a circle, into which a line leads from above, which disappears into another circle.

Then I wrote a piece *Der Tanz und der Schmerz* (for flute, oboe, clarinet, fortepiano, and string quartet, 1981; rev. 2005); it forms the *epilogue* to *Lokale Musik* and is related to the anecdote of a Hasidic rabbi who is dancing and suddenly cries out loud because he bumps into a bench. Asked if he had hurt himself, he replies "it seems to me that the pain came because I had interrupted the dance" – a beautiful paradox or even an enlightening conceit. In *Lokale Musik*, the memory of the annihilation of Judaism certainly plays a role, but just subtly. The inner conflicts in Israel today, we hardly think about; this complex situation in Israel is mostly presented in a black-and-white painting, which does not help us at all. I am very skeptical of any ideology; when you deal with people directly, this bogeyman usually falls apart. It is all about conviviality, after all. People may be able to think things through properly, but they can no longer act. Patriarchy has not been abolished at all by the leftist revolution; the rulers now sound a different note, but they have not become milder or finer and softer, nor have they somehow reformed what the fathers did.

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[176] Hile (Elchanan Pinchas Moshe) Wechsler (1843–1894), see on this: Gershom Scholem: *Die letzten Kabbalisten in Deutschland*, in: ders.: *Judaica 3,* Frankfurt am Main 1970, 218–246, here from p. 228. Fundamental is Sholem's main work: *Die jüdische Mystik in ihren Hauptströmungen*, Zürich: Rhein-Verlag 1957, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (stw 330) 1980 – supplementary: *Zur Kabbala und ihrer Symbolik,* Zürich: Rhein-Verlag 1960, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (stw 13) 21977, furthermore: *Von der mystischen Gestalt der Gottheit*, Zürich: Rhein-Verlag 1962, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (stw 209) 1977, flanking: *Über einige Grundbegriffe des Judentums*, Ffm.Suhrkamp (es 414) 1970, and the anthologies *Judaica 1-4,* Suhrkamp (BS 106, 263, 333, 831) 1963, 1970, 1970, 1984.

[177] *Tikkun* or *Tiqqun Olam* (Hebrew: תיקון עולם) = repair of the world.

[178] Tzimtzum, also Zimzum (Hebrew: צמצום) means the concentration or contraction of God from His own centre. The plural Zimzumim denotes the one who conquers his desires – who restrains himself and does not receive, although he longs to receive. According to Kabbalah in the tradition of Isaac Luria, a mystical cavity is created through which the existence of the universe becomes possible in the first place. The Sohar did not yet know the concept of zimzum. It originated in the second half of the 16th century in the Galilean city of Safed and was written down and disseminated in different variants by the disciples of Isaac Luria.

[179] Walter Zimmermann: *Zimzum-Musik*. Vortrag für Dieter Schnebel zum 70. Geburtstag (Berlin 2000), in: *MusikTexte* No. 158, August 2018, pp. 68–71.

[180] *Zimzum Music*. Project for string trio, voice, synthesizer, and visual projection.

Let us go back to the trips, the guest lectureships, Beijing and Jerusalem ...

By the way, I was in the Philippines in the 1980s, as well, where I also met José Maceda. We were invited by the Goethe-Institut, I gave some guest lectures and brought my collection of ethnological music in the form of copies, which I then gave to Prof. Maceda. The German-American jazz musician Karl Berger, who had attended courses with Theodor W. Adorno in Frankfurt and was living in New York at the time, was also there. In 1973 he had set up the *Creative Music Studio* in Woodstock, knew Cage, Lee Konitz, Steve Lacy, Richard Teitelbaum, etc. Berger was suffering from a stomach ulcer or similar illness and was eager to meet these miracle healers who "operate" by reaching into the body. They often live in the mountains. That is when I saw a Vietnamese soldier – a former soldier who had blood cancer – lying down on a table and being photographed from above during the procedure. The patient was quite enthusiastic about this healing method. Half a year later I found these photos again in *Geo* magazine and read a report by Hoimar von Ditfurth, who reported the complete opposite and called the procedure charlatanry. And I just thought, what a gap between the person pictured and this comment.

The healers reach into the aura?

It is an operation. You go in with your bare hand and pull out substances that materialise in a placebo ball, in goat intestines or whatever. That is volcanic territory and people have incredible skills. It does not matter much what happens, as long as people feel better afterwards... We should not criticise that; we need curiosity and respect for the cultures.

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What works are to be added from the period after the talks with Richard Toop, that is, after 2004?

Voces now forms its own group of works, number 25. *Voces 1* (2005–06) is the piano cycle *Voces abandonadas* after Porchia – see also your liner notes for Nicolas Hodges and Wergo. *Voces 2 is* the *Acht Gesänge* (2002/18)[181] , consisting of two groups: the *incanto* group with two longer solo songs, and the *colla voce* group for voice and instrument, so to speak, for singing instrumentalists (or, conversely, singers who can play an instrument professionally). *Voces 3* is the song-cycle based on Lermontov and Mandelstam. By the way, this has to do with Richard Toop in that he spoke of the monody, the seconda pratica.

In the *incanto* group, two larger vocal solos – *Das irakische Alphabet* for mezzo-soprano with seven tuning forks (25.2.1, Joachim Sartorius, 2017) and *Himmeln* for mezzo-soprano solo (25.2.2, Felix Philipp Ingold, 2005) are framed by the much shorter prologue *me incanto* for solo mezzo-soprano (Biagio Marin, 2015) and the epilogue *Intervals* for mezzo-soprano with seven tuning forks, Robert Creeley, 2018). The *colla voce* group also includes "duo" pieces that are somewhat older and in which an instrumentalist sings alongside playing.

Do these pieces have a retrospective character for you today?

No, not at all, these are my most experimental pieces, so to speak. It is a great challenge to get instrumentalists to sing, for example Barbara Maurer, the violist of ensemble recherche. She premiered the pieces *Taula* (after a text by Ramón Llull) and *Novo Ben* (Biagio Marin) for viola & voice (25.2.3, both 2002–03). It was unusual for her to control both intonations – that of the instrument and her voice – at the same time, but she did it very well in the end. The more specialised the instrumentalists are, the less they like to sing. However, I aim not to separate the performers, but rather to reintroduce the old *colla voce* from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; they should sing and play at the same time. The duo *Interieur – Verdrehtes Lied* for violin and voice (25.2.4 and 25.2.5, Gottfried Benn – Michael Donhauser, 2004) was premiered by Melise Mellinger – it went fantastically, probably also because Melise has been singing since childhood!

[181] Until March 2019, when the conception changed once again. It is now *Zehn Gesänge* WZ 25.2 (2002/19) in three groups, see catalogue raisonné.

Then I composed *Six Country Dances Lost (*2017–18) for the Capella Augustina in Brühl, a Haydn orchestra with natural horns and so on. Haydn, who is one of my favourite composers, mentioned *Six Country Dances* somewhere in his London correspondence, but we do not know if they were ever composed. I thus took the liberty of making up for it. The name originally comes from *Contre-Dance*, dancing opposite each other. The *Country Dances*, by the way, are an offshoot of my opera *Über die Dörfer*.

For the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra I created an encore of about five minutes, *Äthermühle* for orchestra (2015–16). That, in turn, is an offshoot of *Lokale Musik* – I made quite a lot of colored mini-scores? at the time, not all of which I used, and this piece is based on that.

But it is also worth mentioning my parallel life as an author and editor of books. That began with *Desert Plants* (Vancouver 1976): Conversations with 23 American Composers. *Insel Musik* (Cologne: Beginner Press 1981) contained my own texts, further conversations, but also *Desert Plants* went into this thick book; all this can now be read on my homepage *beginner-press.de.* Then came the *Essays* by Morton Feldman (1985) and the *Anarchic Harmony* with Stefan Schädler for the 80th birthday of John Cage (Mainz: Schott 1992), later the Cage volume *Empty Mind* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2012), in between the book about Marius Schneider *Tonart ohne Ethos* (Stuttgart: Steiner 2003) and the conversations with Bernd Leukert (*Beginner Studio*, NRW Kulturstiftung 2005). The editions in particular meant a lot of work.

In preparation, however, are also publications that at first seem to have nothing at all to do with music. There is the textbook on *Chan Mi Gong* by Liu Han-Wen (1921–2004), which was translated in full from Chinese (2015–18) and is now almost finished. Chan Mi Gong is a mind-body exercise system originating from two Buddhist schools – Chan (Zen in Japanese) and Mi. It is a highly-differentiated spinal qigong; the volume is published by Lotus Press.

Then there is *Novalis ABC* (2016–18), a book that will be published by Matthes & Seitz. As a composer, I have long been inspired by Novalis's thoughts on the "light point of hovering between opposites" (*Fichte Studien* No. 555), and from this I developed a theory of non-centered tonality. I first used this in the cycle *Sternwanderung* (1982–84), in which poetic texts by Novalis were also set to music. After continuing the study of his fragments, I came up with the idea of re-editing Novalis' fragments on encyclopedias, called *Das Allgemeine Brouillon – Materialien zur Enzyklopädistik* (1798/99), according to Novalis' own classification. To arrange these keywords into an encyclopedia in alphabetical order would have been the next step Novalis would have taken had he not died so young. I now redeem that loss here. My publication provides a different approach by looking at the totality of the fragments, while the edition by Hans-Joachim Mähl (published by Meiner in 1993) brings a faithful transcription of the manuscript in the order in which it was written. In addition, CD projects are still in the works, including the complete *Lokale Musik* in a CD box set by Mode Records in New York, for which I have been waiting more than ten years. Patience is something to be learned here.

Finally, I am trying to release the complete recording of Herbert Henck's very subjective Bach interpretation of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* against great opposition from a producer who has been blocking it for 30 years. We already call him "Captain Ahab." But Cybele Records now wants to bring it out. Then there is the publication of Herbert Henck's "Bach Diary", which gives a detailed insight into his way of working and living. Herbert now lives in a retirement home near Bremen; I have secured his research for the Archive of the Academy of Arts Berlin. Among the recordings in Herbert's archive, I discovered two concert recordings that will also appear on CD: by John Cage, *Music for piano 1–84* (1952–56), which he played in Berlin in 1992, and by Morton Feldman, *Triadic Memories* (1981), the recording of a concert at *Beginner Studio* on 15 April 1984. Herbert played *Triadic Memories* in what Feldman called "the best performance" he had heard up to that time.

After that, I hope to get back to my composing – maybe I will take up the project of a *music for Wittgenstein* again, which I had started once in 1981 and whose manuscript got lost.

Walter Zimmermann

Transcription as Composition

"Transcription as composition" – this seems paradoxical at first, since one might think: Transcription excludes composition, composition should rise above transcription. Now, in fact, in my compositions, transcription has been an important, even direct, carrier of processes for more than twenty years. Early on I began collecting music in different cultures, in the Siwa oasis in Egypt, on an Indian reservation in Montana in the western United States, in a ghetto with blues music in Pittsburgh, and finally in the backcountry of Franconia. There I collected music, some of which I transcribed myself, and then designed entire cycles that relate landscape, melodic ductus, and other parameters. In this respect, "transcription" was always a point of departure for me.

The idea of creating from nothing goes back to an outdated late-Romantic ideal of composing. It is a misunderstanding if one realises that even such prominent and brilliant composers as Mozart always worked from a template or an existing model, for example the cadential harmony and the rhythmic constellation of the minuets or the reflection of other forms. They were always architectural templates to which one reacted in a dialectical way, also dissolving them. This dialectic was also still to be found in expressionist music; in Schoenberg, for example, there is still the dialectic or interaction of system and impetus or emotion. By the time of composers of the postwar generation, this dialectic was more often abandoned in favour of a colouristic approach to composition. When this regard for a system or adherence to a template or to a given that was somehow outside the ego was lost, a composer entered this aspect of genius and, in my opinion, became entangled in it. His music, as a bourgeois emblem of the spontaneous, may soon have been so revered that it no longer seemed necessary to listen carefully. Such a composer became a bourgeois ideal, and then in the mannerist phase of the aftermath, of the fading of this first genuine world, one often lost sight of that to which composers had originally responded: to templates, to limiting things. And that is precisely what I seek in my pieces, and this search has continued throughout my composing career, from *Lokale Musik* to the present day.

The reference to such specifications and the way of treating them can be very different and ranges from simple listening to intentional dissolution, thus containing the wholegamut from identification to negation of the template. This range is still not exhausted for me; there is always something new to discover. In the process, I found my way back to a method also used by Schoenberg and Schumann, and Bach before them: the letter-sound analogy. Our alphabet has eight letters that can be represented by pitches *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, *E, F*, *G*, *H*, and I then took the liberty of adding the *S* (*E-flat*), because this scale would form too modal a series without the tone *E-flat*; the *E-flat* is the spice, so to speak.

Ataraxia

This tone alphabet became the starting point for my piano concerto *Ataraxia* (1987–88). The title is related to Epicurus and Lucretius, who used the term Ataraxia – unshakability – mainly in the sense of peace of mind. *Tarakē* means restlessness or turmoil and *A-Taraxia* is the opposite. My piece deals more with *Tarakē*, that is with the opposite; the peace of mind is beyond this composition. The starting point is an "obsessive" material built of figures, which in the first movement are presented by the piano in a very dense and thorny complexity. The following seven movements are then about shaking off this obsession. It transforms into its opposite, beginning with the still centre, the fifth movement *Galēnē* – stillness of wind and sea, calm sea – to the point where Ataraxia finally becomes glimpsable.

I derived the rhetorical figures of the prologue *Daimon*, the first movement for piano alone, from *Fragments of a Language of Love by* Roland Barthes, [183]a lexicon of love with eighty terms in alphabetical order. This is the material fund of "obsession" (fig.: *Discours amoureux*), corresponding to the nine-tone scale of the tonal alphabet. I have projected these figures in alphabetical order, and in inversion in German

[182] Lecture at the Musicological Institute of the University of Cologne, 1996. Josef Schreier assisted with the transcription of the audio recording. For this publication, the text was revised and clarified in some places.

[183] Roland Barthes: *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, Paris: Seuil 1977; Engl.: *Fragments of a Language of Love,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1988.

and in French on each other, and led them against each other until four parts were reached (GermanA–Z -> French; German Z–A -> French; French A–Z -> German; French Z–A -> German).

The second movement – at the same time the first orchestral tutti – is entitled *Declinatio*. You know the term from Latin lessons, declination, the "bending" of a word through cases. By the way, this is nothing other than what Epicurus calls "parégklisis" or Lucretius "clinamen": lateral deviation. Epicurus [184]and after him Lucretius differentiated the origin of the universe from the idea of a vertically-falling atomic rain. They developed an irrational mechanicsm, the deviation, the clinamen, and imagined that by an initial coincidence,parallel falling particles collide with each other and thereby a deviation arises which produces vortices, fluctuations.

Now Lucretius, who took up the ideas of the atomists, the pre-Socratics, tried to explain the connection of movement with the weight of the thing moved and thus came up with the question, how is it to be explained at all that human freedom or human will comes about?[185] His explanation had far-reaching consequences; thus the term *Clinamen* appeared in the 20th century with the French philosopher Michel Serres[186], in order to show that also with a determined worldview structured by thinking freedom can exist and from this collision will can arise. Because the fluctuation – the vortex, the friction – generates the will to step out of passivity and to enter state of tension.

In the second movement of my piano concerto, *Declinatio*, the aim is to neutralise the *daimon* – the obsession represented in the first movement – through rgia image of atomic rain. Now here another form of transcription is applied, in that I now anonymise these figures through a process of dissolving, of pulverizing. In order to bring these obsessive structures to dissolution, one must develop certain techniques and one of these techniques is to feed them into a magic square.

I have also been using magic squares for a long time, because they form a structure from which the next step to be taken emerges; the next step in each case thus becomes an objectively external thing to which I must somehow react with my subjectivity. This magic square is thus to be seen as a scaffold, whereby I start from the scale *A*, *B*, *C*, *D, E, F, G, H*, *E-flat*, and then in each case make the second tone – the *B* – t he first of the next line, with the same interval steps – semitone, whole tone, whole tone– according to the original construction. We thereby get eight transpositions of this scale and thus a reservoir of 8 x 8 = 64 tones.

The figures developed from this alphabet are now devalued as material shapes, in order to be able to engender further new figurations. I have now stepped through the 64 tones by means of a square developed by Leonhard Euler, the Baroque mathematician. It is a knight square that works like the knight moves on the chessboard: two moves in front, one to the side. I use this square in such a way that all 64 notes are stepped through this knight move, and then the sequence of notes derived from these jumps becomes an additional body of material that I have continued to work with in this piece. The scales are present in the background, but the tone sequences are no longer those of the rhetorical figures of the *daimon* (see also: explanation of the generation of the tropes[187]).

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[184] "The atoms move steadily through eternity, and indeed some (in perpendicular orbit, others in lateral drifting away, others in vibration; of these some move) far away from each other, the others receive exactly this vibration, if it happens that they are united in an interweaving or are covered by those who are able to interweave. For the inherent law of emptiness, which delimits every single atom for itself, brings this about, because it is not able to produce a support. The inherent hardness of the atoms causes the rebound at the collision, as far as the interlacing allows in each case the return from the collision into the former position. There is no origin for these processes: the causes are atoms and the void" (*Epicurus: Letter to Herodot* 43–44).

[185] "If every movement is always connected, and from the old movement a new one always arises in safe order, and not by bending the bodies make the beginning of a movement, then break the alliance of fate, that since infinite time cause does not follow cause: Wherefrom consists on earth of all animate the free, wherefrom comes, I say, the will wrested from the fate, thanks to which forward we stride, whither one leads the joy, turn also the movements neither at safe time nor at safe place of the space, but where the thought carried us?“ (Lucretius, *De rerum natura II*, 257-260).

[186] Michel Serres: *The Birth of Physics in the text by Lucretia. Fleuves et turbulences*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit 1977.

[187] To sum up (from Zimmermann's introduction to the work): The process of working through those kinetic affects that present unshakability takes place in the movements *Declinatio – Pathé – Hedoné – Galēnē – Metakosmia –Simulacra.* The entire course to imperturbability is based on a series of derivations of the scales underlying the alphabetically-ranked figures (German, French) exposed in *Daimon.* First, a sequence of these eight-note scales is entered into an eighth-order magic square, Euler's knight square, which can be used to obtain – resulting from a knight procession within each of the four sub-squares – sixteen x four tropes of four tones each. Layer 1 consists of sixteen x four inversions (basic form / inversion / cancrizans / cancrizans inversion) x four transpositions (on A, B, B-flat?, C), thus of 256 tropes. This layer forms the sound material of the falling atomic sequences in *Declinatio.* Layers 2, 3, and 4 are filterings of these tropes into figures, which trace the decreasing cast of affect and form the basis

In *Declinatio,* deviations (declinationes) of the vertically falling atomic sequences from each other take place, so that they collide with each other and transform into figures of kinetic affects. The downwardly arpeggiated scales derived from the *daimon* structures are transformed by the process of declination into effigies that detach themselves from the anonymous, falling sound cascades. These images, as described by Lucretius, are extremely light and swift, and they generate entanglements, impulses that lead to suffering and pain: *Pathē*.

The *daimon* figures have disappeared and what remains are various new paths. In *Pathē*, the pianist attempts to free himself from the entanglements and knots in which the affect figures have entangled him. The piano movement reflects these knots through a four-part, mutually-blocking weave in a tight middle register. The knots unravel and give way to the "mild and gentle movements" (Epicurus) of the movement *Hedonē*, which becomes the negation of *Pathē*, seeking to transcend the affects. Thus *Hedonē* is the decisive movement that leads to unshakability a few steps farther on.

In the middle movements, the path of *pathē*, suffering, is initially replaced by the path of *hedonē*, happiness. Along these paths, I have tried to draw lines from this web, which lean emotionally in one direction or another: Suffering and luminous transparency. In the end, both paths turn out to be aberrations that get lost in the empty middle of the fifth movement, the slow movement *Galēnē*. This was one of the most important concepts of the Epicureans, that the mind becomes quiet, and in *Galēnē* there is almost nothing left on the piano of the original complex structure, only marginal notes in extreme registers. The nine-note scale is scanned for the notes *B* and *B-flat?*; a "negative piano cadenza" is encountered there, a short piano solo of extreme reduction that points to the fixed star *B* of the final movement, even where it misses it with the note *B-flat?.*

Then a metastructure of very few tones emerges, randomly distributed like a starry sky and thensurrounded solely by pauses. This is the sixth movement *Metakosmia* and from this the seventh movement *Simulacra* develops.

In the areas between the gods and the earthly world extends the *Metakosmia*, the intermediate world. In it, divine images are created, which penetrate with unheard-of speed through the cosmos to us and can be capturedin the mirror. The movement *Metakosmia*, whose calmly moving orchestral sound is to be seen as the embodiment of the intermediate world, however, shows the protagonist – like the behavior of the gods, which does not intervene in human fate – the opposite side of the mirror. In other words, the protagonist is silent during this movement, except for two short interjections symbolising the vision of an image and its echo. A third passage – simultaneously the end of the movement and the transition to the next – signifies the rotation of the mirror in such a way that the images become visible. The rotation leads directly into the movement *Simulacra* (image, illusion, shadow image).

Simulacra is also a term from the time of the atomists, who tried to describe perception, and indeed seeing, materialistically. One sees by little skins detaching themselves from the object I see and flying towards me with tremendous speed. This is how one tried to describe seeing and this was called simulacrum – illusion. These simulacra [188]can only be very fast and very light, something hovering, moving with tremendous speed, but no longer having this heaviness, obsessiveness as at the beginning of the piece. It is a movement of catharsis, where the obsessive is forgotten amid the whirling.

In the movement *Simulacra*, the turning of the mirror and the speed of the images are traced in a frenzied but unaggressive dialogue of the piano with the orchestra. The basic intervals of the piece – fourth (fifth) and tritone – appear in constantly new entanglements with each other. The pianistplays two independent courses in articulation (legato and staccato) as well as in the arcs of movement over the entire register. Both are mirrored by the instrumental groups until the intervallic essence of the entire work crystallises into an equilibrium of refined moods that forms the antithesis of the initial obsession.

Finally, the piece again frames a piano solo, a counter-image to the prologue *Daimon*. The epilogue is called *Synastria* – star friendship. This is a term coined by Socrates and used by Nietzsche, as well[189]. Two

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of the following movements. The filtering is done by means of the sieve of Eratosthenes (The sieve of Eratosthenes is an ancient algorithm for finding all prime numbers up to any given limit.). In the end, the central tones remain, whose basic intervals still move through the mirror garden in *Simulacra* until they appear in their actuality in *Synastria.*

[188] "Esse ea quae rerum simulacra vocamus ..." "There is what we call the images of the world of things..."], Lucretius: *De rerum natura IV,* 30–53.

[189] Friedrich Nietzsche: *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft,* 1882, no. 279.

friends born under the same star meet under one star. There is suitably the common tone *B*, which is held by the third piano pedal across four octaves, and two other tones, *E-flat* and *E*, fourth and tritone, which, resounding briefly, scan very quickly the template of the *daimon.* Only these three notes remain in all registers, a kind of filtering out of the aggressive moments. The piece ends disconcertingly with a piano solo, but it is also meant to end openly: *Ataraxia*, the real peace of mind, lies beyond the piece.

The eight-movement path to imperturbability is built around the conundrum of tritone and fourth, and this play also runs through the more complex passages like a red thread. Only in this final solo does "Ataraxia" reveal itself in its actuality: the relationship between the fixed star *B* and the two neighboring but harmonically opposing notes *E-flat* and *E*.

Fragments of Love

The translations of the terms from *Fragments of a Language of Love* by Roland Barthes, which I have already used for the rhetorical figures of the *Daimo*n movement, are also the basis of the quintet *Fragments of Love for* saxophone or basset horn and string quartet (1987). The 40 terms are arranged alphabetically, beginning with "s'abîmer," which is the last word in the German translation, meaning "to perish." I layered this French alphabet and the equivalent German translations, and had thus obtained contrapuntal melodic figures that carry the same meaning. For example, "absence" means "absence." Each letter lasts a sixteenth; the letters that cannot be represented as tones double the duration of the previous tone. Thus, a figure is developed from the French word "absence": ABEsE_CE. The German equivalent is then: AB_EEsE_HE__. French and German layered atop each other:

This is the starting point of the piece *Fragments of Love*. I was faced with a similar task of translating this alphabet, of transferring it, as is also the case with the rhetorical figures of Baroque music. At that time, it was not proper to show certain emotions in public, but they were wrapped up in a formulaic form. Mozart also worked with these formulae and did so quite ingeniously, because he always illuminates the transformation of the formulae into emotions. There we are again withtranscription. One needs the formula to shape the emotion, because every true emotion can already become a lie in the moment of communication by becoming public. Schubert's pieces are also packed into architectural structures and it is in the resistance to these forms, in going against them, that they become exciting. Peter Handke wrote the book *Die Stunde der wahren Empfindung* (1975). On the train here I was reading an edition of *Conversations with Cézanne*, and there it is also about the concept of sensation and how difficult it is to capture this moment of true sensation, because at the moment you are formulating, you are already dealing with technique again. Painters perhaps still have a more direct physical one-to-one access between impetus and result. Musicians or composers must first form, train, or reformulate their technique; unless they go to the piano and improvise. Composing is just another process of stylisation, so youmask things in it. To my students I always emphasise "separate! Do not compose, separate!" because composing is done by the listener making connections. In that sense, the sounds must be put in the corner so they can stand for themselves. If you knead together too much, you run the risk of ending up with kitsch; composing just has nothing to do with serving. One should separate, composing for me is rather a question of separating.

The idea that the artist is a role model or something like that certainly has to do with historical development. In Rome on the Gianicolo there are hundreds of bearded men standing there in marble. Nobody knows them today, you walk by and say "Who were they all?" I mean, it was customary for this artist-as-hero to be highly respected and to make public proclamations, but all that is gone today. Society has evolved, we have become freer beings and we donot always have everything pre-interpreted for us. That means we want a freely-chosen approach to what is offered to us. In fact, there is already music, for example by John Cage or also the early pieces by Steve Reich, in which a kind of sound canvas is laid out and the listener can take his or her sensations from the image itself.

In composing the quintet *Fragments of Love,* I realised that I had a shyness about publicly presenting these things, which are still very personal things for me; that seemed to me to be an almost exhibitionistic process, which I wanted to mask so that my share of joy and sorrow – everything is in there, in these figures – would remain for me, remain private. The listener can then take out his share in each case, he need not obey me in the sense that he only understands the piece if he feels as I have pre-felt. These rhetorical figures, as they were used in Baroque music as well as by Bach, for example the winding bow of Christ's crown of

thorns, translated into melodies that symbolise this crown of thorns: a beautiful, still valid way of relating text and sound. Nevertheless, music and language do not become knotted together, but still form two independent levels that are related to each other. In my opinion, this has been lost today.

Sturm und Drang, the expressionist will to express – are these not attempts to free oneself from the respective previous generation? Cadence and sequence were exhausted, they had to be abandoned, but the fact that nothing dominant simply took their place meant that New Music exhausted itself in a sea ofcolourism. Even the new forms and new ways of playing then suddenly appear as old-fashioned as science fiction films from the '50s. And so it is with this accentuation of modernism, when it is pursued so overzealously that one forgets that distance is needed. So: to distance oneself and to separate. The rhetorical figures enabled such a distancing of the individually-feeling person from the work in which he wanted to communicate.

Influences

What influenced me a lot was the aesthetic of the early Romantics, especially Novalis. In his fragments, also in those of his colleagues, there is the concept of irony, not an irony of ridiculing, but an intimate irony, of which Handke also knew. The early Romantics often thought in terms of oppositions, dualistic opposites. Novalis, for example, says that levitation only arises when opposites are formed. So here again: the creation of distances in order to obtain something like lightness. In Kleist, in his essay on puppet theatre, it is shown that grace arises when this earthly heaviness is lifted. This is always a matter of formalisation, to achieve an emotion or an impression. It is a question of technique, you have to know how to build a puppet so that it appears to float. And our music represented these puppets. If we are not already puppets ourselves, at least our music can be a puppet. This is more honest than saying, "Here you have the piece of my true feelings, yes, here five minutes." It is better to start from the opposite, an attitude like, "It may be that it is going wrong, I cannot manage to express it because somehow I do not have it under control," then maybe something will turn up. I am rather skeptical of an image of artists that assumes genius types who succeed at everything.

In another context, where I also use the magic square, I have spoken of "non-centered tonality". This means something that at first seems tonal, but then unexpectedly crosses over into something else and is thus canceled out again. I therefore have two scales. In one, tonal gravity, and in the other,irritation of this gravity, like order and chaos. The two moments, projected onto each other, then result in a hybrid state of something that seems tonal or tonally-centered yet is always jumbled. This balancing of opposites is quite important to me, because it brings things into suspension.

If, on the other hand, you have a serial project before you, then you have only total control. The radical serial pieces in Stockhausen represent, rather à la Plato, a kind of monism of a single dominant sound-being who controls everything. In Nono, coming from his dialectical materialism, the variable moments are stronger: everything is related to everything else, a more Aristotelian expression. Nevertheless, in the radical phase of serialism, both have producedcrystalline music that seems to be anchored nowhere and seems almost like a starry cosmos. That is what makes these pieces so great.

Serial music was for me and for my generation like a natural phenomenon, it opened our horizons and presented a structure that went beyond the individual, formed a consensus and a certain style. It is perhaps the only truly objective, genuine music in the second half of the century that was motivated by a concrete historical impetus, namely the post-war situation. But when the impetus is lost, the phases of mannerism storm in and everyone searches again for himself, takes refuge in his cell and strives to find his individual solutions. For me, the decisive impulses, besides Webern, were the very early crystalline pieces of serial music, and then it was also the early Cage, in the late '40s into the early '50s. He wrote pieces for violin and piano, very simple pieces, like *Six Melodies for Violin and Piano* or the *String Quartet in Four Parts* finished in 1950. For me, that was an 'a-ha!' experience, I could find myself there again, so to speak – also by making clear to myself how this is resolved dance-wise, for example in these *Sixteen Dances*, where each piece represents a different dance.

Also important was or is *Agon* by Stravinsky, a key piece of the cryptically-interwoven Stravinsky as he transitions to twelve-tone writing. These are pieces in which an objective world appears. In Cage's work, it is then further underpinned by the Buddhist concept of "non-attachment", the non-attachment to ego. Therefore, he also looked for objective forms in the outside, whether it was the *I Ching*, which he got to know only later, or this square-root form, in which a bar sequence presents the overall proportion of the movement. Cage worked a lot with proportion. When he drew bar lines denoting phrases, such as

3+5+2+4+5, the practical result was a phrasing architecture into which he placed his sounds like like little crystalline objects. That is also a technique that was brilliant for me. You do not start from the writing, like a composer writing his diary, but from the crystal, that is, the object, from the construction kit, the modules; you think object-like. You think about the whole piece at the moment when you have the detail in front of you.

Clinamen

The ancient Greeks did not have musical notation, though they did have letters to express sounds. They had the two rows of letters: The upper row represented the song, the lower row represented the instrument. Aristoxenus lists the correspondences of modes and letters. I have now used that, in reverse, to have a transcription or translation mechanism to translate language – in this specific case of my orchestral work *Clinamen,* the fragments of Epicurus – into a score. *Clinamen* (1996–98, 2010–13): six pieces for six orchestral groups. It is important to know that in the modes of Greek music there were three readings each: diatonic, chromatic, enharmonic; the tetrachords were practically always the same, the supporting tones and the intermediate tones were mobile. In each reading they were either a semitone higher or lower, that is, there were modes that were similar but not identical, and that times three: three for the vocal part and three for the instrumental part, together six voices, a six-voice set generated from one Greek word. Let us take the word *chronos*. Chronos in the Aeolian mode is represented only by the letters R (rho) and O (omicron).

What you see here now in the orchestral movement is practically the sound of one name, or also one movement each, "transcribed" from the fragments of Epicurus. My orchestral piece is built in such a way that there are separate orchestral groups for each of these two x three readings, which differ microscopically from each other as a result of these different readings. "Declinations" could once again be said here. One orchestra speaks in nominative, the other in genitive, the third in dative, each speaks the same sentence, just formulated differently due to the declination.

Clinamen has already been explained as deviation. There are three different meters: a metre precisely conducted by the conductor; a metre given by a sub-conductor, that is, the respective leader of an instrumental group, which deviates slightly, that is, which can be faster or slower than the other; and finally, a free metre, which moves along without barlines until the next meeting point. The groups that lack barlines are sometimes required to play a little *accelerando*, so that in any case they get there a little earlier, following the "tortoise and hare" game. The instrumental voices can then sometimes move up to a whole bar away from each other. There are fixed metres and there are mobile metres, but the mobile metres have the same rhythmic impulses or melodic phrases. So, there will be a heterophony, and then if one voice is divided six times in the strings, it seems like a diffuse heterophonic state. Then the whole thing is collected and fixed again, and then released again, and so on.

In the orchestral piece I thus try to make the concept of the clinamen perceptible by means of selected text fragments from Epicurus, which were translated into sounds by making an analogy of the letters and scales of Aristoxenus. Here, as mentioned, the six orchestral groups each correspond to three readings of the same text analogous to the ancient singing voice and three each analogous to the ancient instrumental voice. The three readings diverge microscopically, as just described, being the chromatic, diatonic, and enharmonic readings of the text. In the instrumentation, a macroscopic divergence between the groups is created by three metrical forms: 1.) conducted metre; 2.) metre conducted by the leader of each group; and 3.) free metre. This enables clinamen both for the player, who may or may not be following the conductor for stretches, and for the listener, who may perceive the relations of similar textures.

The last fragment of Epicurus,"Et in Arcadia ego" [Also I am in Arcadia], used for the transcription points to the fact that something oppressive beyond this happening is to come to our perception, likewise a further quotation from Lucretius: "If the bodies fall through the emptiness straight down with their own weight, then through fluctuating time and at fluctuating place from the course they jump off at a minor fluctuation, so that you would be able to speak of changed direction. If they were not accustomed to bending (declinare), everything would fall, likedrops of rain, into causeless emptiness, would not have arisen as an impulse nor would a blow have been created by the body. Thus nothing would have ever completed the nature of creation." [190]

[190] Lucretius: *De rerum natura II*, 217-229, transl. and ed. by Karl Büchner, Stuttgart: Reclam 1973.

Richard Toop

Shadows of Ideas: on Walter Zimmermann's Work[191]

INTRODUCTION

It may well seem strange to you that an Englishman who emigrated to Australia long ago should be invited here to talk about the work of a composer currently living in Berlin. At the time, it rather surprised me too. But perhaps it can be justified on two grounds. First, we have had personal contact for almost 30 years, and a kind of 'co-existence' that goes back even further. In the third volume of Stockhausen's Texte,[192] as well as the Stockhausen entry in the first edition (1980) of the New Grove Dictionary of Music, there is a photo of Stockhausen playing one of the *Aus den sieben Tagen* texts at the 1969 Darmstadt Summer Courses. Behind him one can see a small part of the audience, including the composer Nicolaus A. Huber and the now celebrated Wagner specialist John Deathridge. Also in the picture are the 20-year-old Walter Zimmermann, and the 24-year-old Richard Toop [see Foto, p. 96]. As far as I can remember, we didn't meet at the time, and didn't get to talk to one another. But four years later, once I was Stockhausen's teaching assistant at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, we were in regular contact. Walter's flat was barely 500 m. away from mine, which was where I gave my classes. But even this short distance encapsulated some basic social divisions. Where I lived, in Clever Straße, there was a modestly endowed Polish Consulate to the left of my flat, and above it, according to the house owner, was a very discreetly run brothel. In contrast, the Am Stavenhof alley where Walter lived was a flagrant brothel street on the edge of the Turkish quarter. So my flat's location was comparatively 'conformist', whereas Walter's was emphatically not.

At the time, Clarence Barlow und Claude Vivier were studying with Stockhausen, and thus also with me. They lived in the same area as Walter, and it was probably one of them that first facilitated contact. I seem to remember that we first visited him around midday, and one had the impression that – just as one might expect from a jazz musician – he had only woken up in the last half hour or so. People have sometimes commented that the young Wolfgang Rihm looked rather like Schubert, but with Walter, the resemblance was uncanny. One could almost imagine him in his dressing gown, sitting down sleepily at the piano to play through a newly composed sonata.

So much for this first, personal-sentimental justification. The second one is this: it seems not inappropriate to me that one would invite an 'outsider' (geographically speaking, at least) to talk about another outsider. And in terms of German contemporary music, Walter Zimmermann has always been an outsider. How did that happen? Partly, no doubt, through temperament, perhaps in conjunction with personal circumstances – I think the two are rarely entirely separable. I don't intend to say any more about this; it is for the composer to decide whether or not it is worth talking about such things. But in addition, there are obviously aesthetic preferences that are scarcely inconsequential. At a certain point one notes, whether with pride or regret, that one is on a different path to one's colleagues – for example, one might see the composer's role differently. But if one's personal conviction is strong enough, there's simply nothing to be done about it: one just pursues one's own path.

One of the things that distinguishes Zimmermann's own path from that of most other significant contemporary composers is that it has been trodden in such an unpretentious, reticent, yet dogged manner (here, one can't help making comparisons with Webern). I can readily imagine that most composers of standing would prefer not to hear just one of their works in the course of a concert, but several; probably, they would rather hear only their own works. In most cases, this could be regarded as pure egotism. But there are also other possible reasons, which are particularly relevant to Zimmermann.

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[191] Introductory lecture, XVI. Weingartener Tage für Neue Musik, 15 November 2002. English translation by the author. [Die englische Fassung wurde von Toop zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt erstellt.]

[192] Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Texte zur Musik*, Bd. 3, Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1971, opposite 117.

It's like this: if one hears a single composition by Zimmermann – let's say in the course of a 'normal' New Music concert – one will certainly be struck by its 'otherness'. Yet at the same time, there is a danger that because this music doesn't proclaim a polemical position – no 'complexism', no 'new romanticism', no obvious social critique – its 'otherness' might initially be perceived merely as passive negation. Sure, a different world, but what sort of world? How does it function? What are its particular features? Of course, one can try to communicate these through programme notes. But what use is that, when there is neither the time nor the context that would enable the listener to perceive these particulars for themselves, and think them through?

The five concerts at the 2002 Weingartener Tage provide an almost ideal opportunity to become familiar with these personal features, to compare them, and to reflect on them. What follows is an attempt to provide a framework for this.

1ST THEME: EUROPE / AMERICA

If one were looking for a single feature that distinguished Walter Zimmermann from most of the European composers of his generation, it would have to be his early engagement with the American avant-garde. Clearly, this can be ascribed to personal dissatisfaction with aspects of the European situation, including the avant-garde's 'star system', and its exaggerated concern with fashion. In addition, there was surely also mistrust of the politically 'engaged art' which was becoming almost obligatory at the time. This was scarcely a matter of ignorance: we are talking here about someone who even as a schoolboy sat for hours in the train, passionately discussing Adorno's *Negative Dialektik* with a friend! Besides, in those days there was a widespread cynical tendency among the European avant-garde – with Kagel as its main exponent – that was quite foreign to the young Zimmermann, even though he was in contact with Kagel. In this context, the idealistic outlook of the American avant-garde (especially Cage, but Feldman too) may have offered a much-desired way out, and even a possible salvation.

When Zimmermann was at the beginning of his career, Cage's later music was already quite well known in Germany, though it was mainly presented and performed as a kind of musica negativa that didn't necessarily match the composer's intentions. Yet it was not Cage's later output that initially attracted Zimmermann, but rather the so-called 'naive' works of the late 1940s, which culminate in pieces like the *String Quartet* of 1950. Feldman's music was performed less in Germany at that time – perhaps because it wasn't so compatible with the interpretative strategies of the post-Adornoists. But Zimmermann had already got to know some of his work while working as the pianist in Werner Heider's Nuremberg-based ars nova ensemble.

Part of Zimmermann's attraction to American experimental music must surely have been that, compared to tradition-orientated European New Music, it appeared to be an accumulation of individual actions, where the composers were best seen as solitary figures, as outsiders with their own personal visions. One might think here of the Greek poet Archilocus's dictum (made famous by Isaiah Berlin)[193]: "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one great thing". In this respect, one can regard American experimental music as a hedgehog tradition, irrespective of who is involved: Ives, Partch, Nancarrow, Cage or Feldman. Admittedly, one talks about a 'New York School', but here too, the idea of 'school' is open to question. One is talking about highly individual figures, drawn together by a common cause in the early fifties, who one would still come across sometimes in pairs in the sixties and seventies. By the mid-seventies, Cage and Feldman had obviously emerged as the 'key figures'. But while it was obviously these two that influenced Zimmerman most profoundly, one can't help noticing that, if one looks at the programmes of the so-called "Regenbogen-Konzerte" [Rainbow Concerts, see Foto, p. 276] that Zimmermann mounted in Cologne in the late seventies, that he was particularly concerned to demonstrate the sheer diversity of individual 'voices' within American experimental music, including Robert Ashley, David Behrman, Phill Niblock and many others.[194]

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[193] Isaiah Berlin: *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1953/1993.

[194] Cf. W. Zimmermann, *Insel Musik*, Cologne: Beginner Press, 1981, 222ff.

Looking back now at this astonishing concert series, one notes that, at least initially, Cage and Feldman played no great role in it. But paradoxically, this may actually confirm how important they were for Zimmermann. As far as I can see, Zimmermann didn't present a single work of his own during the seven years of the Regenbogen-Kon-zerte. Accordingly, it might also be logical that his two principal 'mentors' would have stayed in the shade.

What did he learn from the two of them? He once put it this way: "I tried to combine Cage and Feldman within me, so to speak: the Cage of the matrixes and chance systems, and Feldman's lyricism". While that's true enough, the situation is actually a little more complex. In particular, from the middle of the 1980s the actual sonority of Feldman's music is unmistakeably evoked; one could even say that certain chords sound 'like Feldman', albeit within a highly structured context that has little to do with Feldman's working methods. And Cage's influence cannot be restricted to matters of theory or composition technique. Echoes of the pure, non vibrato string sounds familiar from, say, Cage's *String Quartet* (1950) or *Six Melodies* (1950) are pervasive aspects of Zimmermann's sound world. Moreover, Zimmermann's very idiosyncratic approach to orchestral sound shows affinities to Cage, and especially to the orchestral version of *Cheap Imitation* (1969) and the *Quartets for Orchestra* (1976/77).

So much for the obvious influences from America, which Zimmermann has never sought to deny. Yet one can scarcely imagine any American composer conceiving music in the way Zimmermann has done over the past 30 years. How ever far removed his music may be from the 'main currents' of contemporary German music, it remains, seen from outside, inextricably linked to German conceptions of art. It would be gratuitous to analyse these here in detail; it is enough to mention some principal themes: art as a matter of utmost seriousness, and therefore also as a moral initiative, as expression of a sense of responsibility, as self-reflections etc.

2ND. THEME: WORK / PROJECT

Many contemporary composers seem to think not so much in terms of individual works, but in cycles of works. For Zimmermann's output, the key notion is neither work nor work cycle, but project. It denotes essential aspects of the way he composes, which is based above all on intensive study (he often reads an amazing amount by way of preparation), reflection and testing, so as, with luck, to produce a successful end product. To that extent, one could compare his work-method to scientific research, and research, as a form of self-immersion, certainly plays a role: he has spoken of his "urge to become completely caught in a world of thought".[195] But that is only one aspect; in an important article on Cage and Zimmermann from 1986, the English composer Christopher Fox described Zimmermann as being committed "to the expression of what is as much a spiritual quest as it is a musical career",[196] and this is surely a fundamental insight. However, contrary to most other contemporary music that one might be inclined to regard as 'spiritual', Zimmermann's work contains no messianic element; it has no intention of preaching or saving, simply to attune the listener to contemplation and perhaps self-reflection. If composing is, for Zimmermann, in part a 'spiritual exercise' (almost in the sense of Loyola), it's not one he seeks to impose on others.

Let's look a little more closely at what a 'project' means for Zimmermann. One is dealing with series of works that share some common stimulus; such stimuli might come from art, from philosophy, from ethnology etc. (some examples will be provided below). There are three initial factors: source – fascination – investigation. The source is not usually consciously sought: it is more likely to emerge by chance – through casual reading, or in conversation. One might surmise that there is something in the composer's mind that is already looking for this source, but that's something one can't prove. What is certain is that as soon as a source is discovered, the composer Zimmermann is ensnared, so to speak. So fascination, but often a kind of fascination that threatens to become punitive, inasmuch as he feels forced to investigate every conceivable aspect of the topic: it looks almost as if he had sentenced himself to extended hard labour. This labour is also physical; it involves endless writing: hundreds, even thousands of handwritten pages (mainly in B5 format), of which only a tiny proportion lead far enough to be finally linked to the fourth stage of actual

[195] Conversation with the author, Berlin, February 2001.

[196] Christopher Fox: *„Cage – Eckhart – Zimmermann"*, in: *Tempo* 159, 1986.

composing. Scarcely something to recommend to other composers, but for Zimmermann that's how it has to be.

The notion of project also explains one initially puzzling external aspect: the way in which Zimmermann will be preoccupied with one particular author (be it St. Augustine, Lucretius, or Roland Barthes), produce a cycle of works, and then seemingly abandon that author for another. Quite possibly, this abandonment (or renunciation) has a certain cathartic element for Zimmermann. But here a further, albeit superficial, comparison with scientific research may be useful. No single scientific project, however exhaustive and sophisticated, stands alone. It always forms part of a larger project, whose completion, if at all conceivable, would surely depend on the prior completion of all its individual parts. Once completed, it too would form only part of a still larger project, and so forth, ultimately extending to a (frankly inconceivable) completely integrated summa of human knowledge.

Global ambitions of this kind are no part of Zimmermann's thinking. But looking back at the past 15 years, one might surmise than in future we may regard the more than twenty projects to date, each consisting of two or more compositions, as components of just two or three major projects, which in turn are directed towards an even 'higher' unity. As minor proof of this, one might mention that the boundaries between projects often turn out to be rather slippery, rather permeable. That is, a work that is initially conceived and composed as part of Project X is subsequently appropriated into Project Y. So Zimmermann as fox or hedgehog? It's an open question.

3RD THEME: MUSICAL PARTICULARS

In the article mentioned above, Christopher Fox draws attention to two essential notions in Zimmermann's work: 'introverted virtuosity' and 'non-centred tonality' (the terms are the composer's own). 'Introverted virtuosity' means that although the highest demands are placed on the performer, only the performer (and perhaps other professional musicians in the audience) realise just how great these demands are. Far from offering an opportunity for crass virtuoso display, they constitute a sort of spiritual exercise. What is important here is that such difficulties are not fortuitous ones, such as might arise from negligence; they are clearly perceptible as a component of the basic compositional concept. I shall say more about this later.

'Non-centred tonality' is a particularly important notion for Zimmermann. The idea of a new kind of harmony – not 'functional' but focused – has long been a preoccupation of his, and in earlier years he was particularly impressed by Henri Pousseur's theoretical essay *L'Apothéose de Rameau*,[197] which has analogous aims. Even today, he doesn't accept that 'the tonal question' is necessarily to be viewed as the province of conservative, historically regressively orientated musicians. He regards the virtual ban on tonality in every discussion of new music more as the sign of a 'cul de sac', which in turn is the result of a "chain reaction of avoidance strategies".[198] So since the beginning of the 1980s he has been dedicated to cultivating this non-centred tonality, which is produced "by projecting two matrices over one another at different angles … one of them is a number network, the other a pitch network". This "produces a constant fluctuation between tonalities: a kind of wandering through pitch fields which are tonally anchored (through overtone series and cycles of fifths). This wandering is determined by a magic square, which is uninfluenced by the decisions of the composing individual, but moves through the prescribed pitch field following the laws of chance. The superimposition of several paths creates pitch relations that constantly fluctuate between tonality and atonality".[199]

At the end of an early work, *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies* (1973/74), there is an extended unison melody. In that context, it represents the final coalescence of a gradual process of syntactic assemblage influenced by the theories of both Noam Chomsky and Otto Laske. But seen in retrospect, it has a broader significance: in later works the whole notion of 'unison' acquires a symbolic quality with emphatic social connotations that we shall return to. But earlier on, unisons were suspect in New Music, and had been

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[197] Henri Pousseur: *"L'Apotheose de Rameau"*, in *Revue d'Esthétique* (special number), 1968.

[198] Conversation; cf. note 4.

[199] Composer's note to *Sternwanderung*.

for while: they implied the possibility of a togetherness, an affirmation, that back then hardly any representative of the European avant-garde wanted anything to do with. From Americans that sort of thing could maybe be tolerated – especially as 'naivety' – but from Europeans, absolutely not. That's exactly why Stockhausen's works were so heavily criticised in West Germany from the late sixties. But this was all the more so because they proclaimed the Will to Affirmation in such an apocalyptic manner (as in *Hymnen*).

There was never anything apocalyptic about Zimmermann's music. On the contrary, we are dealing with a notably ascetic music, whose inclination to affirmation is never expressed through pompous means, but on the contrary, through means that we would be more inclined to regard as disconcertingly fragile. For me, it's a music that says something like: we have to hope, even and especially when the world's dealings offer precious little encouragement to the principle of hope. It is, so to speak, a whispered conversation about hope.

4TH THEME: "WHO'S FORBIDDING ME TO FEEL?"

The quotation comes from a conversation with the composer that took place a year and a half ago in Berlin.[200] It's not possible here to extrapolate substantial consequences from what this little sentence invokes, but at least a brief commentary is necessary.

Just a few years after Zimmermann's first works – that is, in the mid-seventies – a new group of German composers emerged: the one commonly associated with terms like 'New Romanticism' and 'New Simplicity'. Curiously, the latter was actually a term coined jointly by Walter Zimmermann and Wolfgang Becker to describe Zimmermann's own music at the time in the context of Cage's *Cheap Imitation* (1969). The phrase was then appropriated by other people to describe a quite different kind of music.[201] Be that as it may, this historical situation had some strange consequences. I can readily imagine that if there had been no New Romanticism at that time – so no Rihm, no von Bose etc. – one would have judged the expressive traits in Zimmermann's music differently; by this I mean that in comparison to the music of the older Stockhausen generation, they would have been more apparent. But precisely because this expressivity is mostly so restrained, in comparison to that of the New Romantics, this music was judged to be relatively abstract.

Here, as so often with Zimmermann, there is a paradox. In the course of the 1980s he often claimed that he wanted to 'depersonalise' his music; this in sharp contrast to the total subjectivity demanded by the New Romantics. Hence the matrices, and other processes one might describe as quasi-cabbalistic. But the result is a highly personal music, not just in terms of sound, but also because it creates an expressive domain of its own, whereas most of the Young Subjectivists' products – always excepting Wolfgang Rihm – were basically anonymous, precisely because they were based on inherited emotional clichés.

5TH THEME: *Shadows of Ideas*

It's particularly appropriate, perhaps, that the last concert of the Weingartener Tage included one of a series of pieces called *Schatten der Ideen* [Shadows of Ideas]. The title is drawn from the book *De umbris idearum* by Giordano Bruno, of whom we shall have more to say later. But the notion of music as "shadows of ideas" could, in my view, serve as a motto for almost all of Zimmermann's works of the last 15 years. What is so special about this? After all, one could argue that all the music with extra-musical influences that has come about over the centuries is somehow the "shadow of ideas". With Zimmermann, however, the relationship is very particular. The ideas, for the most part, come from the kernels of Western thinking: from philosophy and theology. That means, almost axiomatically, that as 'pure thought' (more or less) they resist quasi-

[200] Conversation.

[201] Cf. Otto Kolleritsch (Ed.): *Zur „Neuen Einfachheit" in der Musik*, Vienna – Graz: Universal Edition, 1981.

pictorial, programmatic illustration: they have to be conveyed by some other means. By what means? There is no single answer, but many; and several of the works performed in Weingarten point towards them.

Even in making a first attempt to analyse Zimmermann's titles and inspirations, certain patterns, certain consistent features begin to emerge. At first – i.e. in the early works – the points of reference are notably 'modern': the economist Frank Gilbreth, and the grammarians (loosely defined) Chomsky and Laske. Then comes a crisis: an obsession with the 'Orgone Theory' of Wilhelm Reich, initiating what Zimmermann calls a "self-destructive phase", whose few compositional outcomes have never been performed. Provisional escape comes through an engagement with Zen Buddhism, surely stimulated by Cage, and especially the book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* by Shunryū Suzuki, which becomes the subject of a 50-minute work for piano. The crucial notion here is the eradication of all past philosophical, cultural and musical impositions, so as to start afresh. A tabula rasa, but one that is effected without external drama. In the cycle of piano pieces, this is depicted not as a state that has already been achieved, but as a sort of evolution. There are three 'books', 1) *Leave the Old*, 2) *Clean the Mind*, 3) *Change the Consciousness*, containing several 'chapters' (there are forty in all), each of which in turn represents a stage of the desired leaving, cleaning or changing. So even here, one is dealing with the musical representation of ideas, not objects.

In the course of the following years a sort of Franco-German polarity emerges, in which the French are always contemporaries – Lévi-Strauss, Deleuze, Barthes, and Daniel Charles – whereas the Germans are never amongst the living: Meister Eckhart, Angelus Silesius, Novalis, Jean Paul Richter, und Nietzsche. Equally notably, the selected Frenchmen are always philosophers, whereas the Germans are always poets or theologians (in this context, Nietzsche is emphatically to be seen as a poet). No doubt there is a nice thesis to be derived from this, but I shall not pursue it here.

Then from the late 1980s to the present – that is, the part of Zimmermann's work which is the main focus of the Weingartener Tage – there is increasing (though by no means exclusive) reference to antiquity, thanks not least to stimulus gained from his friend, the philosopher Hannes Böhringer. At first sight, one might think that the selection of thinkers invoked – Plato, Eratosthenes, Pythagoras, Epicurus, St. Augustine, Plotinus, Huygin, Porphyrus and Lucretius (this listing follows the order in which they figure in Zimmermann's work) – looks a little arbitrary.

But if one then jumps forward many centuries, to the end of the 16th century. As mentioned, the concept "Shadows of Ideas" is taken from an early book *De umbris idearum* by Giordano Bruno, who was burnt at the stake by the Inquisition in 1600. He was burnt, not for his contribution to the 'ars memoriae', *The Art of Memory* (which is a conscious point of connection for Zimmermann), but primarily because of his heretical insistence on the superiority of ancient Egyptian knowledge and magic to Christian doctrines. Yet his ideas on memory had the same roots: as Frances Yates showed nearly 40 years ago (in a celebrated book, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*,[202] which Zimmermann too prized highly), Bruno was an extreme example of the late Renaissance Magus – a neoplatonist attached to the hermetic tradition arising from the fictitious Hermes Trismegistus. To whom did the neoplatonists refer?: naturally to Plato, to the 3rd-century Plotinus, the first of the neoplatonists, and to his early biographer and disciple Porphyrus. They also attach importance to the ideas of Epicurus, as conveyed by Lucretius. In all this, number has a significant role to play, above all when it has mystical implications comparable to or compatible with cabala. The significant figure here from antiquity is, of course, Pytha-goras. But one may also include Eratosthenes, third Librarian of the Library of Alexandria – surely a repository of endless ancient arcana – who wrote about the mathematics underlying Plato's theories.

Of the less familiar figures, Huygin was a 2nd century Pope of Greek origin whose *Fabulae* and *De Astronomia* were also known to the Hermetics. And from their own work, one should mention another source that has played a major role for Zimmermann, namely the late-15th century *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of Francesco Colonna, whose illustrations are full of alchemically orientated images. In this company, it's St. Augustine who looks like the heretic! Indeed, there is a certain irony here, in that Augustine's hostile reaction to the early hermetic tradition and all forms of magic would surely have contributed to the downfall, 1200 years later, of Giordano Bruno, the author of *Shadows of Ideas*.

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[202] Frances A. Yates: *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic tradition*, London : Routledge & K. Paul, 1964. Frances A. Yates: *The Art of Memory*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966/1974.

What is one to make of all this? On the face of it, I can scarcely think of any contemporary composer who seems less likely than Walter Zimmermann to want to assume the role of a latter-day Magus. And if, perhaps perversely, one were looking to associate him with a leading figure from Renaissance hermeticism, then surely not – despite an inner restlessness – with the fiery Giordano Bruno, but with the much more restrained and refined Marsilio Ficino, who didn't regard the ancient knowledge as an opportunity to conjure up demons, but as a pathway to ecstasy and even redemption of the soul. Be that as it may, it would be hard to overestimate the influence of neoplatonism on Zimmermann. And this reveals an unexpected, even improbable connection with certain composers of the so-called 'New Complexity'! One instance here must stand for many: the pseudo-Renaissance woodcut (actually a 19th century pastiche) [see illustration, p. 312] that inspired Zimmermann's composition *Ursache & Vorwitz* (for ensemble, 1993/94) is the very one that served 30 years earlier as a model for Brian Ferneyhough's *Transit* (1972/74; rev. 1974/75)!

Leaving such speculation aside, what are the practical implications, in terms of both composing and performing? In terms of composition technique, one could point to Zimmermann's frequent use since 1984 of the sieve of Eratosthenes, which yields a 12th order matrix with only prime numbers. The musical dimensions of Pythagoras's mathematical thinking also have implications for various pieces which investigate non-tempered tunings, or the conflict between tempered and non-tempered tunings.

But above all, various ideas gleaned from these ancient thinkers serve as a source for their transference – one might be tempted to think of alchemical transmutation – into the musical construction. This occurs in many different ways, which are not necessarily audible, but are partly so, and even visible too. That is, the basic ideas are sometimes conveyed through physical actions. As a first example, let's take the 2nd movement of *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for cello and piano, composed in 1987. The movement is called *Sala della pazienzia*; the title refers to a hall in Ferrara, where depictions of patience and opportunity are placed opposite one another. To quote the composer: "what happens there is that pizzicato and arco must be attempted simultaneously, which doesn't actually work. Or a pizz. and arco together as double stops ... leading to an interplay of reciprocal blocking and stumbling ... just as patience and opportunity get in each other's way".[203]

Even more striking examples can be found in the string trio *Distentio*, composed in 1992. Here ideas from the *XIth book* of St. Augustine's *Confessiones*, which deals primarily with time, are partly conveyed through physical movements that an audience can perceive both visually and acoustically. One is dealing here with four meanings of the term 'distentio'- namely extension, tension, disunity and distraction ["Ausdehnung, Zerspannung, Zerrissenheit und Zerstreutheit"] – which then become the principal ideas underlying four of the trio's five movements. In the first movement, for instance, each entry consists of two notes: a held harmonic and a glissando, with the glissando always stretching "from the given note to the maximum spread of the hand"; on the violin and viola this mainly produces an octave, and on the cello a sixth. In addition, there are sometimes pizzicatos. Moreover, in this context these three kinds of sound – held note, glissando and pizzicato – acquire a meaning relating to St. Augustine's text: the held note as *memoria*, pizzicato as *contuitus*, and glissando as *expectatio*. What this means is that each main sound innately contains both past (*memoria*) and future (*expectatio*). These sounds are of various lengths, whereas the present (*contuitus* – i.e. the instant) can only be short [see illustration, p. 191]. In the middle movement, entitled "Potter's Wheel", the representation is even more literal. St. Augustine wonders whether, "if all the lights of the sky ceased to move but the potter's wheel continued to turn, would there not still be time by which we could measure its rotations?"[204] In this middle movement, and again in the short final movement, a potter's wheel (actually a lathe) is set in motion, and then very gently bowed and stopped with the string players' bows.

It is not just ideas from antiquity that are handled in this way. For instance, in *Fragmente der Liebe*, for tenor saxophone and string trio (1987), Zimmermann takes as his starting point the 80 'figures' that Roland Barthes lists in alphabetical order at the beginning of his *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*: "s'abimer", "absence", "adorable" etc. [see illustration, p. 248]. These, along with their translation into German, are transformed into musical figures. This is done by representing the letters A–H with the corresponding pitches, just as Bach, Schumann etc. did, but here with each letter as a semiquaver. Where this doesn't work

[203] Conversation.

[204] St. Augustine: *Confessions*, transl. R. S. Pine-Coffin, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969, 271.

(apart from S, from I–Z), each letter is treated as a semiquaver extension of the previous pitch, so that figures are formed. In the course of his preface, Barthes often refers to music; sometimes he actually presents the basic figures of his "discours amoureux" as if they were already music. By way of example (the quotation is abbreviated): "Each figure explodes, vibrates in and of itself like a sound severed from any tune – or is repeated in satiety, like the motif of a hovering music ['schwebende Musik']. No logic links the figures, determines their contiguity: the figures are non-syntagmatic, non-narrative … Such sentences are matrices of figures precisely because they remain suspended; they utter the effect, then break off".[205] It's not hard to imagine how these sentences of Barthes' found an immediate resonance in Zimmermann. Especially the last sentence: "matrices of figures … remain suspended … utter the affect, then break off" – that already sounds like a description of the music Zimmermann was writing at the time.

I hope it is clear, even from these few examples, that with Zimmermann there is no single, transparent and lasting relationship between concept and work. What always binds them together is the composer's persona. He alone determines their consistency or inconsistency. And behind this lie all kinds of reactions to entirely personal circumstances, which are not, however, the listener's concern. Yet it's exactly because of this, though for other reasons too, that in retrospect the composer takes a very critical view of some of his own works, but this doesn't oblige us to share his opinion. For example, he often has the idea that a work must have failed, because it doesn't match his original intentions. We can certainly take note of such opinions; but in a way, they too are none of our business.

It will have struck many of you, perhaps, that the titles of Zimmermann's works inhabit a particular domain. They are not pictorial or programmatic, nor do they describe what the piece, or the composer, is supposed to have achieved. Sometimes quite the opposite: Zimmermann has described his titles as "the places I am not at".[206] This does not mean that they are irrelevant, but rather that they point to ideal goals that are currently inaccessible to him. Towards the end of his essay on Zimmermann's *Sai-tenspiel* (1983), Dieter Rexroth tellingly observes that "On the one hand, one recognises here the typical representative of the modern world, the kind of person who restlessly travels the world, and is at home everywhere and nowhere; on the other hand, this restlessness constantly conveys the need for a fixed place, for attachment to a salving and sheltering structure that represents an objective truth independent of human determinations, and, as part of nature, embodies something whole and all-embracing".[207]

There are certain themes that seem to run throughout Zimmermann's output, and are also apparent in the titles of works. But they may change in significance over the years. As examples, let's take the concepts 'desert' and 'unison'. The desert has, for Zimmermann as earlier for Varèse (in *Déserts*), both physical and metaphysical significance. In 1975 he interviewed several American experimental composers, and the results were published in the collection *Desert Plants*;[208] here the desert is a metaphor, with positive connotations: the idea that even in a hostile environment, beautiful things can emerge. The next year, the desert became a physical reality; Zimmermann travelled to the Siwah Oasis, in the middle of the Egyptian desert, to make ethnomusicological field recordings. Then, a decade later, he moved from Cologne to Berlin, in a state of considerable emotional depression; this is partly documented in the essay *Morton Feldman – " …to be lonely"*.[209] Here the desert is an inner one, that of the 'hollow man' who, however, can sometimes also produce his 'desert plants': in this case the *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton* for bass flute and piano (described by Zimmermann as "deadly sad"), whose title comes from a poem by Nietzsche, and *Wüstenwanderung* for piano (1986). The latter work, in the composer's words, "depicts the creation of the world soul according to

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[205] Roland Barthes: *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, Paris: Seuil 1977. English edition, *A Lover's Discourse*, transl. R. Howard, New York: Hill and Wang, 1982, 6–7.

[206] Conversation.

[207] Dieter Rexroth: *„Gedacht – mit beiden Beinen auf der Erde. Analytische Berkerungen zu Zimmermanns ‚Saitenspiel'"*, in: *Melos*, 1/1985. – „Einerseits wird darin der typische Vertreter der modernen Welt erkennbar, jener Typus, der ruhelos die Welt bereist und überall und nirgends zuhause ist; andererseits vermittelt diese Ruhelosigkeit durchaus ein Bedürfnis nach einem festen Ort, nach Einbindung in eine bergende und schützende Struktur, die unabhängig von menschlicher Bestimmung eine objektive Wahrheit repräsentiert, die als Teil der Natur gewissermaßen etwas Ganzes und Umfassendes verkörpert."

[208] In: *Insel Musik*; cf. note 3.

[209] In: H.-K. Metzger and R. Riehn (eds.): *Morton Feldman*, Musik-Konzepte 48/49, 95–104.

Plato's *Timaeus*, getting increasingly complicated, and collapsing from its own complexity, which has become machine-like."[210] The demands here on the pianist deliberately verge on the impossible. Zimmermann says: "These excessive demands match the described path: a path that goes astray, into the desert that one has to overcome."[211]

With the idea of 'unison', which admittedly never figures as the title of a piece, but is a recurrent basic element in Zimmermann's works, the situation is no less complex. In contrast to the 'conventional' unison, such as the one to be heard at the end of *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies* (1973/74), here unison is mainly regarded as an unattainable goal, or at least as a state that can't be maintained for long. In *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989), for example, the unison the players sometimes seem to be striving for can never really come about, because of the violinist's Pytha-gorean intonation. In the string quartet *Festina lente* (1990), it sometimes happens that two or more players are supposed to constantly execute unison glissandi. Inevitably, the attempt fails, but this is aesthetically productive: something emerges that sounds much richer than what was notated.

The situation is similar in the four pieces entitled *Shadows of Cold Mountain* (1993–97). *Cold Mountain* is the title of a group of drawings by Brice Marden, which in turn were inspired by the calligraphy of a Tang dynasty Chinese poet, Han Shan (whose name means 'cold mountain'). Parts of these drawings are 'transcribed' for various instruments as unison glissandi that, once again, are scarcely sustainable as pure unisons: they are constantly fractured. Yet in constantly evoking an ideal that may be unrealisable, they produce fragile 'borderline phenomena' of exceptional subtlety. One could regard this as yet another instance of 'introverted virtuosity', in this case implying a dialectical interpretation: where there is no capacity for imperfection, there's probably no music either.

The latter has to do with the process – long familiar to composers in the electronic studio – of 'phase shifting'. If one, for example, has a large number of sine tones perfectly in phase, and then starts to shift them out of phase, what happens is that one immediately plunges from apparent simplicity into the utmost complexity, which then resolves somewhat as the process continues. What fascinates Zimmermann is the insight that in this situation, order and chaos are not opposites lying at the two poles of a linear process, but immediate neighbours: one transmutes immediately into the other.

Since reference has now been made to electroacoustic music, I'll ask you to indulge a little digression concerning it. For decades, electroacoustic music has been represented as an emblem of technology-driven progress. It will be no surprise that Zimmermann has not generally subscribed to this view. In the early seventies he briefly studied electronic music at Colgate University. He didn't produce any electronic works as such, but he did produce several individual sounds, which were partly deployed in the early work *Akkordarbeit* (1971). But until very recently, these sounds had no successors. Over the decades they occasionally showed up (in *Ursache & Vorwitz*, 1993/94, for example), sounding ever more ancient and decrepit, until they ultimately became anything but 'progressive': in fact, more like an 'arte povera'.

6TH THEME: GERMANY

Finally, I should undoubtedly try, still as an outsider, to locate Zimmermann's work within the general context of German music. This is no easy undertaking, partly because of the unique character of his compositions, which scarcely resemble those of any other German composer, but also because, in the last few years, the defining rules have changed. Many years ago, I would have considered Zimmermann's work in relation to West German music in general, and Cologne in particular; later also in relation to Berlin as an isolated outpost of West Germany within Eastern territory. But in the last decade, it has become far from clear what is currently implied by the term 'German music' – whether the term still has strong aesthetic connotations, or only geographical ones. Here, naturally, I am referring primarily to the consequences of German reunification.

Perhaps I can explain some of my difficulties more concretely by referring to two series of recordings published by the Deutscher Musikrat. Up to 1983 the Musikrat published a series of discs called

[210] Composer's programme note.

[211] Ibid.

"Contemporary Music in West Germany"; there were ten albums each with three vinyl discs. On the 8th album there was an extended excerpt from Zimmermann's *Lokale Musik* (1979), along with works from the same period by Hamel, Henze, Hespos, Nic. A. Huber, Kagel, Riedl, Spahlinger and Yun. This didn't seek to imply that all these composers were going down the same path! But it did occur to me that, with the possible exception of Henze and Riedl, these were all composers whose names could easily have come up in conversations with Zimmermann, even if only to clarify differences of opinion. And that was typical of the whole series. The situation of music in West German may have been pluralistic, but – Habermas notwithstanding – it was scarcely obscure or unintelligible.

More recently, the Musikrat has been producing a set of 150 CDs entitled "Music in Germany 1950–-2000". This time, I must confess, I'm puzzled. Since Helmut Lachenmann's *Staub* (1985/87) and Günter Kochan's *5th Symphony* (1985/87) appear on the CD, I assume they must have something in common (apart from being orchestral compositions), but I have no idea what it might be. The same thing happens when, for example, I hear Johannes Fritsch's *Akroasis* in company with symphonic works by former East Germans Ernst Hermann Meyer and Fritz Geißler. Using an atlas, I can see the proximity; but using my ears, I can't hear it. Now the situation does indeed seem unintelligible.

Curiously, in this new CD context, Walter Zimmermann fares rather better. Excerpts from *Lokale Musik* (once again) and *Saitenspiel* are found on CDs with the titles "A New World Music" and "Free Ensembles", and this time the company (i.e. the other composers) doesn't seem too incongruous. Maybe it's because these are 'genres' that were not much cultivated in East Germany. But in fact, are they genres at all? They seem more like the kinds of categories one invents for things that don't fit anywhere else.

Maybe this is the key to 'locating' Zimmermann's work. Where does it 'fit'? Perhaps it simply doesn't. I have often wondered why his compositions seemed to be neglected in favour of works by undeniably less talented and individual German composers. And increasingly, I believe the answer is that his work has always been too independent – that it has never been easy to accommodate within current cultural agendas. But this is precisely one of the things about his music that I treasure: it shows that nonconformism does not always have to mean protest, and that one can be affirmative without resorting to trumpets and drums. This, for me, is 'free music' in the truest sense – may it ever remain so!

Rachel Campbell

Richard Toop – "What are you doing here?"

Writing about and remembering a person you've lost can be salutary in the days after their death. However, in Richard's case, my urge to remember and celebrate is in tension with his rejection of funerals, memorialising, and the pleasures of nostalgia. He was, after all, the principal musicologist of the *tabula rasa*, the postwar desire to reject the past in favour of the utmost presentness and the intoxication of the new – or, as he often characterised this avant-garde, 'art that boldly went where no art had gone before'.

He was also, as he often stated, a creature of the 1960s, and the excitement of that era was the only source of any tiny hints of nostalgia in his anecdotes (actually, a little also crept in when he spoke about his daughter or granddaughters). In virtually everything he did, he faced firmly towards the future, even to the extent of spending most of his life interested only in living composers and the openness of stories yet unfinished. So with this caveat recorded:

TOOP: THE ACHIEVEMENTS

Richard's primary motivation as a scholar was to understand composers, the creative process, and the nuts and bolts of how musical works were created. He established the history of early multi-serialism (or total serialism) in 1974 in 'Messiaen/Goeyvaerts, Fano/Stockhausen, Boulez' – now regarded as a classic

article.[212] His multiple publications on Stockhausen were landmarks. His analysis (proceeding from the sketches) of Brian Ferneyhough's *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* was described, by Paul Griffiths, as 'belong[ing] with Ligeti's of *Structures 1a* as a modern classic of the genre'.[213] He charted the work of composers who had been placed under the New Complexity banner (Finnissy, Dillon, Dench, Barrett) in 'Four Facets of the New Complexity'[214] and was later incorrectly blamed for coining the term.

Richard was immensely proud of a fax from Ligeti, displayed on the wall of his office for some years, in which Ligeti said Richard's monograph really 'gets' him.[215] Stockhausen and Ferneyhough both also credited Richard with rare insight into their work. Stockhausen invited Richard to lecture in his summer courses at Kürten from 2002 to 2008, and some of these analytical lectures were published in book form.[216]

Several weeks before he died, Richard gave me permission to upload pdfs of his articles to the academia.edu website. I'm learning that, if one counts the scripts of talks he regarded as ephemera, there are hundreds, and I'll be doing it slowly over several years. He has written on Liza Lim, Kagel, Kurtág, Robert HP Platz, Michael Smetanin, and others. He had been hoping to finish a book on Walter Zimmermann. His work is as wide as it is deep. Many of his liner notes have the quality of original scholarship.

I will take this trouble because Richard's work is not only important to other musicologists like myself, but because – and I think this was what he was most proud of – it has concretely influenced composers. Many composers I've met express awe and envy on learning I studied with Richard. They read his articles in order to understand what Stockhausen and Ferneyhough were doing, and how they were doing it.

TOOP: INFLUENCE ON AUSTRALIAN MUSIC, AND POLEMICS

There is no doubt in my mind that Richard has played a major part in the history of musical modernism in Australia. For a start, he taught composition to a group in Sydney who came to prominence in the 1980s: Michael Smetanin, Elena Kats-Chernin, Gerard Brophy and Riccardo Formosa, and later to other significant figures such as Damien Ricketson and Matthew Shlomowitz. He also influenced generations of performers and teachers through his music history lectures at Sydney Conservatorium. As Peter McCallum noted recently, Richard was proud to have educated them to the point they 'could distinguish between Xenakis, Stockhausen and Ferneyhough purely on the basis of the sound'.[217]

Richard's presence here, his teaching, his public talks, his lengthy, boozy lunches with many of us: he made sense of modernism's aesthetic and technical bases, he challenged us to find our own relationship to it, he helped uncover its beauties, and through his many anecdotes he allowed us to imaginatively entertain the possibility of hanging out with Kagel and Stockhausen. He brought the critical attitudes of Darmstadt and Donaueschingen to Sydney as we saw how he approached premieres and endlessly discussed aesthetics. Michael Smetanin has had multiple premieres and commissions in the Netherlands. Damien took his ensemble to Warsaw Autumn. Richard made modernism's (Euro-centric) internationalism part of our lives. *ELISION* flourished. […]

TOOP: VIGNETTES FROM HIS PERSONAL HISTORY

Born on 1 August 1945, Richard was nearly not born at all as the house beside that in which his father and pregnant mother were sleeping was destroyed in the Blitz. He had a southern English childhood, and if the

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[212] Richard Toop, 'Messiaen / Goeyvaerts, Fano / Stockhausen, Boulez', *Perspectives of New Music* 13, no.1 (1974): 141–69.

[213] Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (Oxford, 1995), 299.

[214] Richard Toop, "Four Facets of the New Complexity" *Contact* no.32 (1988): 4–50.

[215] Richard Toop, *György Ligeti* (London, 1999).

[216] Richard Toop, *Six Lectures from the Stockhausen Courses Kürten 2002* (Kürten, 2005).

[217] http://music.sydney.edu.au/vale-richard-toop/

privations of postwar England touched him they seem to have been mostly forgotten in favour of the excitement at being taken to London and introduced to museums and culture by his two aunts.

At a regional grammar school he won the music prize in 1962 and asked for the score of *The Rite of Spring*, which was presented by the future Prime Minister Edward Heath, only recently nicknamed by *Private Eye* magazine 'Grocer Heath'. Richard appended 'grocer fugue' to this, for a reason that no doubt made sense when he told me about it, a few years ago, over an indeterminate number of glasses of wine.

Richard's own words best describe his engagement with new music in this period:

'…imagine, if you will, a tubby teenage Toop in 1962; he's sixteen. He's already utterly intrigued by the 'New Music' phenomenon, but he's still very much a beginner, trying to work out what's going on. Where does he get to hear it? Almost exclusively, on the radio. The BBC Third Programme has a weekly *Thursday Invitation Concert* which has consistently fascinating repertoire, including mediaeval and Renaissance music, hard-line classical chamber music, and every now and then some radical contemporary music. But the main source is the Continent. He soon discovers that the most promising time for 'new music' broadcasts is late in the evening, when he's lying in bed, trying to find programmes using the rather random efforts required by an old crystal set. So one evening in late May, he's prodding away, and out of the blue, he happens on a rather crackly version of… a 25-minute block from *MOMENTE*… on West German Radio. Was that an Epiphanic Moment for me? I'm not sure I really believe in such fancy terms, but be that as it may, it came pretty close. I remember the sheer impact of the music; I remember being utterly astonished.[218]

In the early 1960s he also had live contact with composers and their new scores: at the Dartington Summer School in 1961 he heard Berio, Nono and Maderna, and the following year, Lutosławski. At this point, he was composing, and his final piece at school was partly determinate, partly indeterminate, scored for spatially separated instrumental groups. Soon after, he taught himself German, primarily to read *Die Reihe*.

In the late 1960s Richard became active as a new music pianist around London; repertoire included Cage's Concert for Piano and Orchestra and several of La Monte Young's *Composition 1960* pieces. Most notable, perhaps, was his performance in October 1967 of Eric Satie's *Vexations,* lasting about twenty-four hours at the Arts Lab, Drury Lane; it seems to have been the first documented solo performance of the work.[219] The photograph at the piano with the mug (see photo on page 281) was taken during this.

Contact with Stockhausen began in 1969, and from 1972–1974 he was Stockhausen's teaching assistant at the Staatliche Musikhochschule in Cologne; lessons mostly took place in Richard's apartment and, after several hours' analysis, Richard's wife Carol served refreshments and baby Samantha was allowed, as Richard put it, to 'terrorise' the students. These included Claude Vivier, Walter Zimmermann, Moya Henderson, and Kevin Volans. I asked Walter, years later, if Richard had been 'like this' – i.e. musically encyclopaedic and erudite – at the age of 28. 'Oh yes!', he said.

Relations with Stockhausen deteriorated in 1974 and, back in London looking for employment, Richard heard from Roger Woodward about a lectureship at the (then) N.S.W. State Conservatorium of Music. So began a 35-year association and the advent of the Australian part of Richard's life.

Australians, conscious of their peripheral position in relation to the centres of new music Richard wrote about, often asked him, 'What are you doing here?' He usually noted that he came for the job but also that he liked it here. For one thing, it provided an opportunity for a productively distanced view of those centres of new music. Secondly, he said that, after disembarking on his first flight into Sydney, the taxi took him through Kings Cross, and, on noting several Italian and Greek restaurants, he thought, 'This will do, this will do.' The wine he subsequently bought confirmed the impression.

CLOSING

What Richard sought in life and art was amazement, wonder, and, in the nineteenth-century sense, transcendence. I asked him recently if he thought Schoenberg's music really was the result of his analysis of

[218] Richard Toop, "Climbing a Musical Everest: Unravelling the sketches for Stockhausen's MOMENTE", Paper presented at the Sydney Conservatorium Musicology Colloquium Series, March 2014.

[219] http://www.gavinbryars.com/work/writing/occasional-writings/vexations-and-its-performers#_edn8

the German classics and a self-conscious attempt to combine their qualities, and if this was what led to much of it being so difficult. He agreed but noted that this was what made it wonderful: the aesthetic, technical and emotional gymnastics whose effect was to thrill.

29 June 2017

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Rachel Campbell teaches music history and musicology at the Sydney Conservatorium. She is currently writing a book about the beginnings of Peter Sculthorpe's career and the history of Australian musical nationalism. She was an enthusiastic discussion partner and friend of Richard Toop's for over twenty years.

Timetable

Born in Schwabach (Middle Franconia) on **April 15, 1949,** learns piano, violin and oboe, begins composing at the age of twelve, attends the humanistic high school in Fürth and studies piano with Ernst Gröschel.

1968-70	Pianist in the ars-nova-ensemble Nuremberg; composition lessons with Werner Heider.
1970-73	Studies with Mauricio Kagel in Cologne (courses for New Music), at the Institute for Sonology in Utrecht (with O. E. Laske) and at the ethnological center Jaap-Kunst in Amsterdam.
1974	stay in the USA, first in Hamilton, NY, to study computer music
1975	Tour of the USA, during which he talks with 23 American composers. First book publication *Desert Plants* (Vancouver 1976).
1976	Recordings of folk music in the Siwa Oasis in Egypt, in an Indian ghetto in Pittsburgh, an Indian reservation in Montana, and in the backcountry of Fuerth.
1977	Opening of the Beginner Studio in a former factory floor in Cologne. Regularly organizes concerts with new music (until 1984).
1980	Promotion Prize of the City of Cologne.
1981	First prize "Ensemblia", Mönchengladbach.
1981	Second book publication *Insel Musik* (Kerpen 1981).
1982 and 1984	lecturer at the International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt.
1980-84	teacher of composition at the Conservatoire de Liège.
1985	Third book publication *Morton Feldman Essays* (Kerpen 1985).
1986	Move to Berlin.
1987	Scholarship "Villa Massimo", Rome.
1988	Prix Italia for *The Blind*.
1988	Teaching position at the Koninglijk Conservatorium Den Haag.
1988-93	Lives in Frankfurt am Main.
1989	Schneider-Schott Prize, Mainz, together with Herbert Henck.
1989	"Composer to Composer", Telluride / Colorado.
1990-92	Composition teacher in Karlsruhe.
1992	Organization (together with Stefan Schädler) of the festival *Anarchic Harmony*, for the 80th birthday of John Cage in Frankfurt. This results in the fourth book publication (Schott-Verlag).
1993-2014	Professorship for composition at the Berlin University of the Arts.
1996L	Lecturer "June in Buffalo," N. Y.
2003	Visiting professor (one academic year) at the ESMUC School of Music in Barcelona.
2005	Lecturer an der Juilliard School, Columbia University, New York City.
2005	Lecturer Universidad de Alcalà de Henares near Madrid.
2006	Lecturer Shanghai Conservatory, Beijing Central Conservatory.

2006	Member of the Academy of Arts. 2007Composer in Residence New England Conservatory, Boston.
2006-today	Chen-Taiji to Chenxiaowang.
2009	Appointed honorary professor of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.
2012	John Cage: *Empty Mind*, edited together with Marie-Luise Knott (Suhrkamp-Verlag). Fifth book publication.
2013	Transcription and edition of the piano work *Sixteen Dances* by John Cage found in the New York Public Library.
2015–19	*Chan Mi Gong*. Textbook by Liu Han-Wen (Lotus Press). Sixth book publication.
2016–18	*Novalis ABC Book*, edited together with Josef Schreier (Matthes & Seitz). Seventh book publication. 2018International Study Day Walter Zimmermann, Strasbourg GREAM.
2018-19	Edition of the *Well-Tempered Clavier I-II* with Herbert Henck and the Bach Diary by Herbert Henck on Cybele Records.
2019	*Lokale Musik.* Remake of the complete recording of the 3 LPs of the TAT (Mode 307).
2019/20	"Wittgenstein on Music". Eighth book publication.

List of works

With the exception of *Akkordarbeit* for piano, orchestra and tape (1971) and *Einer ist keiner* for seven instruments and live electronics (1972), all works are self-published BEGINNER PRESS, Walter Zimmermann, Görlitzerstraße 40a, 10997 Berlin.
Unpublished or withdrawn works were not included in this list.
The website beginner-press.de contains detailed commentaries on works as well as almost all of Walter Zimmermann's texts.
Zimmermann divides his compositions into the following groups of works:

1 **Early pieces** (1965-1970)
1.1 Songs (studies, not intended for performance)
1.1.1 *Die Kaiserin* for voice and piano (Li Tai-Pe, 1965)
1.1.2 *Aufblick* for mezzo-soprano and eleven instruments (Gottfried Benn, 1967)
1.1.3 *Drohung* for alto and alto flute (Gottfried Benn, 1967)
1.1.4 *Mein Ende for* alto and alto flute (Alfred Lichtenstein, 1967)
1.1.5 *Éventail* for soprano, flute, violoncello and piano (Stéphane Mallarmé, 1968)

1.2 Choral and orchestral works (studies, not intended for performance)
1.2.1 *Psalm 23* for four-part mixed choir, timpani ad libitum and strings (1965)
1.2.2 *Prelude* for choir and string orchestra (1965)
1.2.3 *Dialog. Eine Fantasie for* Piano and String Orchestra (1966)
1.2.4 *Studie* for orchestra (1967)

1.3 Ensemble works
1.3.1 *Parabel* for string quartet (1965). - – 20’
1.3.2 *Paranthèses* for oboe, two English horns and bassoon (1969)
1.3.3 *Nothing but* for piano, celesta, harpsichord and electronic organ (1969). – Premiere Hannover 1971; 15’
1.3.4 *Gliss* for solo trombone, four trombones (on tape) and piano (1970). – Premiere Erlangen 1970; 10’

1.4 Early piano works
1.4.1 *Ode auf Isang Yun* for piano (1967). – UA Berlin 2017; 10’

1.4.2 *As a Wife Has a Cow. A Love Story. Seismography of a text by Gertrude Stein for* piano four hands (1970). – Premiere Nuremberg 1970; 10'

2 **Akkordarbeit** (1971)

2 *Akkordarbeit. Attempt on work in formal organizations*. For piano, orchestra and tape (1971). – Moeck, Celle. – Premiere Hannover 1972; 30'
Version for piano, chamber ensemble and tape. – UA Nuremberg 1973

3 **Orgon** (1972-1974)

3.1 *Einer ist keiner. 81 phases of development towards identity* for seven instruments [Klar ./ Ssax., Pos., 2 Vl., 2 Va., Vc.] and live electronics (1972). – Moeck Publishers. - – 20'

3.2 *In Understanding Music the Sound Dies. Composition of the creation of a composition*. For 21 instrumentalists [2 pianos; perc.; 3 ensembles: fl., clar., pos., vl., va., vc.] (1973/74). – Premiere Bremen 1974; 25'

3.2 *Orgon. Catharsis strategies* for didgeridoo, corroboree singer, two actors and two tapes (1974 – .(Ms .

4 **Beginner's Mind** (1975)

4 *Beginner's Mind* for singing pianist with after ¯ShunryuSuzuki (1975(. – *Prologue: Five Moments in the Life of Franz Schubert*; I. *Leave the Old*; II. *Clean the Mind*; III. *After the Consciouness*; IV. *Prepare the New*. – UA Darmstadt 1976; 60'

5 **Lokale Musik** (1977-1981)

5.1 *Ländler Topographien* for orchestra (1978/79). – I. *Phran*; II. *Topan*; III. *Tophran*. – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1981; 40'

5.2 Leichte Tänze

5.2.1 *Zehn Fränkische Tänze.* Sublimated for string quartet (1977) –
premiere Cologne 1977; 12'

5.2.2 *25 Kärwa Melodien.* Substituted for two clarinets (1979). - –
Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 8'

5.2.3 *20 Figurentänze*. Transformed for six instrumentalists [2 clar., trp., 2 vl., Kb. Or for clar., trp., vl., Kb., Schlz. (two players)] (1979). - –
Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 9'
1994: Version for accordion, clarinet and double bass under the title 20 Figuren-Tänze (Reste und Lumpen)),
- UA Rümlingen 2006; 10'

5.2.4 *15 Zwiefache*. Transcended for guitar (1979). – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 8'

5.3 Stille Tänze

5.3.1 *Erd-Wasser-Luft-Töne. Stille Tänze* for trombone, piano and bowed glasses (1979). – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 10'

5.3.2 *Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen). Stille Tänze* for percussion with voice (one player ((Flurnamen, 1980). – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 10'

5.3.3 *Keuper. Stille Tänze* for string quartet (1980; rev. 1999). – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 10'

5.4 *Wolkenorte* for harp with voice (Meister Eckhart, 1980). – Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1980; 20'

5.5 *Seiltänze* for violoncello and orchestra (2002/06). – Parts I-III – UA Donaueschingen 2003 (I.), Munich 2006 (I.-II.), Stuttgart 2007 (complete performance); 25'
Original title: *Subrisio saltat / Rope dances*

5.6 Epilogue *Der Tanz und der Schmerz* for flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, fortepiano, string quartet. After Martin Buber (1981; new version 2005) . – Premiere (new version) Mannheim 2006; 5'
The original version (1981) is scored for two clarinets, trombone / alto trombone, harp / voice, dulcimer, percussion and string quartet.

5.7 Marginalie 1 *Äthermühle* for orchestra (2015/16). – Premiere Bamberg 2017; 5'

5.8 Marginalia 2 *Six Country Dances Lost for* orchestra (2017/18). – UA Brühl 2019; 15'

6 **Freunde** (1979-1984)
Schalkhäusser-Lieder for voice with piano (one performer) (1979/84). – I. *Muckn-Blues* (Fitzgerald Kusz); II. *Carol's Dream* (Carol Byl); III. *Ami-Schicks* (Gabriele Schreimel); IV. *Geburtstagsgrüße* (Fiorenza Hohl); V. *Die Gitarre blieb liegen* (W. Z.); VI. *Drums, Weg* (W. Z.); VII. *Der Aztekenstein* (Herbert Henck); VIII. *Miss TL* (W. Z.); *Interlude:Forty chords for Jon* (without lyrics) – IX. *Über das einzelne Weggehen* (Rolf Dieter Brinkmann); X. *Krikel-Krakel* (W. Z.); XI. *Sang* (Flemish, anonymous); XII. *Quasi-Swazi* (W. Z.); XIII. *Thumbstraße 68* (W. Z.); XIV. *Kein Tanzbär mehr sein* (W. Z.); XV. *Zwischen den Stühlen* (W. Z.); XVI. *Du, ich moch die fei immer nu* (Godehard Schramm). – UA Bremen 1982; ca. 45'

7 **Sternwanderung** (1982-1984)
7.1 Flechtwerk
7.1.1 *Glockenspiel* for one percussionist (1983). - Premiere Cologne 1983; 20'
7.1.2 *Klangfaden* for bass clarinet, harp and glockenspiel with klingstein .(Text ad libitum: Peter Handke, 1983). - I. *Jerusalem artichoke*; II. *onyx*. - Premiere Düsseldorf 1984; 15'
7.1.3 *Saitenspiel* for 18 instruments [2 fl., ob., 2 clar., alto sax.; 2 br., 1 trp.; 2 hf., mand., git., harpsichord; strc.; 2 vc., kb.] (Blackfeet Indian, 1983). - *I. movement*; *interlude*; *III. movement*; *song*. - Premiere Cologne 1983; 25'

7.2 Spielwerk
7.2 *Spielwerk* for soprano, (soprano, alto, tenor) saxophone and three ensembles [2 fl., 2 clar., 2 hr., hf., schlz., 2 vc.]. (Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder; Novalis, "Rad der Zeit / Traumwandlung," 1984). - I. *Wheel of Time*; II. *Air Figure*; III. *Dream;* IV. *Transformation*. - Premiere Cologne 1985; 25'

7.3 Appendix: Transcriptions
7.3.1 *Die spanische Reise des Oswald von Wolkenstein* for baritone, ud, qanun, nay, rabab and percussion [riqq, daff, mazhar, darabukka (one player [((1976; rev. 1993). - Premiere Cologne 1977; 25'
7.3.2 *Gaze. Beduinenlied* for oboe and tape (1976; rev. 1993). - Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1993; 4'
7.3.3 *Mandingo - Koroharfe* for mandolin, 7.3.3 (1976; rev. 1993). - UA Freiburg 2003; 3'
7.3.4 *Tre Stanze* for guitar (2005). - UA Melbourne 2006; 15'

8 **Vom Nutzen des Lassens** (after Meister Eckhart, 1981-1984)
8 Prologue *Gelassenheit* for alto with portative and two guitars (Meister Eckhart, 1975). - Premiere Darmstadt 1976; 10'

8.1 *In der Welt Sein* for horn solo (1982). - UA Aarau 1996; 7'

8.2 *Garten des Vergessens* for violin, violoncello and piano (1984). - Premiere Cologne 1993; 15'

8 Interlude *Ephemer* for violin, violoncello and piano (1981; rev. 1985). - Premiere Darmstadt 1982, Cologne 1985 (rev. version); 15'

8.3 *Lösung* for viola, violoncello and double bass (1983). - Premiere Cologne 1985; 20'

8.4 *Abgeschiedenheit* for piano (1982). - Premiere Cologne 1985; 20'

8 Epilogue *Selbstvergessen* for speaking voice with obbligato sounds (Meister Eckhart, 1984)
1991: Version für die Merce Cunningham Dance Company "for four players / singers" unter dem Titel *Change of Address*. - UA New York 1992; 20'

9 **Die Blinden** (1984)
9 *Die Blinden.* Static drama after Maurice Maeterlinck for twelve singers (six female, six male voices) and nine instruments [2 bass fl., Kb.klar., Hr., Alt-Pos.,Tenor-Tuba, 3 Kb.] (1984). - Premiere Gelsenkirchen 1986; 60'

9.1 *Die Blinden*, Anhang: *Singbarer Rest for* nine high female voices and sampler (Edmond Jabès: "Buch der Fragen", 1993). - UA Stuttgart 1995; 17'

9.2.1 *Das Zwiegespräch der beiden Rosen* for three female voices, three male voices and violoncello (Edmond Jabès: "Buch der Fragen", 2005). - Premiere Stuttgart 2006; 19'

9.2.2 *Le Dialogue des deux Roses* for three female voices, three male voices, baroque flute, baroque violin, viola da gamba, baroque cello (Edmond Jabès, 2011). - Premiere Tel-Aviv 2012; 17'

9 Marginalie *"... denn von Echos lebst du"* for violoncello solo (2010). Dieter Schnebel on the occasion of his 80th birthday. - Premiere Berlin 2010; 5'

10 **Übder die Dörfer** (1985/86)

10 *Über die Dörfer*. Dramatic song after Peter Handke for vocal soloists [S., Mezzos., A., high T., character T., high Bar., Bar., bass Bar.], three choirs (of 24 voices) and large orchestra [Fl. (Picc.), Fl., alto fl., *E-fl.* clar., clar., bass clar., SSax., ASax., TSax.; trp. picc., trp., bass trp., 2 Hr., euphonium, APos., Pos., bass pos.; Schlz. (Glsp., bells, alm bells, crotales), timpani; cel., git., mand., dulcimer, hf.; vl.: 6, 6, 6; va.: 4, 4, 4; Vc.: 3, 3, 3; 4 Kb.], 10th - Premiere Nürnberg 1992; 100'
In it received *From Near and Far for* three choral groups and obbligato sound sources (1977/81) and, as epilogue, *Return from the Hesperides* for orchestra (1985 .(

11 **Wüstenwanderung** (1986)

11 *Wüstenwanderung* for piano (Friedrich Nietzsche / Ezra Pound, 1986). - –
Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1988; 20'

11a *As I was walking along I came upon chance* for tenor saxophone, percussion and piano (2008). - Premiere Munich, Premiere Zurich 2016 (new version); 20'

11b *Kore* for flute, harp, percussion, clarinet and piano (2010). In memory of Gerd Lünenbürger (1958-2010). - Premiere Prague 2012; 10'

12 **Fragmente der Liebe** (1987)

12 *Fragmente der Liebe for* saxophone or basset horn and string quartet (after Roland Barthes, 1987). - I. *Emanatio*; II. *Conversio*; III. *Remeatio*. - Premiere Darmstadt 1988; 20'

12 Marginalie *The Paradoxes of Love for* soprano and soprano saxophone (Hadewijch [13th century] in English translation, 1987). - Premiere Basel 1988; 7'

13 **Geduld uind Gelegenheit** (1987-1989)

13 *Geduld und Gelegenheit* for violoncello and piano (1987/89). - I. *Hypneros*; II. *Sala della Pazienzia*; III. *Tyche*. - Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1990; 20'

14 **Residua** (1987-1989)

14.1 *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton* for bass flute and piano (Friedrich Nietzsche / Ezra Pound, 1987). - UA Fossanova 1987; 12'

14.2 *The Ecchoing Green* for violin and piano (1989 - .(I - .IV- .UA Witten 1990; 14'

15 **Ataraxia** (1987-1988)

15 *Ataraxia* for piano and orchestra (or for 13 instruments: Fl., Ob., Clar., ASax., Br., Trp., Pos., Tenortuba; Schlz. (2 players); 2 vl., va., vc.) (1987/88). After Lucretius. - I. *Daimon*; II. *Declinatio*; III. *Pathé*; IV. *Hedoné*; V. *Galène*; VI. *metacosmia*; VII. *simulacra*; VIII. *synastria*. - UA Donaueschingen 1989; 25'

16 **Hyperion** (1989-1990)

16 *Hyperion*. Epistolary opera after Hölderlin for writer, singer [S., high bar., bass bar.], instrumentalists [alto fl., ob.d'amore, basset horn; Hr., Pos. (alto pos.), tenor Tb.; Hf., Cymbalom; Schlz. (2 players); 2 vl., va., vc.] and written projections, 16th libretto: Dietrich E. Sattler (1989/90). - Premiere Frankfurt/M. 1992; 70'

17 **Über die Zeit** (1990-1992)

17.1 *Festina lente* for string quartet (1990). - I. *Patientia*; II. *Occasio*; III. *Poenitentia*; IV. *Regressus in infinitum*. - Premiere Erlangen 1990; 20'

17.2 *Distentio* for string trio [Vl., Va., Vc. [(1992). - Premiere Witten 1993; 20'

18 **Diastasis / Diastema** (1991-1993)

18.1 *Diastasis* for two orchestras without conductor (1991/92). After Plotinus, Enneade III, 7th - première Essen 1995; 15'

18.2 *Diastema* for divided orchestra, if possible without conductor (1993). - Premiere Cologne 1993; 15'

19 **Schatten der Ideen** (1992-2001)

19.1 *Schatten der Ideen 1* (after "Umbrae Idearum" by Giordano Bruno) for octet [bass clar., fg., hr., 2 vl., va., vc., Kb.] (1992). - Premiere New York 1993; 16'

19.2 *Schatten der Ideen 2* (with the essay "Unisono" by Hannes Böhringer) for piano, violin, viola and violoncello (1993). - Premiere Saarbrücken 1994; 15'

19.3 *Schatten der Ideen 3* for accordion (1994). - Premiere Berlin 1995; 14'

19.4 *De Umbris idearum. Schatten der Ideen 4* (new version) for piano and string quartet (2001; rev. 2010). - UA Graz 2001 (original version); 15'

19.5 *"Fear of Symmetry*. *Schatten der Ideen 5* for double septet [A: fl., ob., bass clar., 2 vl., va., vc. - B: clar., fg., hr., 2 vl., va., vc.] (2002; rev. 2007/08). - UA New York 2005; 16'
2017: Version for twelve solo strings [3 vl., va., 2 vc. + 2 vl., 2 va., vc., Kb.]. - UA Berlin 2018

19.6 *"Blueprint. Schatten der Ideen 6* for piano (2003). - Premiere Berlin 2004; 4'

19.6a *"blauPause". Shadows of Ideas 6a* for piano (2004). - – 4'

20 **Cura Curiositas** (1989-1994)

20.1 *Die Sorge geht über den Fluss* for violin solo, 20.1 -Part 1. in memoriam Stefan Schädler (1989/91); Part 2. for Marc Sabat (2000). - (complete) premiere Berlin 2001; 18' + 25'

20.2 *Ursache & Vorwitz* forhorn, violin, violoncello, piano, percussion and tape (1993/94). - UA Zwolle 1995; 10'

20.3 *Wanda Landowska's verschwundene Instrumente* for midi-harpsichord / fortepiano and randomized CD-Rom. - UA The Hague 1999; 25'
Contains: *A Little Grace* for (Hammer) Piano (1983; rev. 1994).
2001: Film version

20.4 *Aimide* for piano solo (1987; 2001/02). - *Prologue: Daimon*; I. *Cura*; II. *Fuga*; III. *Svara*; *Epilogue: Synastria*. - Premiere Munich 2005; 25'

21 **Ritornelle** (1989-2007)

21.1 *When I'm 84* for piano (1989). - UA Tokyo 1990; 3'

21.2 *Kindheitsblock* for viola and celesta (1994). - Premiere Berlin 1994; 10'

21.3 *Neue Apologie des Buchstaben B* for flute, clarinet, violin, viola and violoncello (1994). - Premiere Berlin 1994; 8'

21.4 *Songs of Innocence & Experience* forstring quartet and recording (1996; rev. 2006). - Premiere Berlin 2009; 25'

21.5 *Barn Snail Dance* for piano (1996). - UA Woodside / California 1996; 2

21.6 *Irrgarten (Choka for Junko)* for bass zither (1997). - – 13'
2008: Version for clavichord

21.7 *La Fleur inverse* for organ (2001/16). - I. *evoL. Fuga* (2001; rev. 2008). Heinz-Klaus Metzger for his 70th birthday. Registration: Hans-Peter Schulz; II. *Est-ce mars. 15 Chaconnes (Abruptio - Anadiplosis - Anaploce - Antistaechon - Hyperbaton - Bombilans - Catabasis - Catachresis - Heterolepsis - Pathopoeia - Superjectio - Anabasis - Mora - Cadentia duriuscula - Pausa)* (2016); III. *Stanza* (2016); IV. *Le Jongleur* (2016); V. *La belle Folie* (2016). - UA Schwaz 2017

21.7a *evoL* for organ (2001; rev. 2008). - UA Weingarten 2002; 13'

21.7b *evoL - Echo* for the [five] organs of Sancta Maria Cathedral in Visby
III.-V. are taken from *Tre Stanze* for guitar, 7.3.4 (2005). - UA Melbourne 2006; 15'

21.7c *La Fleur inverse* for guitar (2017). - I.-V. (see above)

21.8 *The missing nail at the river* for piano and toy piano (2003/04). - Premiere Berlin 2004; 5'

21.9 *Karussell* for violoncello and piano (2003)

21.10 *Gold* for oboe, violoncello and piano (2003). - – 1'

21.11 *Romanska Bågar* for piano left hand. After the poem of the same name by Tomas Tranströmer (2004). - Premiere Münster 2004; 6'

21.12 *Encore: Groll & Dank for* any instrumentation (up to six players) (1994). - Duration undetermined (ca. 1' to 2')

22 Erased-Retraced (after Brice Marden and Robert Creeley, 1993-2000).

22.1.1 *Shadows of Cold Mountain 1* for three tenor recorders (1993). - Premiere Berlin 1995; 13'

22.1.2 *Shadows of Cold Mountain 2* for violin, piano, bandoneon and two (analog) sinus generators (1995 - .(Premiere Berlin 1995; 10'

22.1.3 *Shadows of Cold Mountain 3* for flute, oboe and clarinet (1997). - Premiere Cologne 2001; 11'

22.1.4 *Shadows of Cold Mountain 4* for flute and tape (1997). - Premiere Cologne 2001; 8'

22.2.1 *Echoes / Umbrae Idearum* for mezzo-soprano, bass flute, basset horn, violin, viola and violoncello (Robert Creeley, 2000(. - Premiere Cologne 2001; 12'

22.2.2 *The Edge* for (mezzo)soprano, clarinet, violoncello, piano and tape (Robert Creeley, 1994 - .(UA Antwerp 1995; 13'

22.2.3 *Numbers. De Monade, Numero et Figura* for (mezzo)soprano, dulcimer, alto flute, oboe d'amore, basset horn, violin, viola and violoncello (Robert Creeley, 2000). - Premiere Cologne 2001; 12'

23 Randonnée (after Michel Serres, 1995-1999)

23.1 *Northwest Passage* for clarinet in *E-flat*, high trumpet in *F,* violin, double bass, percussion (two players) (1995). - UA Toronto 1996; 11'

23.2 *Streifzüge* for a pianist (with speaking voice: Landkarte, 1995). - UA Aarau 1996; 18'

23.3 *Parasit / Paraklet* for clarinet, string quartet (and tape ((1995). - Premiere Rümlingen 1997; 20'

23.4.1 *Monade / Nomade 1: Dit* for violoncello with voice and tape (Papua New Guinea, 1999). - UA Berlin 2005; 5'

23.4.2 *Monade / Nomade 2: Quattro Coronati* für Violoncello piccolo)oder Cello) mit Gesang (Martin Luther, 1999). - UA Berlin 2005; 10'

23.4.3 *Sha-ma-yim* for viola solo (2016)

23.5 *El Baile de la Conquista* for flute (piccolo, bass flute), oboe (cor anglais, ocarina) and percussion (1996). - Premiere Rümlingen 1997; 15'

23.6 *Seidenstraße.* Experimental film and electronically transformed music of Silk Road (2001). - – 15'

23.7 *Sarganserland* for voice, alpine bells / glockenspiel and Schwyzer Örgeli (Michael Donhauser, 2008). - Premiere Rümlingen 2008; 8'

23.8 *Chantbook of Modified Melodies* for double string duo [Vl.+Vl. / Va.+Vc. = string quartet] (2011). - UA Witten 2012; 10'

24 Suave Mari Magno - Clinamen I-VI (1996/98, 2010/13)

24 *Suave mari magno - Clinamen I-VI* for six orchestral groups, 24th - I. *Epicure's Garden. Transcription*; II. *an apology of the letter H*; III. *gothic lineament*; IV. *Ikat*; V. *Jerusalem artichoke*; VI. *wheel of time*. - UA Donaueschingen 2013; 34'
New version and extension of *Clinamen I-IV* (1996/98)
Preliminary version: *Clinamen I-IV* - premiere Munich 1998; 25'

25 Voces (2002-2019)

25.1 *Voces abandonadas* for piano (after Antonio Porchia), 25.1 -Primera serie .Helmut Lachenmann on his 70th birthday (2005); Segunda serie. Morton Feldman on his 80th birthday (2006). - UA Witten 2007; 21' + 16'

25.2 *Ten songs* (2002-2019)

Incanto

25.2 Prologue *me incanto* for mezzo-soprano solo (Biagio Marin, 2015) For Dieter Schnebel on his 85th birthday . - Premiere Berlin 2015; 2'

25.2.1 *Das irakische Alphabet* for mezzo-soprano with seven tuning forks (Joachim Sartorius, 2017(. - UA Cologne 2018; 12'

25.2.2 *Himmeln* for soprano solo (Felix Philipp Ingold, 2007). For Aribert Reimann on his 70th birthday. - Premiere Rümlingen 2008; 12'

25.2 Epilogue *Intervals* for mezzo-soprano (Robert Creeley, 2018(. - UA Berlin 2018; 2'

Colla voce (preferably a performer)

25.2.3 *Taula - Novo Ben* for voice and viola (Ramón Llull - Biagio Marin, 2002/03). - UA Munich 2008;16'

25.2.4 *Interieur* for voice and violin (Gottfried Benn, 2004). For Dieter Schnebel on his 75th birthday. - Premiere Munich 2008; 3'

25.2.5 *Verdrehtes Lied* for voice and violin (Michael Donhauser, 2004 .(- Premiere Munich 2008; 3'

25.2.6 *Das Gras der Kindheit* for voice and viola (Fuad Rifka, 2010 .(- UA Munich 2008; 9'

25.2.7 *Litanei des Auges for* mezzo-soprano and violoncello, 25.2.7 (Cees Nooteboom, 2006(. For Hans Zender on his 70th birthday. - Premiere Munich 2008; 6'

Three countertenor duos

25.2.8 *Aus der Bibliothek des Meeres (Från Havets Bibliotek)* for countertenor and baroque cello (Tomas Tranströmer, 2006(. - Premiere Munich 2008; 5'

25.2.9 *Vertont* for countertenor and baroque oboe (Felix Philipp Ingold, 2007(. - – 5'

25.2.10 *Cirkel* for countertenor and theorbo (Inger Christensen, 2019 .(- – 8'

25.3 *Vergebens sind die Töne*. Twelve songs after poems by Mikhail Lermontov and Osip Mandelstam for baritone and piano (2015/16). - I. *star*; II. *light*; III. *shadow*; IV. *banished*; V. overAll (I.-V.: Lermontov); VI. *tissue*; VII. *wasp;* VIII. *Glass*; IX. *Honeycomb*; X. *Enamel*; XI. *Sound*; XII. *sails* (VI.-XII.: Mandelstam); XIII. *epitaph: Zman* (Felix Philipp Ingold). - UA Munich 2017; 35'

Selection discography

The information is based on the discography in the Lexikon *Komponisten der Gegenwart*, 47th Nlfg., Munich (ed. text + kritik) June 2012.

Lokale Musik (1977-81). Complete recording:
Prologue: Ephemer. Piano Trio (1981): Konstantin Gockel (Vl.), Manuel Gerstner (Vc.), Deborah Richards (Pno.); 1 *Ländler Topographien* for Orchestra (1978/79): Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester Frankfurt, Cristóbal Halffter; 2 *Leichte Tänze (*1977/79) - 2.1 *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* for string quartet (1977): Konstantin Gockel / Gerhard Köhn (Vl.), Horst Enger (Va.), Manuel Gerstner (Vc.); 2.2 *25 Kärwa-Melodien* for two clarinets (1979): John Corbett/ Michael Riessler (Klar); 2.3 *20 Figuren-Tänze* for six instrumentalists [2 Klar, trp., 2 vl, Kb.] (1979): John Corbett / Michael Riessler (Klar), Bruno Piroth (Trp.), Konstantin Gockel / Gerhard Köhn (Vl.), Martin Ingenhütt (Kb.); 2.4 *15 Zwiefache* for guitar (1979): Hubert Machnik (Git.); 3 .*Wolkenorte* for harp with voice (1980): Gabriele Emde (Hf./Voice); 4 *Stille Tänze (*1979/80) - 4.1 *Erd-Wasser-Luft-Töne* for trombone, piano and bowed glass (1979): Stefan Sauvageot (Pos./Altpos.), John McAlpine (Pno.), Martin Schulz (bowed glass); 4.2 *Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen)* for percussion (1980): Martin Schulz (Schlz./Voice); 4.3 *Keuper* for string quartet (1980 ;(*Epilogue: The Dance and the Pain for* two clarinets, trombone / alto trombone, harp / voice, dulcimer, percussion and string quartet (1981): John Corbett / Michael Riessler (Klar.), Stefan Sauvageot (Pos./Altpos.), Gabriele Emde (Hf./Voice), John McAlpine ,(dulcimer)Martin Schulz (Schlz.), Konstantin Gockel / Gerhard Köhn (Vl.), Horst Enger (Va.), Manuel Gerstner (Vc.), Walter Zimmermann (Ltg.). - Edition Theater am Turm TAT 8201-03 (3 LP 1982)

Ländler Topographien for orchestra (I. *Phran*, 1978): Radio Symphony Orchestra Cologne, Antoni Wit. - Deutscher Musikrat / Deutsche Harmonia Mundi DMR 1023 ("Contemporary Music in the FRG," Episode 8, LP 1984; Recorded 1981).

When I'm Eighty-Four for piano (1989): Aki Takahashi (pno - .(.EMI Toce-6655, 2DJ-3828 ")Hyper-Beatles 2 ,"CD 1990.(

The Ecchoing Green for violin and piano (1989): Peter Rundel (Vl.), Hermann Kretzschmar (Pno - .(.Witten Chamber Music Days 1990 (CD 1990(

The Paradoxes of Love (1987): Marcus Weiss (Sax.). - Xopf Records / Marcus Weiss: 10 (CD 1991)

Festina lente for string quartet (1990): Arditti Quartet. - Auvidis Montaigne 782036 ("Arditti Edition 18", CD 1994).

25 Kärwa melodies for clarinet (1979): Roger Heaton (clar.). - Clarinet Classics CC0009 (CD 1994)

Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton Tone for bass flute and piano (1987): Laura Chislett (bass fl.), Stephanie McCallum (pno - .(.ABC Classics 446738-2 ")The Flute in Orbit ",CD 1995).

Lösung for viola, violoncello and double bass (1983): Eckart Schloifer (Va.), Othello Liesmann (Vc.), Wolfgang Güttler (Kb.) - Koch-Schwann 3-5037/0 ("50 Years of New Music in NRW", CD 1996)

Die Blinden. Statisches Drama (1984); *Singbarer Rest for* nine high female voices and sampler (1993): Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart, Junges Philharmonisches Orchester Stuttgart, Manfred Schreier. - Wergo 6510-2 (CD 1996)

Fragmente der Liebe for saxophone or basset horn and string quartet (1987): Johannes Ernst (TSax.), Ensemble United Berlin - .Col legno WWE 1CD 31890 (CD 1997(

Shadows of Cold Mountain 3 for flute, oboe and clarinet (1997): bläsertrio recherche. - Witten Chamber Music Days 1998 (CD 1998). - Again on DMR

traditional ensembles 15 Zwiefache for guitar (1979): Geoffrey Morris (git.). - ABC Classics 465 701-2 (CD 2000)

Ländler Topographien for orchestra (III *Tophran*, 1977/81): SWR Symphony Orchestra Baden-Baden and Freiburg, Cristóbal Halffter. - RCA / Deutscher Musikrat 74321 73513 2 ("Music in Germany 1950-2000: New World Music," CD 2000; recording Donaueschingen 1980)

Saitenspiel for 18 instruments (1983): Ensemble Modern, Peter Eötvös - .RCA / Deutscher Musikrat 74321 73502 2 ")Music in Germany 1950-2000 :Modern Ensembles 1970-1990 ,"CD ;2000recording of the premiere, Cologne 1983(

Wüstenwanderung for piano (1986): Daniel N. Seel (Pno - .(.Hat Art 139 (CD 2001 (

Distentio for string trio (1992 ;(*Schatten der Ideen 2* for piano quartet (1993); *Ursache & Vorwitz* forhorn, violin, violoncello, piano, percussion and tape (1993/94); Shadows of*cold mountain 3 for* flute, oboe and clarinet (1997): Ensemble Recherche. - Mode 111 (CD 2002)

Beginner's Mind for a pianist with singing voice (1975 ;(*Seclusion for* piano (1982 ;(*Desert Wandering for piano* (1986 ;(*When I'm 84* for piano (1989) ;*Barn Snail Dance for piano (*1996) ;*Wanda Landowska's Missing Instruments for* midi harpsichord / fortepiano and randomized CD-Rom (1998): Ian Pace (pno - .(.Métier MSV 92057 (2 CD 2003(

Wüstenwanderung for piano (1986); *Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton* for bass flute and piano (1987 ;(*Geduld und Gelegenheit* for violoncello and piano (1987/89); *The Echoing Green* for violin and piano (1989): Dietmar Wiesner (bass fl.), Michael Bach (vc.), Peter Rundel (vl.), Hermann Kretzschmar (pno.). - Mode 150 (CD 2005)

Wand a Landowskas verschwundene Instrumente for midi harpsichord / fortepiano and randomized CD-Rom (1998): Ian Pace (Pno .(. -Stichting Prime, Beginner Press (CD-Rom 2005).

Der Tanz und der Schmerz for flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, fortepiano and string quartet (1981; new version 2005): members of the National Theater Mannheim - .Genuin Music GEN 86078 ")Magic Flute Remixed ,"CD 2006(

Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen) for percussion (1980): Christian Dierstein (Schlz - .(.RCA / Deutscher Musikrat 74321 73600 2 ")Music in Germany 1950-2000 Music for :Solo Instruments 1990-2000 ",CD 2006.(

Labyrinth for bass zither (1997): Georg Glasl (bass zither - .(Cavalli Records CCD 115 (CD 2007 (

The missing nail at the river for piano and toy piano (2003/04): Heather O'Donnell (pno - .(.Mode 211 ")Responses to Ives ;"CD 2009 (

CD 1: *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* (string quartet with drone, 1977); *Keuper* (1980); *Festina lente* (1990); *Songs of Innocence & Experience (*1996; rev. 2006). - CD 2: *Die Sorge geht über den Fluss* for violin solo (1989/2000 :(*Taula - Novo Ben* for voice and viola (Ramón Llull - Biagio Marin, 2002/03); *Zehn Fränkische Tänze* (string quartet, 1977): Susanne Zapf (Vl.); Sonar Quartett (Susanne Zapf / Kirsten Harms, Vl.; Nikolaus Schlierf, Va.; Cosima Gerhardt, Vc.). - Mode 245/46 (2 CD 2012)

Klangfaden for bass clarinet, harp and glockenspiel with Klingstein (1983 ;(*Saitenspiel for* 18 instruments (1983 ;(*Ataraxia* for piano and orchestra (1987/88 ;(*Kore* for flute, harp, percussion, clarinet and piano (2010): members of Ensemble Adapter; Ensemble Modern, Peter Eötvös; James Clapperton (pno.), SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg ,Ingo Metzmacher; Ensemble Adapter, Manuel Nawri (cond.) - .World Edition [Cologne] 0021 ")Synastria ;"CD 2013 .(

Lied im Wüsten-Vogel-Ton for bass flute and piano (1987): Klaus Schöpp (bass fl.), Yoriko Ikeya (pno - .(.edition kopernikus 002 (CD 2014 (

Suave mari magno - Clinamen I-VI for six orchestral groups (1996/98, 2010/13): SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg, Pascal Rophé. - Neos 11411-14 ("Donaueschinger Musiktage 2013", 4 SACD 2014).

Wüstenwanderung for piano (1986): Andrew Zhou (Pno - .(.Tessiture tess 002 (CD 2014 (

AIMIDE (from: *Cura*, *Fuga*, *Svara,* Titus Livius, 2001/02); *The missing nail at the river* for piano and toy piano (2003/04 ;(*Blaupause* (2003); *Blueprint (*2004); *Romanska Bågar* for piano (left hand) (Tomas Tranströmer, 2004 ;(*Voces abandonadas* (after Antonio Porchia, 2005/06): Nicolas Hodges (pno.). - Wergo 73562 (CD 2016)

As I was walking along I came upon chance for tenor saxophone, percussion and piano (2008): Trio Accanto (Marcus Weiß ,TSax.; Christian Dierstein, Schlz.; Nicolas Hodges, Pno - .(.Wergo 73642 (CD 2018 .(

Lokale Musik, 5 (1977-81). Complete recording: orchestras, ensembles, soloists. - Mode 305/07 (3 CD 2019)

CD 1 + 2: identical with TAT 8201-03 (3 LP 1982)

CD 3: *Seiltänze* for Violoncello and Orchestra (2002/06; Part I): Lucas Fels (Vc.), Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, Erik Nielsen; *Ephemer* for Violin, Violoncello and Piano (rev. version, 1981; rev. 1985): Yulia Kopylova (Vl.), Reynard Rott (Vc.), Yun-Qi Wong (Pno.); *Erde-Wasser-Luft-Töne. Stille Tänze*. For trombone, piano and string-glass-playing (1979): Dylan Chmura-Moore (Pos.), Stephen Drury (Pno.), Walter Zimmermann (Glass-playing); *Riuti (Rodungen und Wüstungen)* (1980): Christian Dierstein (Schlz. / voice); *Wolkenorte für* Harfe mit Stimme (1980): Franziska Huhn (Hf. / voice).

Filmography

Epilogue and *Hyperion V "Wenn aus der Ferne ..."* from the epistolary opera *Hyperion* (Dietrich E. Sattler, 1989/90): Beth Griffith (p.), Ensemble 13, Manfred Reichert (cond.). Moritz Sattler (animation). - Beginner Press (Video 1992, DVD); 6'36''

Wanda Landowskas verschwundene Instrumente [Wanda Landowska's vanished instruments] (1998; film version 2000): Deborah Richards (fortepiano/MIDI harpsichord), Hanns Zischler (voice), Nanne Meyer (drawings), Max von Velsen (scans of archive materials). Live version programmed by Digital Design Cologne. Wolfgang Vieweg (sound engineer). Marc Sabat and Peter Sabat (realization of the soundtrack, computer, MIDI and video parts). Willem de Vries, Amsterdam, documented Wanda Landowska's book collection and her instrument collection. Denise Restout of the Landowska Center in Lakeville/Connecticut provided photographs. With support from Stichting Prime, Groningen, and the Institute for New Music at the UdK Berlin. - Beginner Press (DVD 2000); 27'57''

Seidenstraße [Silk Road]. Experimental film and electronically transformed music of the Silk Road (2001): Mario Bertoncini (texts by Leonardo da Vinci); Esther Ferrer (performance, photos); Roro Kokkas (text by an Afghan woman); Turgun Alimatov / Talip Özkan / Kim Chuk Pa (musicians of the Silk Road). Ulrike Surmann (Curator Diözesanmuseum Cologne). Larry Polansky (sound hack), Marc Sabat (sound mastering); Nicola von Velsen (camcorder), Peter Sabat (film direction); Vassily Kokkas (sound direction). - Beginner Press (DVD 2001); 24'05''

The Edge (2001). Performances at the Kunstmuseum Bonn of *The Edge* for (mezzo)soprano, clarinet, violoncello, piano and tape (Robert Creeley, 1994) with ensemble recherche and of *Lösung* for viola, violoncello and double bass (1983) with Trio

Basso. With pictures by Robert Ryman. Robert Creeley (text). Peter Sabat (video production). - Beginner Press (DVD 2001); 35'25''

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Zimmermann 1976: Desert Plants. Conversations with 23 American Musicians, Vancouver (A. R. C. Publications) 1976 - New edition expanded with German translations, Cologne (Beginner Press) 1981 - Includes conversations with:
Morton Feldman / Christian Wolff / John Cage / Philip Corner / Jim Burton / Phil Glass / Steve Reich / Robert Ashley / Alvin Lucier / Joan La Barbara / Pauline Oliveros / David Rosenboom / Richard Teitelbaum / Larry Austin / James Tenney / J. B. Floyd about Conlon Nancarrow / La Monte Young / Charlemagne Palestine / Charles Morrow / Garrett List / Frederic Rzewski / John McGuire / Ben Johnston about Harry Partch / Afterword: On the Search from the Beginning (Reinhard Oehlschlägel in conversation with Walter Zimmermann)

Volans, Kevin / Zimmermann 1979: *Conversation with Walter Zimmermann*, in: *Feedback Papers* 13.1977; Reprint: *Feedback Papers* 1-16, 1979, 338-341

Zimmermann, Walter: Insel Musik, Cologne (Beginner Press) 1981. - Contains:
Part 1: Written 1970-1980
Komponieren kann jeder. [Anyone can compose.] Interview with the Abendzeitung Nürnberg, May 5, 1970, 14
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[Zimmermann:] *Orgon Stufe 1: Hörverstehen [Orgon Level 1: Listening Comprehension]*, 66-69.
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Continental Divide. Eine Geschichte über das Wegfahren und über die Beziehung von Landschaft und Emotion [*Continental Divide. A Story of Driving Away and of the Relationship of Landscape and Emotion]* [Aug. 13-16, 1976], 156-165.
[Weiler, Margret / Zimmermann, Walter:] *Die Musik der Zigeuner in ihrer heutigen Beschaffenheit auf den historischen Stationen ihrer Migration von Indien nach Europa* [Projektbeschreibung] [*The music of the Gypsies in its present condition on the historical stages of their migration from India to Europe* [project description]], 168-174.
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