

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN KLAVIERSTÜCKE I-XI

BERNHARD WAMBACH-HADEMANN





foto Roberto Masotti

Klavierstücke I-XI

My first encounter with Stockhausen's music was through a record I heard during the sixties.

The pieces that so completely enmeshed me were entitled "Refrain" and "Kontakte". This was music the likes of which I had never heard before. Shortly after this, a record was released with the piece "Klavierstück X" (piece for piano), played by Frederic Rzewski in a way that was unrivaled. Once I had heard this piece as well, I wanted to play the "Klavierstück X". In the seventies, when I felt that I was ready, thanks to having studied Schönberg's works, I began to work on "Klavierstücke" by Stockhausen. First I studied the IX, then the X and XI - and also "Kontakte" for electronic sound, piano and drums. But I was already so eager to play all the works by this composer, works that use my instrument in solo pieces or in an ensemble. So in the early eighties, I added "Klavierstücke I - VIII" to my repertoire. I began to study and explore them more deeply by collaborating with Stockhausen in a number of rehearsals and concerts. Shortly after this, I began to study the pieces in the opera cycle "Licht (Light)" (XII, XIII, XIV). The concerts I was giving at the time were often dominated by the music of Stockhausen.

Preparing these pieces again for Florence for me means a basic rethinking of my interpretations of the time, this time also using Stockhausen's sketches for the composition as reference. This work, performed at a "historic" distance of about 25 to 30 years with respect to the first piece I studied, has shown me completely new perspectives. Comparing the sketches and the early versions of the pieces with the definitive scores highlights the way the composer developed his ideas to make them clearer and more - "playable". An important part of the development lies in the way the notes are distributed in the various registers of the piano. After Stockhausen found the time scale while working on the composition "Gruppen" for three orchestras, he further perfected the tempi of "Klavierstücke V - VIII". The pieces XI (an aleatoric open form concept), IX and X (completed in 1961) represents the conclusion and culmination of the sudden and intense development that took place in the fifties.

I - IV (composed between 1952 and 1953) were the precise ways of thinking that led to the first forms of "Gruppen". Transcribed again with traditional notation, these pieces could be listened to as a form of "expressionism" within "serialism".

V - VIII (composed between 1954 and 1955, VI only reached its definitive form in 1961), dedicated to the incomparable David Tudor, uses certain techniques that this pianist had discovered for himself: resonances achieved with the ingenious use of the pedals, colours created by touching keys in a completely new way allows for an immersion into the interior of the sounds, the resonances and harmonies. If in the pieces I - IV you find a sound that resembles the "expressionism" of the Second Viennese School, in the pieces V - VIII the many colours of a new mode appear and make us perceive similarities to Debussy's "Impressionism". The great variety of sounds move in the new flow and breathing space of the tempo. The various stages of the compositional process of "Klavierstück VI" make it possible to follow Stockhausen's development during that period step by step.

XI: this aleatoric piece was composed in 1956 with yet another new concept in the development of Stockhausen's compositional style. "Open" forms are also found in "Refrain" and "Zyklus".

IX and X were composed based on sketches of structures created in 1954. Now making a completely free use of his compositional resources, Stockhausen managed to create two unparalleled masterpieces.

The processes inherent in these pieces are clear. In IX, the monotone structures are transformed into more complex, articulated structures. In "Klavierstück IX", one of the most important works in the piano music of the twentieth century, chaotic structures are transformed into ordered structures. In the piano piece XIII (1981) we can see the process in reverse. Very clear and precise structures are increasingly dissolved.

(Bernhard Wambach-Havemann, September 2012)

Biography

Bernhard Wambach, born 1948, studied with Konrad Meister in Bremen and Peter-Jürgen Hofer in Hamburg.

From 1973 to 1977, he attended courses given by Friedrich Gulda. From 1978 to 1982, he participated in the International Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (International Summer Courses for New Music) in Darmstadt. He won the Internationalen Arnold Schönberg-Wettbewerb (International Arnold Schönberg Competition) in 1979 and the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis (Kranichstein Award) in 1982. He gives concerts in the European centres of music and in Israel, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, China and India. He is a guest performer at the important music Festivals such as the Berliner Festwochen, the Berlin and Venice Biennials, the BBC, the Wiener Festwochen, the Festival d'automne, Paris, the Donaueschinger Musiktage, Frankfurtfest, the Pro Musica Nova Bremen and many others. He has worked with many conductors: Michael Gielen (SWR Symphonie, Berliner Symphonieorchester, ORF Symphonieorchester), Hans Zender (SR-Symphonieorchester), Myung-Whun Chung (SR-Symphonieorchester), Peter Eötvös (SWR Symphonieorchester), H. Wagasuki (WDR-Symphonieorchester), G. Bertini (WDR Symphonieorchester), Lothar Zagrosek (SWR Symphonieorchester), J. Kalitzke (SWR Symphonieorchester, NDR Symphonieorchester) and many others. He performs the classic repertoire of concerti, chamber music and works for solo piano, but a large part of his artistic work is dedicated to performing contemporary works, subsequently leading him to work with such composers as Stockhausen, Boulez, Nono, Xenakis, Kagel, Rihm, Lachenmann, Hosokava, Marc Andre and many others. He has made a good hundred releases for radio, and recordings of a number of concerti, again for radio. He has also recorded extensively for television. His releases on CD include works by Stockhausen, Boulez, Rihm, Lachenmann, Zimmermann, Kalitzke and Dillon with the labels CBS, Kairos, Koch-Schwann, CPO, Neos and Col Legno. He has taught piano courses for the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (International Summer Courses for New Music) in Darmstadt, at the Centre Acanthes in Avignon, at the Akiyoshidai Music Festival in Japan, and also in Korea, Italy, China and Taiwan. Since 1989, Wambach has taught piano at the Folkwang-Universität der Künste in Essen. He was artistic director of a workshop for composers at the "Internationalen Serge Prokofieffestival 1991" in Duisburg and the international festival "Arnold Schönberg und Musik aus Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz". From 1995 to 2006, he organized the concerts at the Haniel-Akademie in collaboration with the city of Duisburg.

In 2003, he released CD recordings of works by Scelsi and Rihm for the preminent label Kairos. In 2009, the label Neos released the piano concerto by Toshio Hosokava, which he also performed at its world premiere in 1999.



foto Roberto Masotti



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LC-00129

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CD 1

1	Klavierstück I	1952/53	03:47
2	Klavierstück II	1952/53	01:43
3	Klavierstück III	1952/53	00:32
4	Klavierstück IV	1952/53	03:33
5	Klavierstück V	1954	05:53
6	Klavierstück VII	1954	06:16
7	Klavierstück VIII	1954	02:04
8	Klavierstück VI	1954/61	29:52
		total time	53:42

CD 2

1	Klavierstück XI	Version 1	1956	07:36
2	Klavierstück XI	Version 2	1956	06:44
3	Klavierstück IX		1954/61	11:11
4	Klavierstück X		1954/61	27:41
		total time		53:16



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