

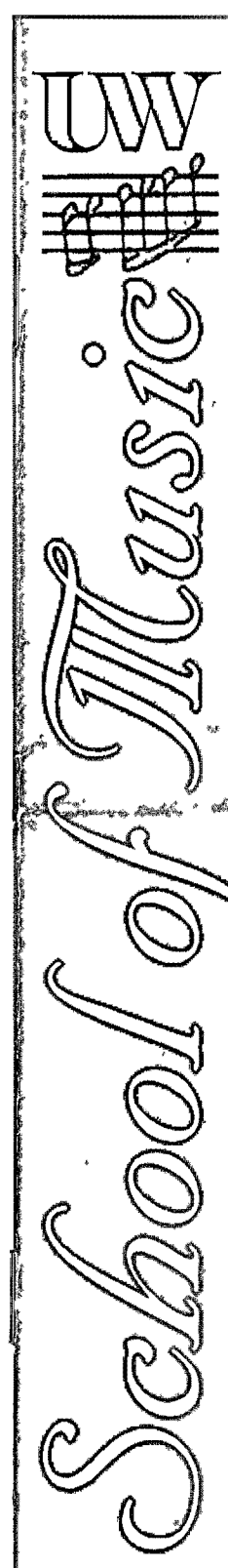
East. In addition Stähler has organized festivals and multimedia events worldwide. As composer in residence he was invited—among others—to Japan by the Japan Foundation, several times to the Djerassi Artist-in-Residence program in California (USA), to the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf-Duisburg (Germany), to the Computer Music Center at the Stanford University (USA), to the Center for Art and Media, ZKM, in Karlsruhe (Germany), to Northwestern University Chicago, the University of Illinois, Urbana, and the KORE Ensemble in Montreal (Canada). Mr. Stähler is presently a guest professor for composition at the Evergreen State College in Olympia (Washington).

ROBERT SCHUMANN

MÄRCHENERZÄHLUNGEN, Op. 132

Although there is no direct reference to a narrative or an underlying program, these pieces present a strong epic character. The setting is condensed, the events increasingly agitated and the form rhapsodically free in typically Schumanesque fashion—despite the resemblance to the three-part form that prevails in character pieces. There is a freedom of inner experience with many facets of music narrative “from olden times” but is a freedom mixed with an acute and at times almost painful awareness of the irrevocability of that past.

[Hartmut Lück]



University of Washington
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

THE
CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

COMPACT
DISC
C67
2004
5-25

MODERN MUSIC
FROM GERMANY

Compositions by

ROBERT HP PLATZ
HELMUT LACHENMANN
GERHARD STÄBLER
ROBERT SCHUMANN

7:30 PM
May 25, 2004
MEANY THEATER

DAF# 14634

PROGRAM

CD# 14,635

1 COMMENTS, J-F Durand

2 KLAVIERSTÜCK NR. 3 (1988).....8:41..... ROBERT HP PLATZ (b. 1951)

Regina Yeh, piano

3 RAUMFORM, for clarinet solo (1981/82).....4:39..... ROBERT HP PLATZ

Del Hungerford, clarinet

4 ROUNDLING, for violin and piano (1991).....4:25..... ROBERT HP PLATZ

Kyung Sun Chee, violin / Regina Yeh, piano

5 TOCCATINA, for violin (1985).....5:10..... HELMUT LACHENMANN (b. 1935)

Eric Rynes, violin

6 STEINE, for two pianos (1993).....6:55..... ROBERT HP PLATZ

Harumi Makiyama / Michelle Chang, pianos

INTERMISSION

8 IKAR, for violin solo (2001).....1:20..... ROBERT HP PLATZ

Pamela Yu, violin

7 SENKO-HANA-BI, for violin solo (2000).....3:15..... ROBERT HP PLATZ

Pamela Yu, violin

4:39

9 MOON'SCAPE, for flute and guitar (1996)... GERHARD STÄBLER (b. 1949)

Ada-Rose Williams, flute / Benjamin Wilson, guitar

10 MÄRCHENERZÄHLUNGEN op. 132, 14:44
for clarinet, viola and piano (1853/54) ... ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

- I. Lebhaft, nicht zu schnell
- II. Lebhaft und sehr markiert
- III. Ruhiges Tempo, mit zartem Ausdruck
- IV. Lebhaft, sehr markiert

Matthew Nelson, clarinet / Brianna Atwell, viola
Sachi Hirakouji, piano

ROBERT HP PLATZ

KLAVIERSTÜCK NR. 3 was at first conceived as the solo movement to be written last for my ensemble piece *from fear of thunder, dreams...* Imagination would not let itself get tied down, however, and I had to interrupt writing on it and start again twice: once as the originally intended part of the composition for ensemble and again, this time following the new ideas and on a larger scale, as *KLAVIERSTÜCK NR. 3*.

Kristi Becker, to whom this piece is dedicated, premiered it in a concert of the Hessischer Rundfunk in Frankfurt on October 24, 1989.

Robert HP Platz was born in 1951 in Baden-Baden, Germany. He studied with Wolfgang Fortner and Karlheinz Stockhausen, as a conductor with Francis Travis. Further studies in parapsychology, later computer composition (IRCAM, France).

Among numerous awards and prizes, Platz was composer in residence at the Villa Serbelloni (Rockefeller Foundation) and spent several months in Japan upon a grant by Japan Foundation.

Platz has taught and published in many European countries, the U.S. and Japan. He has appeared or had his works performed in all the important festivals in Europe, including the Salzburg Festival. He lives in Cologne, Germany.

PORTRAIT ON ROBERT HP PLATZ,

[© MAX NYFFELER]

The idea of a work that develops processually was already present in germinal form in the early works of Robert HP Platz. In the course of an output that now stretches over a quarter-century, this idea has gradually taken shape, finally coming to the fore in the composition *Grenzgänge Steine* for soprano, 2 pianos and orchestra (1989-93). What is involved here is neither 'work in progress', in the sense of an innately incomplete single work, nor simple cycles of pieces.

The conception is different, and unmistakable. Today, Robert HP Platz regards all his work as a continually unfolding overall architecture, within which individual works are loosely grouped into work-complexes. The linking factors between them are motives, instrumentation, or an organisation of tonal centres and structural types that extends from one work to another. But this is not done in a quasi-serial way, through the advance planning of all structural data. Instead of strategic calculation, Platz's work involves a more intuitive grasp of organic growth, where the laws of development arise from the process itself. Development does not proceed in a goal-directed way, but forms a continual musical flow, whose various windings and branchings feel their way towards an unknown destination.

Within such constellations, individual works may overlap or interlock, permitting partly simultaneous performances; alternatively, they form conglomerates or transitional formations, loosely grouped around a centre of gravity. The basic notion is that of an enormous meta-composition, in a constant state of becoming; to that extent, its significance would be conceptual, rather than aiming at literal realization—or at least, not as a totality. As far as the overall process—the succession and interpenetration of individual works—is concerned, Robert HP Platz talks in terms of 'form polyphony'. An excerpt was heard at the Donaueschingen Music Days in 1996: a single performance comprised the following works, partly interlocked: *Andere Räume* (tape and percussion), *Turm* and *Weiter* (orchestra), *nerv II* (violin, piano & winds) and *Echo II* (violin, piano, winds & percussion). Whereas the overall architecture tends to follow intuitive rules, the details of each individual work are thoroughly worked out—a legacy of the serial thinking with which Platz has had a deep engagement. But here too, spontaneous artistic decisions take precedence over abstract definitions.

The background to this novel attempt to synthesize macro- and micro-structure is the striving towards an 'integral' artwork which may be understood as the sum of all previous artistic experience, depicting the world, as it appears to the composing subject, as fully as possible. The first attempt to master these problematics was the exuberant major project *Schwelle* (1973-78), which occupies an exemplary place at the beginning of Platz's evolution as a composer. However, only Parts I and III were realised (Munich 1979, Cologne 1981); a complete performance of all six parts fell foul of organisational practicalities. This experience subsequently persuaded the composer not to impose 'integrality' though a single work, but to seek it in constellations of works and ultimately, in a life's work.

To date, Robert Platz has composed in all genres, often incorporating music on tape: music theatre, orchestral works, ensemble works, chamber music and solo pieces. Yet his list of works also includes music for children, witty, and never banal. His artistic interests cover a broad spectrum. Next to composing, the most important activity for him is conducting. This began with direction of the 'Ensemble Köln' which he founded in 1979; nowadays, it increasingly involves guest appearances with international orchestras and ensembles. Friendship with visual artists and authors, an affinity with French culture that goes

back to his infancy, and a fascination with Japanese culture have provided further inspirations for his multi-faceted musical world.

ROBERT HP PLATZ

RAUMFORM (form of space) is one of my most utopian pieces. Before composing the piece, I made a fair amount of psychoacoustical tests. Some of the results are to be found in this piece. Some of the psychoacoustical phenomena that I studied—e.g. a sound oscillating between the instrument and a close point away from the instrument—can best be heard in a rather small hall or by listening to the CD with headphones on. Others work better in a greater hall. I personally prefer to hear the piece in fairly large hall, where the "undirected" sounds of the beginning really come from nowhere in space. Maybe one should listen to this piece several times under changing acoustical conditions, a recording with changing conditions from chapter to chapter in the score being unthinkable anyway...

Therefore, this piece is utopian, since it draws its rules from receptive processes while exceeding the conditions of one specific space by far. This piece seems to search for its own, imaginary space.

ROBERT HP PLATZ

ROUNDLING was written in connection with *RELAIS*, *L'oeil du Silence* and *ATILA* as the first piece of this cycle in summer 1991. After *SCHREYAHN* for violoncello and instrumental groups dealing with the tiny round village Schreyahn.

Source of inspiration for this short and silent piece I found in a poem by Heinz Kattner titled *Solo for Violin* and also dealing with Schreyahn:

Den Blick aufs Notenpapier
zugleich nach innen das Gesicht
als ob ein Wind
Glut weithin sichtbar macht

The eyes fixed on the music paper
at the same time facing inwards
as if a wind
made glowing visible from far away

Später Hölderlin und Abzählreime
Ich spüre was was du nicht siehst
vor dem Gasthaus sehen wir nach
oben ein Vollmond mit Schleier
roundling in the night singt sie
zu mir herüber und lehnt sich an
ihren anderen Begleiter wie ein
Schatten lange starre ich in den
Himmel bis mir die Augen brennen
und ich fast blind bin für die Nähe
es heisst strangers sage ich leise

Hölderlin later and nursery rhymes
I feel something that you can't see
in front of the pub we look
up to a full moon, veiled
"roundling in the night" she sings
over towards me and leans
on her other companion like a
shadow I stare up into the
sky until my eyes are burning
and I'm almost blind for this closeness
it runs: "strangers..." I say softly

HELMUT LACHENMANN

TOCCATINA

A *toccata* is a piece intended to challenge and display a musician's command of her instrument; the word *toccata* implies a short *toccata*. But this is only half of the meaning of Lachenmann's clever choice of title. In English and in French, a violinist "plays" (*joue*) the violin, while in Italian and in Spanish, she "touches" (*toccare, tocar*) the violin. And from the outset of this piece, the sounds are all produced by touching the screw (hair-tightener) of the bow to the string, something conceptually (and physically!) orthogonal to normal "playing" with the bow. This novel sound draws the listener in not only on its own merit, but because it is exceedingly quiet, demanding unusually intense concentration from the listener. Variations on this sound are developed while traversing precisely-notated pitches over three octaves, notated with one staff for the left hand, one for the right. Rhythm and contour are kept simple to provide an anchor for the ear. The minimally-sustaining blips transition to a controlled drumming of the stick on the strings, and finally to a series of pairs of contrasting sustainable noises, which are eventually sustained fully and tapered into absolute silence. Helmut Lachenmann was born, raised, and educated in music theory and piano performance in Stuttgart; he returned there in 1981 to teach composition and theory at his alma mater, the Stuttgart Musikhochschule. The Second Viennese School of composition, particularly Webern, inspired him; his introduction to and subsequent study with Luigi Nono, dating from the 1957 Darmstadt summer courses, greatly affected his artistic vision. He attracted much international attention with his compositions when he moved from using timbre as merely one of several tightly-controlled parameters, to relentlessly pursuing new timbres, and ways in which to build structure and drama from them. Lachenmann has called his technique *musique concrète instrumentale*, and has likened his process to "building an instrument" out of a collection of innovative sound-producing methods, and then finding a way to write a suitable piece for each new "instrument." His approach was fully realized for perhaps the first time in 1969 and 1970, in his cello piece *Pression* ("pressure") and his piano piece *Guero* (after the Latin American instrument). The former builds tension and propulsion from an exploration of the often unstable sounds that can be produced by applying pressure in different ways to several parts of the cello with various parts of the bow, hand, and fingers. The latter has the pianist exclusively scrape his fingernails along the surface of the keys, the tuning pins, and the strings. Some detractors, such as Henze, seem to have misunderstood Lachenmann's music, interpreting it as something negative, meant to oppose all attempts to produce tones in a natural manner. In response, Lachenmann has taken to writing and lecturing widely on his music, explaining that his devotion to new constellations of sound is inherently positive. His supporters have awarded him many accolades, including the coveted Ernst von Siemens prize in 1997.

[notes and biography by Eric Rynes]

ROBERT HP PLATZ

STEINE (Stones)

In the title of this short piece (written in connection with the orchestral score *GRENZGÄNGE*) several chains of associations are coming together: "Steine" is the tiny village, where at the end a trail goes off into the fields to Schreyahn, where I had conceived *SCHREYAHN*, which belongs also to the context of *GRENZGÄNGE STEINE*.

I had just decided to fix this topographical and musical neighbourhood in the title, when we found the stone again that served us while in Schreyahn to keep the door open to the outside. The very same evening, reading in a book about the Japanese tea ceremony, I found the photograph of a stone, tied cross-wise with a chord, that shows the way in the Japanese tea-garden. It looked a bit like my stone from Schreyahn. Which now lies in my room, lovingly tied cross-wise with a rope. The way it shows is leading outside towards the park, away, further and further...

ROBERT HP PLATZ

IKAR: of course, the association of Ikarus has to do with it. Even more so the Japanese word *ikari* for anger.

ikari, if written with different kanji, also means anchor, maybe a hint to Ikarus' destiny to be grounded?

ROBERT HP PLATZ

SENKO-HANA-BI (1997) first performed in original version for sho by Mayumi Miyata at takefu Festival, 1998, Japan

...at night in Yoshitake's garden --- the idea to have some little fireworks... the most beautiful towards the end: small strips of rice-straw called *senko-hana-bi*", impregnated by some powder that makes most tiny and beautiful bonsai-fireworks...

[August 21, 1997]

GERHARD STÄBLER

MOON'SCAPE for flute and guitar was written during various trips to Houston (Texas) and to various places in Germany in 1996. The work belongs to a number of compositions that explore independent rhythms and dynamics for each instrument of the ensemble, in order to enjoy the resulting conflicts. Gerhard Stäbler (born 1949) is one of the leading composers of his generation. Possessed of a radical mind, technical skill and phenomenal breadth of imagination and passions, he is internationally known for his orchestra works, operas, chamber music, and works for solo instruments. He has performed many concert and lecture tours in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East and the Far