

AUTUMN

With songs and dances the peasants celebrate the happiness of a fine harvest, and after being greatly kindled by bacchic spirits, their rejoicing ends with sleep. Thus everyone quits both his singing and his dancing. The air is pleasant and moderate, and the season invites everyone to the agreeableness of a sweet sleep.

At the break of day the hunter goes to the hunt with guns, dogs, and horns; he puts the wild beast to flight and tracks him down.

Tired and terrified by the loud noise of the guns and dogs, the beast, now in danger of being wounded, longs for escape, but is overcome and dies.

WINTER

To tremble frozen in the icy snow; to be buffeted by the wild wind; to stamp one's frozen feet; to have excessive cold set one's teeth to chattering;

To pass to a fireside of quiet and contentment, while outside the downpour bathes all; to walk carefully on ice, going slowly in fear of falling;

To slip and fall sharply to the ground, start out again on the ice, and run until the ice breaks apart;

To hear the south wind, the north wind, and all the other winds unloosed in battle: such is winter, these are joys it brings.

There will be a silver collection in aid of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1977-78

SINGCIRCLE

GREGORY ROSE *director*

SUZANNE FLOWERS *soprano*
PENELOPE WALMSLEY-CLARK *soprano*
NANCY LONG *contralto*
ROGERS COVEY-CRUMP *tenor*
GEOFFREY SHAW *baritone*
PAUL HILLIER *bass*
SIMON EMMERSON *tape & sound engineer*

Next Concert: Thursday, 12th January 1978 Reid Concert Hall

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

SCHUMANN Quartet in A major, op. 41, no. 3

TIPPETT Quartet no. 3

MOZART Quartet in C major K465

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 19 January 1978

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN b. 1928

STIMMUNG (1968)

The *structure* of 'sound', the combination of components which creates sound long before it reaches the listener, is as important as its *matter*. John Cage, Mauricio Kagel and others have taught us to listen to all sound whatever its source or objective, to the four elements and all that goes on around us in our everyday lives, thereby teaching us the negation of silence.

The twentieth century has witnessed the sophistications of the space age, highly developed and speedy transport resulting in unprecedented global travel; people move freely between cultures, and electronics have become a familiar feature to musicians and public. It might be thought likely in this atmosphere for meditation and contemplation to fall away as our lives become more agitated and lively. Yet during this century there has been a greater interest than ever before shown by people from all cultures in each other's way of life and religion east and west, and indeed an increasing cross-influence of these cultures. The meditative qualities of the eastern religions have had a profound effect on many aspects of western thought. Moreover as nationalism takes over where traditional western colonialism left off, there has been a strong revival in many local religions that had been overcome by the undisputed power of Christian missionaries.

As study of Hinduism, Buddhism, the Chinese and African religions has spread into Europe and the USA, it has entered into the cultural and artistic lives of westerners. Karlheinz Stockhausen is perhaps the most significant western composer to have studied eastern religions and the influence on his music is often very strong and visible such as in 'Mantra', 'Ceylon' and 'Trans'. He is profoundly impressed by the peacefulness and overall perception of timelessness and meditative qualities of these religions and has been for long visits to, for example, Sri Lanka, India and Japan.

It seems paradoxical that *STIMMUNG*, one of his most meditative pieces, should have resulted from a visit to Mexico and a personal assessment of Aztec religions in which festivities culminated in the sacrifice of living human hearts. Yet in *STIMMUNG* we find one of Stockhausen's most calm and individual statements in sound. It was in Madison, Connecticut in 1968 that Stockhausen finally began *STIMMUNG* following this Mexican trip during which he spent days wandering around the ruined temples becoming absorbed by the ancient rites he imagined taking place. Both the sound structure of the piece (it grows out of a fundamental) and the duration were conceived there, suggested by the age of the ruins and the sound of the wind blowing constantly

through the ancient walls. He has likened it in its religious facets more to Gagaku-type influences than say Christian plainchant. The single long timeless quality resembles transcendental contemplation and yoga; the division of the work into 51 *unequal* 'combinations' (time zones) contributes to this timelessness, although there are inside the combinations strict rhythmic patterns passed to and fro between the performers. '*Stimmung*' can be translated into English variously as 'tuning' of instruments, 'intonation' of voices, 'tuning-in' of rhythm, timbre or 'tuning' of spiritual harmony. 'Stimme' means 'voice'.

A special vocal technique is used in *STIMMUNG* that is unique in western music and takes several months practice to prepare; by the performance *SINGCIRCLE* will have had more than 30 rehearsals which started in March last year. By adding carefully prepared vowels to notes the singers obtain perfect 'overtones'. Stockhausen admits he was not the first to utilise vocally projected 'overtones' (or 'upper partials') in vowel formations; Tibetan monks have articulated the harmonic series for centuries. However, he was not satisfied employing a random raising and lowering of the overtones but categorised them as closely as possible to 21 vowels used in international phonetics in combination with a limited number of 6 notes, used as fundamentals, themselves being overtones of B flat (numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9). Although in many ways a highly complex work, Stockhausen cut back the originally melodious work he had planned to its basic sound spectrum. At its simplest each singer leads one of the 51 combinations, the upper three voices 8 times, the lower three 9 times, by performing a 'model' into which the other available performers gradually have to transform until 'identity' has been reached. The 6 notes and the fundamental itself are played quietly to the performers on tape during the performance to aid tuning. Sometimes a singer remains on the previous model; sometimes a 'magic name', gods from Christianity, ancient Greece, the Aztecs, the Aborigines, India, China and so on, are called out, and these too have to be incorporated into the combination reached; there are also texts and poems to be read out and woven into the sound structures. The entire work is a rich tapestry of simple and complex ideas.

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