

COLLECTION  
BBVA FOUNDATION - NEOS

**Donaueschinger Musiktage 2008**  
**Vol.2 Aperghis · Gander · Haddad · Herrmann · Moguillansky**

**ARNULF HERRMANN**

***Fiktive tänze [Fictitious Dances, Volume 1]***  
***for 17 musicians (2008)***

The work *Fiktive Tänze* presents a simple model of musical motion (a series of twelve quarter notes) that is examined in various contexts. Each dance describes one and the same object viewed from various perspectives or in various conditions. When forced to come up with a headline, it would run: how can something highly irregular be made to seem regular and vice versa? This against the background of bodily movements, however stylised these may be.

In *Gerader Tanz* (Regular Dance) the apparently simple model is presented. But even in this very first dance the regular façade draws a veil across the irregularities within the music.

In *Kurzer Rausch* (Slight Inebriation) the model starts to disintegrate. The time span of twelve quarter notes remains as a kind of framework, but the rhythmic values are distributed unevenly, so that the pulse becomes lost. Instead, various micro-tempi emerge, ones which make our perception of time careen. In this way, however – and because the model is repeated as a whole – the building does not yet collapse.

In *Schwieriger Tanz* (Difficult Dance) the metrical scaffold of the twelve quarter notes takes on the appearance of a completely gutted building. The construction materials are always the same, and twelve quarter notes are omnipresent, just their appointment is variable. Variable in a very special way: no single motif has up to now ever had the same neighbour. In spite of the heavy emphasis on the metrical meta-rhythm of the twelve quarter notes – and where a supposed regularity is suggested, everything has gone awry within the music: a condition that finally causes the dance to collapse.

The two dances taken in on the way are II (*Verlangsamter Tanz* [Retarded Dance]) and IV (*Auszeit* [Time Out]), these sections also intimately bound up with the model used as a point of departure. The pattern here is of course much more broken up and it is the individual, isolated motions that encroach on the foreground.

Arnulf Herrmann

*Translation from the German: Graham Lack*

## SAED HADDAD

### ***The sublime for ensemble (2008)***

The sublime and the beautiful are mutually exclusive. The dichotomy is not as simple as Dennis' opposition, but antithetical to the same degree as light and darkness. Beauty may be accentuated by light, but either intense light or darkness is sublime to the degree that it can obliterate the sight of an object.

The reason why a great work of art is so inspiring is because it is not merely beautiful, but sublime. While the beauty of a work of art may inspire love or admiration, the sublimity of a work of art may inspire awe or astonishment at its mystery and power. Astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended.

Edmund Burke (from: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 1756)

## EDUARDO MOGUILLANSKY

### ***Cire perdue for large ensemble (2008)***

The term "cire perdue" (lost wax) is a method used for casting metal sculptures using a wax mould. When the mould melts, an empty space is left, into which an alloy, such as bronze, can be poured. It is thus possible to make multiple copies, added to which the details of the mould are gradually eliminated with each new copy.

What I imagined was a piece of secret theatre, in which an unspeakable atrocity is repeated *ad infinitum* (I think it was Averroes who once said or wrote that it is not so much the flames of hell which engender terror, more eternity itself). In that metaphor for insomnia (or obsession, it comes to the same thing) which is represented by (infinite) memory, each fact remains a singularity. It is the somewhat gauche imprecision of repeated actions that erode the details, until the original takes on the appearance of a mask. The copies confront each other as it were, causing in their innumerable variations the original form to disappear.

For Spinoza eternity did not represent the entirety of the past, present and future, but the permanence of the moment. I can imagine that macabre representation in a time outside of time, in which each element in the series appears simultaneously. My work *Cire perdue* consists of six attempts to reconstruct that original symbol. Why six? In the mathematics of Cantor a transfinite number is one in which the parts are not greater than the whole. I suspect that in every repetition all possible mirrored forms are available. Each number, six for example, contains the whole of eternity.

Previously I attempted – probably with dubious success – to contain the moment in which the perception of actual details (that palimpsest in which a repetition razes out the previous one at the very places marked by formal intersections) would seem to occur. Meta-perception becomes perception of itself. Any actual "theme" itself, along with "content", disappears before the proof of their commutability. Every ritual has something heretical about it, and also something pettifogging, probably more of the latter. Just as in the paradox of a map and territory displayed, we attempt – in the human scheme of things – to retrieve the immeasurability of creation, this in the vain hope that our personal appellation might be made out in some arenaceous corner of the universe.

Eduardo Moguillansky  
*Translation from the German: Graham Lack*

## **GEORGES APERGHIS**

### ***Teeter-totter for large ensemble (2008)***

The teeter-totter (or seesaw) the motion of which is based on the laws of gravity – an interplay of raising, lowering and moments of force.

A game, a system of equilibrium, which attempts to create a state of equilibrium between two forces by supporting one force or another.

A system of balance, which attempts to recede after one has previously gone forward and to abrogate what formerly had been joined together.

Georges Aperghis

*Translation from the German: Graham Lack*

## **BERNHARD GANDER**

### ***Beine und strümpfe [Legs and Stockings] for ensemble (2007)***

... because this piece behaves like legs and stockings:

I Stockings are produced in a factory building – chaotic, coloured yarns are entangled and produce various patterns; close-meshed, wide-meshed, light, dark, fine-spun, coarse-spun, elastic, close, clinging to the skin ...

II The stockings are tried on and presented on the catwalk – applause, flash-lights.

III And then the party in the disco; many legs (in slinky stockings) dance, on their own, in pairs, a change of partners, make for the private room, just the dull thud of the music and dimmed lights, the stockings won't take it any longer, they ladder; back into the mêlée, and everyone – well almost everyone – is dancing to the same rhythm underneath a large rotating disco ball.

*Beine und Strümpfe* is dedicated to the Klangforum Wien.

Bernhard Gander

*Translation from the German: Graham Lack*