

A note from Suzee Stephens on December 18th, 2007:

On November 30th 2007, Stockhausen wrote the following e-mail to Udo Zimmermann, director of the *Ars Viva* Festival in Munich where Stockhausen's work *MIXTUR 2003 for Orchestra* (five groups of instruments, 4 sine-wave generator players, 4 sound mixers with 4 ring modulators, and sound projectionist) will have its first German performance on January 25th 2008 at the *Herkulesaal der Residenz* in Munich. It will be performed by the Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio conducted by Lucas Vis. The Collaborators of the *Experimental Studio for Acoustic Art* will collaborate technically as they did for the world première in Salzburg last year.

Udo Zimmermann had written to invite Stockhausen to attend the performance.

Stockhausen answered:

Dear Udo Zimmermann,

It is impossible for me to accept your invitation to the performance of *MIXTUR 2003* because I have reserved the days – and nights – when your rehearsals and performance take place to work on a new composition. But I would like to very cordially thank you once again for this truly beautiful gift for my 80th birthday.

Peter Ruzicka wrote to me and said in his lecture following the intermission of the world première in Salzburg “*MIXTUR 2003* is the model of the new *Electronic Orchestra*”.

Lucas Vis, Christian Schumann, and André Richard have my complete trust.

Greetings from his heart sends

Karlheinz Stockhausen

Added to the end of Stockhausen's e-mail was the **introduction to MIXTUR 2003** (which Stockhausen wrote in 2006 on the occasion of the world première in Salzburg **as his greeting to be read following the intermission preceding the performance of the *Backwards Version***):

*MIXTUR* is the historical leap from the classic orchestra to the **Electronic Klangkoerper** (literally: body of sound, the German term for all large ensembles, such as orchestras and choirs).

The form is a *MOMENT-FORM*: twenty musical **Moments** help us learn changing transformations in five orchestra groups, as they were called in the first version in 1964:

*MIXTURE* in unknown timbre glissandi – **PERCUSSION** with scraped metal discs – **BLOCKS** with 6 micro-rhythms – **DIRECTION** with 5 flying plucked clouds, a *Marienlied* above 2 clinking expanses – 11 shimmering **CHANGES** which step-wise fall from whirring to blazing solo instruments – extreme **CALM** in slumbering timbral strata – and so on until the glassy **HIGH C**.

And then the *BACKWARDS VERSION* following the intermission: Only once in over 320 works have I risked – namely in the SCHLAGTRIO in 1952 – to have music played backwards: in MIXTUR I experience it like the journey following the physical death: white HIGH C – PIZZICATO-players transparently alternating – LAYERS of sound- skeletons in strands of tone-hail – DIALOGUE between shouting shots and bronze beats – and so on: backwards into the dreamy reminiscence.

Everyone is invited back to the beginning.

Whoever wants to hear well, closes his eyes.

For sure I am electronic myself – and our Spirit is ring modulated downwards as well as upwards.

K. Stockhausen, August 28th 2006

### **Beauty of mirrored overtone harmonies**

The essential aspect of MIXTUR is, on one hand, the transformation of the familiar orchestra sound into a new, enchanting world of sound. It is an unbelievable experience, for example, to see and hear string players bowing a sustained tone and to simultaneously perceive how this tone slowly moves away from itself in a glissando, the pulse accelerates, and a wonderful timbre spectrum emerges. Orchestra musicians are astonished when they hear the notes they play being modulated timbrally, melodically, rhythmically, and dynamically. All shades of the transitions from tone to noise, noise to chord, from timbre to rhythm and rhythm to pitch come into being from such ring modulations, as if by themselves.

Finest micro-intervals, extreme glissandi and register changes, percussive attacks resulting from normally smooth entrances, complex harmonies (also above single instrumental tones), and many other unheard-of sound events result from this modulation technique and from the variable structuring.

Secondly, the ring modulation adds new overtone- and sub-tone series to the instrumental spectra, which can be clearly heard, especially during sustained sounds in MIXTUR. Such mixtures do not occur in nature or with traditional instruments. Through these mirrored overtone harmonies, one is moved by alien, haunting sensations of beauty, which are completely new in art music.

Only such renewal in how music affects us imbues new techniques with meaning.

MIXTUR was the genesis of live electronic music which, in the four decades since its birth, has already developed multifariously, as witnessed by many parts of my work, LICHT.

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**Friday, Jan. 25th, 8 p.m.**

Munich, *Herkullessaal der Residenz*, Musica Viva (Information: München Ticket GmbH: +49-89 54 81 81 81; Fax +49 54 81 81 54. [www.muenchenticket.de](http://www.muenchenticket.de) )

**MIXTUR 2003**