

*Stockhausen Foundation for Music*  
D-51515 Kuerten, Germany



Kürten, July 2008

Dear Listeners,

Welcome to the inaugural concerts of the *Centre for Stockhausen Space Music*.

In November 2007, Stockhausen wrote:

*“Since 1956 I have been looking for sound projectionists... The new sound projectionist is, in many of my works, more important than the conductor: the audience hears what he projects!... One must practice each work, like a pianist – have a lot of practical experience with the equipment... For a long time I have been constantly wondering how I could – for one week per year – show how the balance should be – at least for the works without interpreters... That is how one should begin. A centre for Stockhausen Space Music.”*

This year during the eleventh annual *Stockhausen Concerts and Courses Kuerten*, two of Stockhausen’s dreams are being realised for the first time. First of all, **16 concerts** are taking place over an extended period of 17 days. Composers, interpreters, musicologists, sound projectionists and music lovers world-wide are here to participate in the eleventh *Stockhausen Concerts and Courses Kuerten*.

Secondly, the **Centre for Stockhausen Space Music** is being born. With this, a new course on how to project Stockhausen’s spatial music is being offered to all musicians who are already sound projectionists, all musicians and music lovers who want to learn more about the art of sound projection, and sound technicians who want to learn how Stockhausen’s equipment is installed and adjusted to arrive at the legendary authentic “Stockhausen sound.”

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More than 50 years ago, Stockhausen’s Electronic Music **GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE** had its world première in the *large broadcast auditorium* of the *WDR* (West German Radio) in Cologne. It is the first work of four-channel spatial music with composed directions and movements of the sounds all around the audience. For the first time electronic music is combined with speech (the praising of God in the *Song of the Youths in the fiery furnace* from the 3rd book of Daniel). A twelve-year-old boy sang all of the syllables and tones which Stockhausen composed together with the electronic sounds. Since then he has composed over 200 works of electronic or electro-acoustic music.

The first week you will hear 4-track and 8-track works in which the sounds move horizontally in all directions and combinations around and through the audience: these works are projected over 8 (4 x 2) or 16 (8 x 2) loudspeakers plus sub woofers surrounding the audience. There are two octophonic works in which the sounds move horizontally, vertically and diagonally around and through the audience: these are projected over 8 x 2 loudspeakers plus sub woofers installed in a cube (as high as the ceiling) around the audience. The 20-track work **ELECTRONIC MUSIC with SOUND SCENES of FRIDAY from LIGHT** will close the first week. In this loudspeaker constellation, the audience is surrounded by loudspeakers set-up in a pyramid which makes conceivable all possible vertical and horizontal movements around and through the audience.

All of the loudspeakers for the various set-ups described above have already been installed (except for the 20-track concert), so please take a look and locate where the sounds will be coming from, and how they will move.

For each of the countless concerts in the over 50 years of his world-wide concert career as sound projectionist, Stockhausen spent hours and even days in each concert hall – together with his sound technicians and assistants – to position, aim and adjust the loudspeakers and fine-tune the mixer in order to find the right sound in each hall. And he worked tirelessly until he found it – in order to share it with us, the listeners. One of those concert halls, the *Sülzthalhalle* here in Kürten (of which he was particularly fond), is now – for two weeks – the **Centre for Stockhausen Space Music**.

In 1998, when Stockhausen was informed that his 70th birthday wish – to create the *Stockhausen Courses Kürten* – would be fulfilled, he sat down and wrote a motto for every year until 2028, which would have been his 100th birthday. The motto for the first courses was: “*Learning in order to pass it on*”. The birth of the **Centre for Stockhausen Space Music** heralds the – at least partial – “passing on” of his unfathomable and unprecedented knowledge and experience in the performance practice of sound projection.

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In August 2000, Stockhausen wrote, in his text **Bridge to the Present**:

“Because of my experiences in 1996 at the *Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music*, I was again reminded of what I had often envisioned since 1974 during **lengthy courses in connection with concert series** of my music in the following cities... [56 cities world-wide].

My vision was to find a beautiful place surrounded by nature, with a good concert hall, a sufficient number of pleasant helpers and rooms for teaching, where I could give a composition course once a year in peace, in connection with interpretation courses and concerts given by the soloists I know and their students. Since 1998, this place is Kürten, where I live, in the *Bergisches Land*.

Three times already, about 130 composers, interpreters, musicologists, and music lovers from 23 different countries have come each year, usually living with families here, and have practised my works, studied, exchanged views and heard 10 to 12 concerts of my works, which were attended each evening by about 480 people.

May these *Stockhausen Courses Kürten* live long into the future.”

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The motto that Stockhausen wrote for this year (2008) is

*“Learning in order to radiate”.*

During these two weeks, may we all “learn in order to radiate” as Stockhausen did and always will through his music.

And – as he always advised us to do, during his concise, accessible introductions to his space music – “Since there is nothing to see (only a small moon for people who do not like the dark) – don’t forget to close your eyes. Have a good flight!”

Detailed information about all of the works which will be performed these two weeks,  
including drawings of loudspeaker set-ups,  
may be found in the programme book of the *Stockhausen concerts and courses Kuerten 2008*.