

EINKLANG for oboe and 7 instruments

I would prefer not to get into the technical details of this piece, because, as Schoenberg tells us (the reader may recall his letter of July 27, 1932 to Rudolf Kolisch), showing how a piece is *made* does not help us to know what the piece *is*. Yet, I do recall a few facts that accompanied the composition's birth, partly because (more or less indirectly) they worked their way into the piece, and partly because, *a posteriori*, they seem rather intriguing to me.

I began writing *Einklang* on the July 10, 1980 at Salto di Fondi and then I worked on it on a farm in the Black Forest, in Berlin, and in Leipzig, finishing it on October 11, in Milan. In Dresden, where I was located during that period, I carried the manuscript with me wherever I went, with some strange foreboding. And this foreboding kept me from finishing three other manuscripts I had with me, which vanished from my hotel room...

While I was working on *Einklang* (in July) I read the memoirs of Shostakovich, a composer I "rediscovered" for myself very late. For years I had considered him (I am ashamed to admit) a middling composer, if not a reactionary one; today I recognize him as one of the greatest composers of our century, and in his legacy there is still, I believe, much to be pondered, for example, that it is impossible to equate the language a composer uses with the value of his work. His Eighth Quartet made a great impression on me; I heard it in a version for string orchestra in Bologna, in August of 1980 while I was working on *Einklang*. And so, amongst the folds of this composition, there is, for those who want to go to the bother of looking for it, a little homage to Shostakovich. There are other references, some private (a quotation from my cantata *Majakowski*, that I had finished at the beginning of July and which I was still mulling over in my mind: "Lilja, liebe mich!"—Lilja, love me), and some suggested by the intended players, the oboist Burkhard Glaetzner and my friends in the "Gruppe Neue Musik Hanns Eisler," for whom, on the commission of the city of Leipzig, I wrote it. I do not wish to dwell upon these references, but I must mention the famous song of Eisler's "Vorwärts und nicht vergessen ... die Solidarität" (Forwards, and don't forget solidarity), especially its opening which announces a marching stomp (as if frozen stiff).

Having finished the composition, I went to see Pietro Borgonovo to ask for advice on some technical problems (multiphonics, etc.). Somehow we got talking about the Bohemian composer Zelenka, only recently rediscovered and reevaluated. Until then I had never even heard a note of Zelenka, but I was interested, having read a few articles on him. When Borgonovo heard the name he said, "Zelenka is a true genius!" and he put a record on. I was dumbfounded: The composition begins with a unison several measures long, exactly like *Einklang*! Mark my words, I do not believe in metempsychosis, and yet... it is true, Zelenka died on the day of my birth two centuries earlier!

What else can I say about *Einklang*, what else that is not there to be heard? "*Einklang*" means "unison, accord, syntony" and implies "tuning," "conciliating," "harmonizing," "conforming," "corresponding," "coinciding." In this composition, a soloist performs with seven other soloists; everyone acts autonomously and collectively, which is not always easy. Rather than a result, the title indicates an objective—beyond the piece itself.

[Composed in 1980; the program notes in Italian are dated September, 1981.]

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