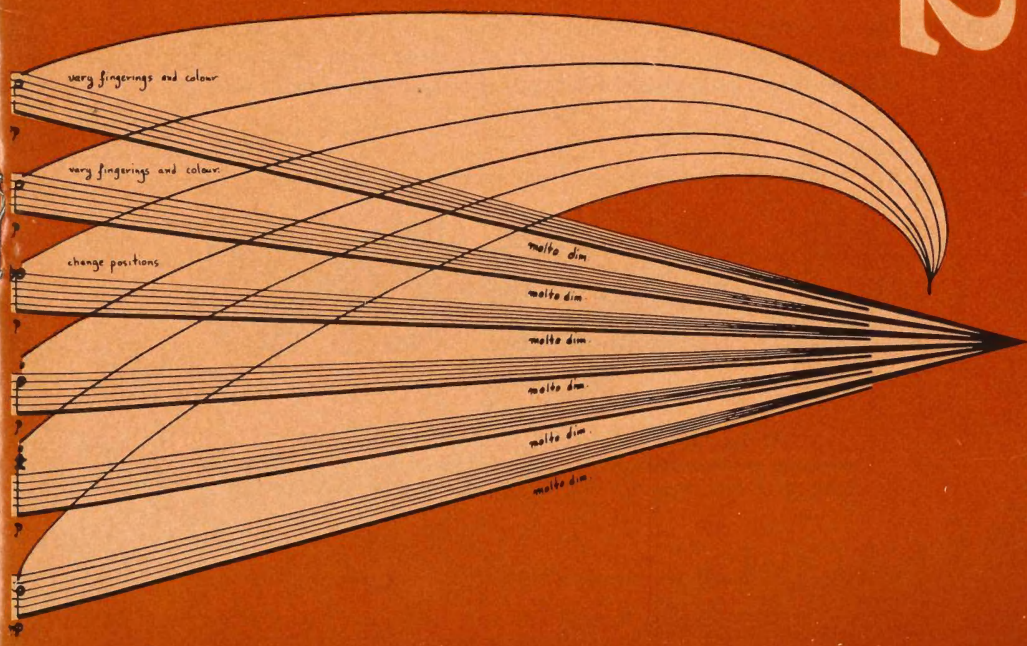


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1981-82



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MAURICIO KAGEL

and

pianist

ALOYS KONTARSKY

voice

GUILLERMO GALLARDO

APRIL 23, 1982

8:30 p.m.

MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto

P R O G R A M

AN TASTEN, etude for
piano (1974/77)

MAURICIO KAGEL

ALOYS KONTARSKY, piano

UNGUIS INCARNATUS EST
for harmonium and piano (1976)

MAURICIO KAGEL

MAURICIO KAGEL, harmonium
ALOYS KONTARSKY, piano

MM51, a piece of film
music for piano (1976)

MAURICIO KAGEL

ALOYS KONTARSKY, piano

- I N T E R M I S S I O N -

PRESENTATION FOR TWO
(1976/77)

MAURICIO KAGEL

GUILLERMO GALLARDO, speaker/baritone
ALOYS KONTARSKY, piano

MAURICIO KAGEL

MAURICIO KAGEL was born in 1931 in Buenos Aires. In 1957 he was granted a scholarship to work at the Electronic Music Studio in Cologne, where he has lived since that time. He was Director of the Cologne Courses for New Music from 1969 to 1975 and he has been Professor at the Cologne Academy of Music since 1975. In his work KAGEL extends the range of composition beyond the purely musical to include the visual and the theatrical. With wit, inventiveness and a distinctive amalgam of seriousness and humor, he concerns himself as much with the composing of gestures, situations and scenes as with the arranging of tones and sounds.

ALOYS KONTARSKY

ALOYS KONTARSKY enjoys an international reputation for his masterful interpretation of both classical and contemporary works, many of which he has premiered. His recordings on the Deutsche Gramophon label, frequently in duo with his brother, Alfons Kontarsky, range from Schubert to Kagel and from Brahms to Stockhausen.

GUILLERMO GALLARDO

GUILLERMO GALLARDO is well known as a recitalist and opera singer in Europe as well as in South America, where he appears regularly at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires. He has also given numerous performances of contemporary works, among them the world premiere of PRESENTATION in 1977.

P R O G R A M N O T E S

AN TASTEN, etude for
piano (1974/77)

MAURICIO KAGEL

In this piano study of 1977, I use mainly three-note chords, augmented, diminished, major or minor, in root position or their inversions. Each chord appears for one bar only and is resolved in such a way that the two upper notes repeat alternately, while the root of the chord is held on. The two hands almost always play the same music but at differing times.

In 1974-75 I had already composed the piano music for my radiophonic piece SOUNDTRACK on principles similar to harmonic-rhythmic writing; but the content and the form differ somewhat in this piece. The articulation of the musical language of AN TASTEN (literally 'on the keys') is based exclusively on a single pattern of a succession of broken chords. Consequently, the acoustic construction of the problem is at once compressed and enlarged; accompaniment and melodic line can no longer be separated from each other.

The regular and continuous quaver movement is distributed unequally through the group of notes. This subdivision is articulated by the natural accentuation of the first note of each group. At the same time, this first quaver must be held fractionally by a slight and sensitive rubato before the second note. If this rubato, characteristic of the romantic style, is interpreted with

extreme sensitivity, the player's intuition will discover an organic link between the rubato and the quaver pulse.

In short: he will find the right touch on the keys!

UNGUIS INCARNATUS EST, for MAURICIO KAGEL
harmonium and piano (1976)

The first five tones, which constitute the melodic as well as harmonic upbeat of this composition of 1972, are identical with the beginning of the piano piece NUAGES GRIS, by Franz Liszt (1881). Especially in his later works, Liszt demonstrates that the greatest intensity of expression can also be achieved by a comprehensive reduction of means. This limitation in favor of a more lasting effect indicates Liszt's role as initiator of a form of expressionism with a "strictly measured number of tones", which was not recognized stylistically and developed further, as it should have been, until decades later, ie. in Schönberg's SIX SMALL PIANO PIECES - Op. 19 or Anton Webern's BAGATELLES FOR STRING QUARTET.

The compositional relationship between UNGUIS INCARNATUS EST and NUAGES GRIS may be compared to Liszt's paraphrases of works by other composers which were for him a point of departure for musical reflection. And just as Liszt deliberately expands on inherent tendencies of the models (thereby exposing inflationary music for example), here too, the method is similar: by using sounds very sparingly, I have tried to intensify the inherent stillness and, at

the same time, the musical life, of these gray clouds.

The technical term "unguis incarnatus" is a medical expression for ingrown nails. It would certainly not be fair to the listener if the connection between title and composition were clearly spelled out. In the course of the piece, there are many opportunities to relate the stigma of the (ingrained) idea to the music that is presented. The special role of the piano pedal certainly offers a consummate key to the deciphering of this work.

MM51, a piece of film-
music for piano (1976)

MAURICIO KAGEL

The theme of this piano composition-like that of Schönberg's INCIDENTAL MUSIC TO A CINEMATOGRAPHIC SCENE - is the threat presented by unexpressed fears and dangers. But in contrast to Schönberg's orchestral piece, which was written in an independent expressionist musical language, we have here stereotypical samples of the commercial music so familiar to cinema audiences of countless productions of the film industry. This conscious renunciation of a recognized "contemporary" style becomes at the same time the point of departure for a composition which tolerates mutually opposed solutions and realizations.

From the very first chords, the listener can recognize the repertoire of acoustic anecdotes easily distinguishable from the illustration of filmic images. But the very connection of this music with the depiction of situations of fear, which, in the

listener's memory are seldom precise but more often blurred, amorphous, renders possible the collage-like treatment of the various movie scenes. Thus, a very new and distinctive conception is moulded from dramatic circumstances of disparate origins.

PRESENTATION FOR TWO (1976/77) MAURICIO KAGEL
for piano and voice

This scenic composition for two performers - a speaker/baritone and a pianist - is divided into two separate sections: text and piano part. This separation reflects the formal organization of the composition and its performance praxis, in that it exists as two independent, but at the same time, interdependent layers. Only if they are performed together concurrently, can an adequate musical-dramatic function be fulfilled.

In this piece, the piano represents a broken music-automaton, or something of that sort: an endlessly activated sound source. The part is based on a relatively long series of chords, which may be described as a "flowing-retarding cadence". This constant flow of the harmony in a regular progression of eighths is varied only by a recurrent doubling of the rhythm into sixteenths. In order not to interrupt the sound continuum, the performer avoids turning the pages of his music himself; he lets the speaker know when he wishes this to be done. In this context the role of the pianist takes on various meanings. The injunction to play the instrument continuously without a break will hardly be evaluated by the

viewer as a special form of music-making as a compositional principle, but rather, it will be considered a psychological characteristic of the instrumentalist: the "singular" role of the pianist simply expresses itself in a purely motor-manic activity.

The speaker's text is to be presented in an unnatural (rough, sensationalistic) voice. Prototypes for the role: emcees, barkers at circuses and variety shows, conferenciers in music halls and cabarets. The fact that not all of the conferenciers expectations are fulfilled in this Presentation, will hardly be considered exceptional. Only in this way can certain aspects of the entertainment world, where everything always seems to run smoothly, be brought under scrutiny. Nowhere else is perfection, as prerequisite for an acceptable level of success, sought after in such an intense and single-minded way. It is precisely for this reason that entertainment value becomes extremely crucial, a matter of life and death, for the performer, much more so than it ever is in the field of serious music.

Program notes were by MAURICIO KAGEL

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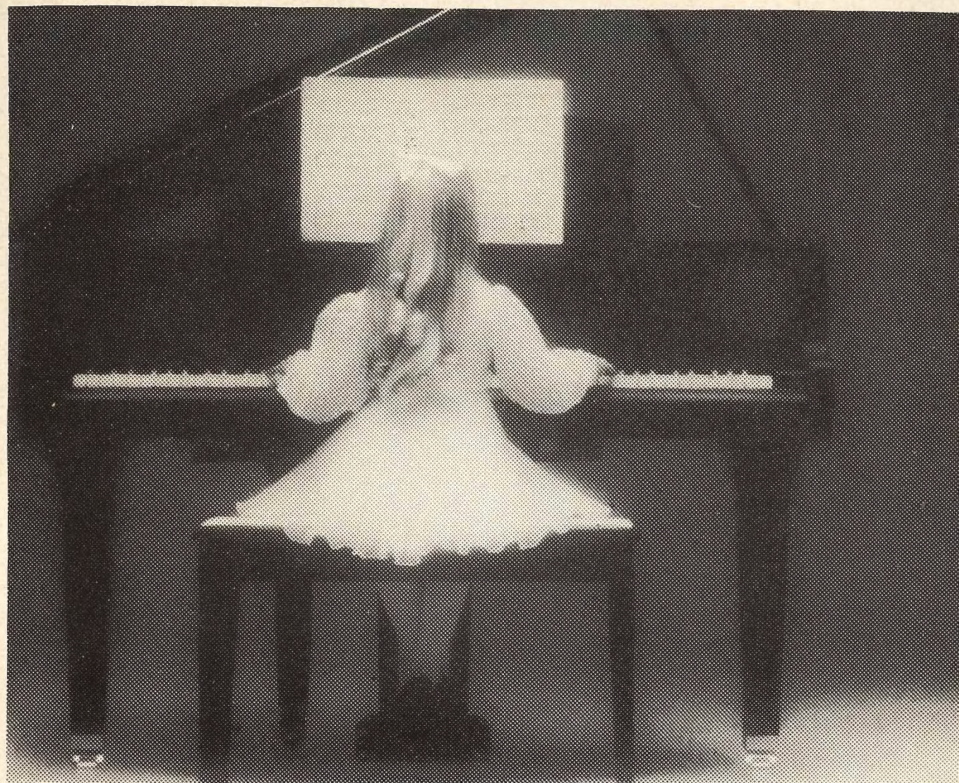
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