

Electronic Music in the Milan Cathedral

The archbishop of Milan has invited Stockhausen to perform the works FREIA, Xi, AVE and the electronic 4-track space music GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE (SONG OF THE YOUTHS) at the Milan Cathedral on April 1st 2004. Stockhausen realised GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE from 1954 to 1956 at the *Studio for Electronic Music* of the WDR in Cologne. He had initially intended that the work be an electronic mass for the Cologne Cathedral. But at that time it was not permitted to perform loudspeaker music in the cathedral, so he changed his plan and composed the *Song of the Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace* based on the text of Daniel 3:57.

Further information: Mons. Luigi Garbini, e-mail: artache@tin.it, Fax. 0039 02331 9993.

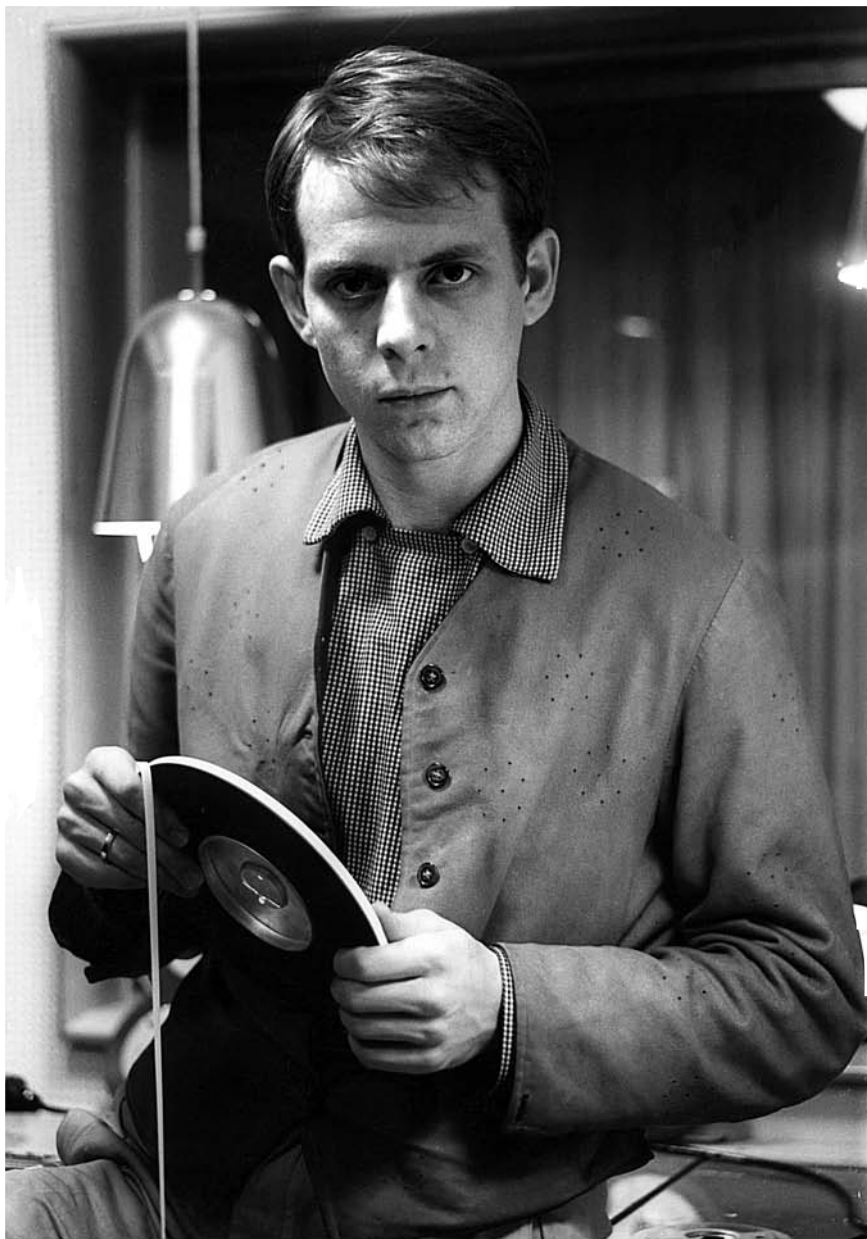
Beginning of the lecture *Music and Speech* given during the *Darmstadt Vacation Courses* in 1957, first published in *die Reihe* 6, Vienna 1958.

The *Hymn of Praise of the Three Youths* is a series of acclamations from the apocryphal Book of Daniel, and is thus more or less universally known. The composition GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE is based on the German version as recited following the Catholic Mass (there are several translations of the Latin in common use, and I have selected syllables and words from each of them, according to my requirements). These are the lines which were used as the verbal material:

Preiset (Jubelt) den(m) Herrn, ihr Werke alle des Herrn – lobt ihn und über alles erhebt ihn in Ewigkeit.	O all ye works of the Lord, praise (exult in) the Lord – laud Him and exalt Him above all forever.
Preiset den Herrn, ihr Engel des Herrn – preiset den Herrn ihr Himmel droben.	O ye angels of the Lord, praise ye the Lord – O ye heavens, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, ihr Wasser alle, die über den Himmeln sind – preiset den Herrn, ihr Scharen alle des Herrn.	O all ye waters that be above the heavens, praise ye the Lord – O all ye hosts of the Lord, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, Sonne und Mond – preiset den Herrn, des Himmels Sterne.	O ye sun and moon, praise ye the Lord – O ye stars of heaven, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, aller Regen und Tau – preiset den Herrn, alle Winde.	O every rain and dew, praise ye the Lord – O all ye winds, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, Feuer und Sommersglut – preiset den Herrn, Kälte und starrer Winter.	O ye fire and heat of summer, praise ye the Lord – O ye cold and harsh winter, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, Tau und des Regens Fall – preiset den Herrn, Eis und Frost.	O ye dew and fall of rain, praise ye the Lord – O ye ice and frost, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, Reif und Schnee – preiset den Herrn, Nächte und Tage.	O ye hoar frost and snow, praise ye the Lord – O ye nights and days, praise ye the Lord.
Preiset den Herrn, Licht und Dunkel – preiset den Herrn, Blitze und Wolken.	O ye light and darkness, praise ye the Lord – O ye lightning and clouds, praise ye the Lord.

These are nine verses of the *Hymn of Praise*; the translations in use contain another eleven verses. I have sometimes used *exult in (jubelt)* rather than *praise (preiset)*, depending on the context.

Essentially the text consists of three words – *preiset den Herrn (praise ye the Lord)* – which are continually repeated in connection with an enumeration of all kinds of things. Clearly this enumeration can be continued endlessly or broken off after the first line, just as lines and words can be permuted without altering the basic meaning: *alle Werke (all ye works)*. Thus the text lends itself particularly well to integration in a purely musical, structural order (especially in a permutational serial one) without regard for the literary form, message, or anything else. The *Song of the Youths* reminds us of a collective idea: whenever the word *preiset (praise)* emerges at one moment and the word *Herrn (Lord)* at another – or vice versa – one immediately associates them with a familiar verbal context. The words are memorised, and the important things are that they have been memorised at all, and *how* they have been memorised – the detailed content is of secondary importance. Attention is directed towards the spiritual – speech becomes ritual.



Karlheinz Stockhausen in the *Studio for Electronic Music* of the WDR Cologne (1955).