

PREFACE

The four essays, which are being published together for the first time in this bilingual edition, were written between 1989 and 2002. My first encounter with the music of Karlheinz Stockhausen dates back much further. As an adolescent at the beginning of the sixties, works such as GESANG DER JÜNGLINGE, GRUPPEN, KONTAKTE, and MOMENTE made a lasting impression on me. Between 1964 and 1966, Stockhausen's thirteen radio programmes entitled "Do you know music which can only be heard over loudspeakers?" were broadcast late at night by the West German Radio Station in Cologne (*Musikalisches Nachtprogramm*). They featured electronic music from studios all over the world, opening to me unknown realms of musical imagination. It is through the work of Stockhausen that to me music means *contemporary* music and that the art of the past appears to me in the light of the present – not the other way round.

The music of Stockhausen as viewed by a literary critic: this volume could contribute to and perhaps initiate a dialogue between the disciplines. The musical world of Stockhausen provokes a discussion which crosses the boundaries separating the arts and sciences, linguistics and literature, musicology and dramaturgy. The way Stockhausen composes, his linguistic operations and literary imaginations, his dealing with cultural traditions and his spirituality time and again put the self-conception of each of these disciplines to the test and, beyond that, his work opens enticing perspectives for an interdisciplinary dialogue. In the course of this dialogue, we are invited to exchange our particular codes and the unifying *experience* of art which we share, and to articulate our *reflections* – which concern all of us – upon the place and meaning of art in the world. Therefore, ideally the present volume will initiate a new series of books and a new kind of communication which extends across the boundaries.

The four essays have been printed together with their English translations in one volume in the hope of building bridges between languages and of connecting readers from different countries. In the German part the reader will find further illustrations.

First of all, I would like to thank Suzanne Stephens for her painstaking corrections and revisions of the translations of Mark Schreiber. In addition, our long conversations further served to assure the exact correspondence of the English translations with my original German texts. To John McGuire goes my appreciation for his translation of the text "Die ring-modulierte Meditation". Mark J. St. Hilaire was very helpful in providing important references and information. I would also like to thank Kathinka Pasveer for her wonderful work in type-setting the entire book. Above all, I am grateful to Karlheinz Stockhausen who generously offered to include these essays about his work in the series of books published by the *Stockhausen Foundation for Music*, and for giving me full access to all of the material in the archives of the foundation for my research. This book is dedicated to him on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

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Günter Peters

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