

Electronic Music (1)¹⁾

About 30 years ago, electronic music came into the world of the classical music system which has established itself in a tradition of more than 2000 years in monasteries, schools and today in advanced musical courses. The mechanics of the digits, strings, keys and pipes are replaced by mysterious oscillators, the movements of the hands are replaced by cryptic combinations of numerals on a computer, and top-class singers and smart pianists on the stage are replaced by unsightly speakers and other equipment for the sound reproduction. Instead of humans playing instruments there is deeply profound digital computer technology which is unsightly. There are strange and different tones, sounds, noises, cracks, sometimes beautiful tones, even perhaps pure tones which haven't been heard yet.

For a long time, one spoke of pitches and frequencies, but so far there has been no musical imagination of pitch modulation, nor frequency modulation. Instead of composition and composers, one speaks now of additive and subtractive synthesis and of producers, even sound designers, instead of singing, audio penetrates the computer world, instead of sheet music, MIDI files are used worldwide.

A quantum leap of music has really taken place. Which is the lowest common denominator of all the innovations? Presumably many things, at least, one must overcome the human demand for definition of the determined, clear, self-contained, of the simple, of what is available, of the defined tone in favour of contrary suggestions, summarized, what you can't define, a sliding continuum, whose intermediate points are equally relevant as the endpoints.

Emergency and decay of permanently new systems is preprogrammed in the actual musical computer programs

as in the classical system, each step must follow a determined program.

Electronic music doesn't lead humans to the experience of trimmed musical delicacy, but on the contrary, it shows clearly which ups and downs, which smoothness and shrillness, which simplicity and complexity of sound nature can offer to the world and to humans. Electronic music, innovative, smooth and shrill, as it is, leads humans to merely listening, to experiment and to the infinity of the sound world which is due to history, reduced to the dictate of the classical tonal language, just as many other events of our culture have violated and destroyed nature.

1) Klaus Weinhold, „Klingende Steinhalle“, Emmendingen 2004