

Abstracts

Matthias Kassel: The Foundations of the Tower of Babel. Another Attempt to Read *Anagrama*

Mauricio Kagel's *Anagrama* (1957–58) is part of a group of works that allowed him to emerge as a highly individual and headstrong artistic personality only a few years after his move from Argentina to Cologne in 1957. Set in the midst of the then current debates on serialism, *Anagrama* formed a sort of commentary on competing and highly conflicting modes of composition, based on an experimental approach to language known as *Sprachkomposition*. Proceeding from a single palindromic sentence, Kagel deals with the origin and growth processes of human speech and adapts them to the creation of music. This article unearths several previously unknown compositional cornerstones of *Anagrama* in Kagel's sketches and drafts, revealing it to be a central and anticipatory masterpiece of *Sprachkomposition*, a field that has remained important to Kagel to the present day.

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Matthias Rebstock: »Die Resultate widersprachen meinem Instinkt: gerade das wollte ich ...«. On the Process of Composition in Kagel's Instrumental Theatre

Based on so far unpublished sketches the author inquires into basic principles of the process of composition within the »Instrumental Theatre« of Mauricio Kagel. The main focus is on the concept of »decomposition« and the question in what sense the theatrical dimension of the pieces is »composed«. However, as Kagel's »Instrumental Theatre« itself can be seen as an inquiry into the different ways of composing music theatre there can be no such thing as *the* method of Kagel. Therefore, the article concentrates on the following examples: *Sur scène*, *Match*, *Camera oscura* and *Die Himmelsmechanik*.

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Peter Andraschke: Exotica from Germany. Sociological issues in compositions by Mauricio Kagel

As with other composers of his generation, a crucial turning point in the work of Mauricio Kagel came in the 1960s. At that time, he began to extend his choice of issues from musical phenomena to contemporary problems of a sociological and (cultural-) political nature. These new issues, often suggested by current events of his day, increasingly occupied the extra-

musical impulses and contents of his compositions. This paper discusses these questions with reference to those of Kagel's works composed mainly in the 1970s, focussing on compositions in which he deals with folklore and non-European music.

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Helga de la Motte-Haber: *Near and far from genre traditions*. On the dialectics of innovation and tradition in the work of Mauricio Kagel

Many of Mauricio Kagel's pieces relate to traditional genres such as dance, string quartet or passion. Some of them show references to a certain style, some even to one particular composer or work. This traditional frame of reference has been seen as problematic since, at the same time, part of Kagel's influence has been to extend the concept of musical material. The focus of his thinking, however, does not seem to be on material as such. Instead, he seems to aim at compositional methods which uncover new features in old material.

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Björn Heile: Imaginary and Imagined Music in the work of Mauricio Kagel

Many of Kagel's works can be described as realisations of literary descriptions of music. For instance, *Norden* for salon orchestra is derived from Mircea Eliade's descriptions of shamanic ceremonies in the Arctic, while one of Kagel's earliest compositions sought to reconstruct the violin sonata in Marcel Proust's *Recherche*. Such translations of imagined music into actual sound are related to the concept of imaginary music which plays an important role throughout Kagel's oeuvre. In the latter instance, the sounding music seems to refer to a sphere of ideal music that is evoked but that can only be imagined. In either case, the reference beyond the piece in question suggests an idea of transcendence which acts as a dialectic counterpart to the ostentatious worldliness of much of Kagel's music.

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Wieland Reich: *Figuren – Play – End – Thoughts – Silence*. An essay on Kagel's manner of finally ending

Composers as well as musicologists have always focused their attention more on the finale than on the introduction. With the growing disintegration of traditional forms, at the latest since tonality was abandoned the ending has become a problem, asking for individual solutions. The way a composer ends does not only demonstrate his personal style, but also the level of his craft. The conceptual diversity of Kagel's endings often transcend the borderlines of music. Consequently, it is not only the subject of this essay, it has also influenced its form and style.