

Review-Article

‘FURCHTLOS WEITER’: STOCKHAUSEN’S WRITTEN LEGACY

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Stockhausen thought big. In outdoor parks, underneath the earth in caverns, in helicopters buzzing overhead, at La Scala, within a football stadium, a spherical auditorium, or a former factory, he sought out places in which his music would make a lasting impression on listeners. This was true until the end of his life: for his colossal *Licht* project (1977–2003), he fantasized about building seven opera houses, one for each opera. These dreams were part of a career that spanned nearly sixty years. His official catalogue contains 376 works in all. The Stockhausen Foundation’s CD edition now numbers over 100 items, a number that increases if one counts the so-called ‘Text-CDs’, which include audio recordings of many key lectures. Surely, few composers of the modern era have documented their careers as thoroughly.

Central elements of Stockhausen’s thinking appear in *Texte zur Musik*, a series of seventeen volumes containing essays, sketches, interviews, correspondence, and miscellanea, published in instalments since 1963. The seven new volumes cover the years 1991–2007.¹ Continuing the seven-year cycle of grouping material, the latest set spans two periods. Volumes 11–14 centre on the compositions written during 1991–8, and volumes 15–17 deal primarily with the composer’s activity from 1999 until his death in 2007. Edited by Imke Misch, a scholar who has spent many years studying Stockhausen’s life and works, these new volumes build on the approach established by her *Doktorvater*, Christoph von Blumröder, who edited volumes 4–10.

The first two volumes of *Texte* (1963) contain such classic essays as ‘Structure and Experiential Time’, ‘Music and Speech’, and the seminal ‘...How Time Passes...’. (Sometimes clumsily translated, many of these essays were published by Theodore Presser in the English version of *Die Reihe* (the journal co-edited by Stockhausen and Herbert Eimert). Other important essays, such as the epic analysis of the percussion piece *Zyklus* in volume 2, still await adequate English translation.) These first volumes attracted critical attention, with reactions ranging from contemptuous dismissal to effusive encomium. Expectations ran high that they would contain a nascent and potentially coherent theory of the avant-garde. As Robert Morgan wrote, ‘the *Texte* come closer than anything else currently available to providing a general compositional

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¹ Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Texte zur Musik*, 11–17, ed. Imke Misch (Stockhausen-Verlag, Kürten, 2015): vol. 11: 448 pp., vol. 12: 426 pp., vol. 13: 486 pp., vol. 14: 496 pp., vol. 15: 501 pp., vol. 16: 565 pp., vol. 17: 545 pp. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

theory for the postwar period'.² Writers noticed a change beginning in volume 3, however. Morgan bluntly asserted that this volume did not contain 'a single general, theoretical article in the entire four hundred pages' (p. 12). Some German critics reacted even more forcefully. Reinhold Brinkman opined that in volume 3, 'theory has shrunk to a strange, sad blend of technology and mysticism; Stockhausen's contribution to the hippie wave of neo-romanticism and the younger generation's escapism'.³ Others saw a more benevolent change in purpose. Albrecht Reithmüller wrote that volume 4 ought to be regarded more as a 'musicological source . . . acknowledging this character is necessary to avoid misunderstandings; because it is—as with the earlier volumes—not a scientific or, strictly speaking, theoretical work, but rather an artistic self-expression . . . which can be tapped for its poetical content'.⁴ After the 1978 release of volume 4, critical reaction slowed and volumes 5 and 6 received only scant attention.⁵ Although scholars have cited them frequently, no comprehensive review of volumes 7–10 has appeared in print.⁶

Stockhausen pioneered elaborate mechanisms of serial organization throughout his life, and as we know from the writings of musicologists Richard Toop, Jerome Kohl, Markus Bandur, Joe Drew, and many others, his impressive commitment to the *Licht* operatic heptology is evident not just in the way that he was able to hold onto certain key ideas throughout its ambitious twenty-five-year compositional history, but also in how he dealt with their final realization in a flexible way. We might therefore expect that the volumes of *Texte* would share a similar attention to detail and meticulous organization, moving in parallel with his compositional adventures.

Organizing nearly 3,500 pages of material into a coherent publication was a near-impossible task, and, although Misch's efforts to lend structure to the new volumes of *Texte* are heroic, her work is only partly successful. Nevertheless, anyone trying to navigate the subject will appreciate her numerous signposts. The polyvalent quality of much of the material frequently defies Misch's well-intentioned efforts to capture it in a distinct category. In order to help organize such a gallimaufry—which ranges from interviews and lectures to sketches and correspondence, photographs, and even writing-table blotters—Misch has wisely divided each volume into smaller, more coherent sections. For example, the third section of volume 15 deals with Stockhausen's summer courses in his hometown of Kürten, to which we shall return later. Although her sectionalization helps to provide a certain general orientation, even Misch cannot resolve the scrapbook quality that characterizes some of the material. Readers may rightly wonder how much was included at her discretion, and how much entered the project through Stockhausen's other primary collaborators at the Stockhausen Foundation. One thing is for sure: the Foundation's release of this material is a very welcome, if sometimes redundant, addition to the corpus of source material on Stockhausen.

² Robert P. Morgan, 'Stockhausen's Writings on Music', *Musical Quarterly*, 61 (1975), 1–16 at 16.

³ Reinhold Brinkmann, 'Texte zur Musik 1963–1970. Einführungen und Projekte. Kurse. Sendungen. Standpunkte', review of *Texte zur Musik*, vol. 3. *Die Musikforschung*, 27 (1974), 243–4 at 244.

⁴ Albrecht Reithmüller, 'Texte zur Musik. Band IV. 1970–1977', Review of *Texte zur Musik*, vol. 4. *Die Musikforschung*, 34 (1981), 117–18 at 118.

⁵ Dieter Gutknecht, 'Texte zur Musik 1977–1984: Band 5: Komposition, Band 6: Interpretation', Review of *Texte zur Musik*, vol. 4. *Die Musikforschung*, 44 (1991), 189–90.

⁶ Markus Bandur briefly reviewed volumes 11–17 of *Texte* in two interesting essays available online. See <http://info-netz-musik.bplaced.net/?p=12094> and <http://info-netz-musik.bplaced.net/?p=12105> (both accessed 6 Nov. 2015).

Taken together with previous volumes, the whole *Texte* project might be viewed as a kind of master compendium or sourcebook, rather than a carefully curated critical edition. Indeed, this may ultimately prove to be one of its most fascinating qualities. The first two volumes, which contain the most theoretical essays, now seem to be the exception rather than the rule. We have to look elsewhere for Stockhausen's later technical analyses, which are published separately and do not appear in *Texte*. Nevertheless, the countless sketches and letters provide a wealth of information essential to interpreting the works themselves.

Useful though they are, Misch's section groupings are not the only way to penetrate the thicket of information: an alternative path through the forest could start with the operatic works, which occupied most of Stockhausen's compositional energies from 1977 to 2003. Volumes 12, 13, and 15 are primarily devoted to the operas *Friday*, *Wednesday*, and *Sunday* respectively. Whereas these volumes are bound in the colour of their day (orange for *Friday*, yellow for *Wednesday*, gold for *Sunday*) the other volumes are clad in white binding, another hangover from the earlier days of *Texte*. Compositionally, the first of these 'late' operas is *Friday*, a work that had its premiere in September 1996 at the Leipzig Opera and raises many difficult questions.

Themed as the 'day of temptation', the *Friday* opera prompted Richard Toop to write: 'clearly, there's something here to drive virtually everyone with a political correctness hobbyhorse into a frenzy'.⁷ Above a primary layer of slowly moving electronic music, the theme of miscegenation runs through the opera, coming to a head with a battle between two opposing armies of racially homogeneous children. Interpenetrating the narrative 'Realszenen' is a third layer of metaphorical action ('Tonszenen') wherein twelve pairs of gendered singers and dancers exchange partners, forming 'bastard' pairs. The pairs finally repent and enter a 'purifying flame', which sends them spiralling upwards into the heavens.⁸

Like many, Peter Rautmann and Nicolas Schartz admired the high quality of the 1996 Leipzig premiere, which was noteworthy for a particularly strong performance by the children's chorus. But they understood the opera as politically regressive, suggesting that there were subliminal fantasies of sexual debauchery scarcely concealed beneath the surface, and implying that in Stockhausen's conception the female was 'always ready for copulation', both 'seductress and seduced', and ultimately nothing more than a 'one-dimensional patriarchal projection'.⁹ Material in *Texte* suggests that Stockhausen's view of temptation was significantly more nuanced than Rautmann and Schartz thought. An interview Stockhausen gave with Annette Kanzler and Lothar Mattner roughly a month before the *Friday* premiere indicates that the composer thought that temptation extended beyond the gendered body. In typical Stockhausenian fashion, the interview answers some questions while simultaneously opening up deep fissures.

The greatest temptation as I see it, is that since a particular time—and probably even more so in the future—humanity wants to get outside of itself. All transvestitism and perversions and extreme transgressions [*Grenzüberschreitungen*] of the body and the mind through artificial means [*Beschleunigungen*] or drugs (or whatever else) indicate the longing to be something

⁷ Richard Toop, 'Myths Made into Scenic Sounds', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 Sept. 1996.

⁸ This was not the first time Stockhausen used the metaphor of fire for purity. In the text-piece *Set Sail for the Sun*, from *Aus den sieben Tagen* (1968), the performers are asked to 'move your tone / until you arrive at complete harmony / and the whole sound turns to gold / to pure, gently shimmering fire'.

⁹ Peter Rautmann and Nicolas Schartz, *Passagen: Kreuz- und Quergänge durch die Moderne*, ii (Regensburg, 1998), 1113.

different. . . I believe that this is the greatest temptation: that we don't want to accept the boundaries that one discovers after a few years of becoming aware of oneself. And that is very interesting musically. This is the theme of *Friday* from *Light*. (xii. 265)¹⁰

Although there is enough here to make many wince, a charitable interpreter might contrast Stockhausen's words with his idea of musical hybridity, a concept with which he made positive musical associations. In an impressive attempt to incorporate hybridity into the musical experience, Stockhausen developed an array of intermodulation techniques from the 1960s onwards (xii. 245). In this context, the need for 'purification' at the end of *Friday* seems particularly surprising: wouldn't it make sense from Stockhausen's overarching perspective to understand gender as something far more fluid than a simple binary relationship? In another interview from roughly the same time, one senses that he might have been open to this possibility.

Rudolf Frisius: Are people constantly changing?

Stockhausen: Yes, precisely. . . . Anyway, I believe that humanity, as it has been interpreted on this planet up until now, consists of genetic formulas [*Formeln*] or parts of formulas—atomic formulas—represented by various people with various bodies and individual characteristics and races and groups: they are the consequence of structural seeds [*Kernen*]. People [*Menschen*] can appear differently—not necessarily in human form [*Menschen*], but in different representations [*Darstellungsformen*] . . .

Frisius: So, as it happens, for example, in *Friday* from *Light*.

Stockhausen: It is a development that I sense and moreover wonder at in my own work: namely, the increasing ways that music itself already contains persons and characters and constantly develops further. (xii. 255–6)

In the light of Stockhausen's serial project, in which he sought not so much to reconcile opposites but rather to move beyond a dialectical way of thinking entirely, it can be frustrating to try and locate the line he draws between transcendence and decadence when racial and gender issues are at stake. Some scholars, such as Thomas Ulrich, who believes that Stockhausen's serial thinking fundamentally involves relationships rather than oppositions, have tried to construct an interpretation of *Licht* in which the opera cycle is not a simplistic morality play about the binary opposition of good and evil, but rather a vast contemplation of different conceptions of reality.¹¹ Further evidence of the composer's scepticism towards dialectical relationships is evident in a remarkable passage in the Kanzler/Mattner interview, in which Stockhausen suggests that the line between what is rational and what is irrational is linked to our sensory experiences, and is not fixed.

Irrational is precisely that in music—one speaks of irrational rhythms, for example—which lies above a certain degree of complexity that the senses cannot follow. . . . Only when you go to the limit of what is conceivable and rationally conceivable—and this limit is constantly expanding through the work of the mind—does one really feel what lies beyond the rational: the realm of mysticism. (xii. 283)

¹⁰ Stockhausen's fury over an all-female performance of *Stimmung* testifies to the special valence gender held for him (*Texte*, xi. 217).

¹¹ Thomas Ulrich, *Stockhausen: A Theological Interpretation* (Kürten: 2012), 48. See also p. 100 and Robin Maconie, *Other Planets* (Lanham, Md., 2005), 417.

Earlier, Kanzler suggested that what is ‘ungraspable’ doesn’t ‘really play any role in our lives’, to which Stockhausen abruptly retorted: ‘In my life that plays the main role’ (xii. 276–7).¹² Even seen in this context, the sight of children in blackface, battling Caucasians on stage, will remain difficult for many to swallow. It is probably fair to say that for many, *Friday* poses the most difficult questions of the entire *Licht* cycle; yet, it may also provide us with the clearest window into Stockhausen’s view of humanity.

It may be that *Friday* will fare better in partly staged performances. Thanks to the many alternative versions Stockhausen endorsed, sections of the opera can be performed as chamber music. Sometimes he even judged these pared-down performances to be more successful than their fully staged counterparts because of the more favourable opportunities afforded for the placement of loudspeakers: he was often frustrated with the physical limitations in conventional opera houses (xii. 323–4). Especially with regard to *Friday*, these chamber versions could carry the torch for the foreseeable future; on the other hand, many would feel it a pity to consign the scenic appeal of the opera to the wastepaper basket.

Stockhausen’s next major operatic venture, *Wednesday*, seems liberated from the troubling questions surrounding *Friday*. Dedicated to the theme of cooperation among its three protagonists or *Gestalten*—Eve, Michael, and Lucifer—*Wednesday* contains one of the composer’s most audacious works, the *Helicopter String Quartet*. Daunting in its logistical challenges as well as its musical intricacies, this was for one critic perhaps ‘the least interesting part’ of the opera: about ‘halfway through . . . tedium sets in’.¹³ Conversely, another called it ‘the most iconic piece of classical music from the 1990s’.¹⁴ In the public consciousness no less than in its performance requirements, the *Quartet* overshadows other parts of the *Wednesday* opera—and, indeed the entire *Licht* heptology—somewhat like Wagner’s *Ride of the Valkyries* standing for the *Ring* cycle for some listeners.

Wednesday had a tangled production history leading up to its 2012 world premiere in Birmingham. Letters reproduced in *Texte* provide welcome documentation. The opera was originally intended to premiere in May 2000 at the Bonn Opera. A letter from the director Manfred Beilharz from 26 October 1999 summarizes the opera company’s version of events leading to the breakdown of relations (xiii. 295). Beilharz noted that certain conditions hadn’t been met, including a performance in a smaller space and the engagement of some regular orchestral and choral forces. Costs had also exceeded estimates. In a forceful, handwritten rebuttal from 1 November, Stockhausen not only disputed all of Beilharz’s claims but also made a counteraccusation: after repeated blunders, the Bonn company never engaged a producer. Stockhausen listed failures of management to approve rehearsal plans and noted that contracts were not even sent to artists. In a 2000 interview with Anthony Fiumara, Stockhausen remarked ruefully and hyperbolically that ‘the world was hoping that *Wednesday* would be premiered in Bonn’ (xvii. 180). A second attempted premiere of *Mittwoch* at the Bern Biennale was cancelled in 2001, after Stockhausen’s remarks regarding

¹² Stockhausen denies another imagined dialectic—between compositional intuition and construction—in an interview with Stefan Holmstöm and Karl Tiderman (xvii. 157).

¹³ Alex Ross, ‘Opera in the Clouds’, *The New Yorker*, 10 Sept. 2012.

¹⁴ David Fallows, ‘Mittwoch aus Licht: Birmingham Opera Company at the Argle Works, Birmingham, August 22’, *Opera* (Oct. 2012), 1284.

the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks made it impossible to continue raising funds (xiii. 303). The Bern management was clearly much more sympathetic to Stockhausen, and the director Roman Brotbeck even debunked the media's claims regarding his 9/11 comments. Nevertheless, with the damage already done, the company found it impossible to go forward with the production. Finally, as part of the festivities surrounding the London Olympic Games of 2012, the Birmingham Opera Company premiered *Wednesday* in what was a generally well-received production. Dozens of excellent photographs from Birmingham are reproduced in volume 13 of *Texte*, which give a good sense of the ambitious undertaking.

Wednesday was not the only Stockhausen opera that saw its first performance after the composer's death: the Cologne premiere of *Sunday* had occurred a year earlier in October 2011, although Stockhausen composed *Sunday* after *Wednesday*. (He had hoped it would be premiered in Berlin in 2003 (xvii. 163).) Financial issues tied to the performances helped precipitate the Cologne director's resignation; yet, once again, the impressive production met with mostly positive reviews in the press. In addition to another generous collection of photographs from the premiere, volume 15 of *Texte* brings together several interviews that clarify some of Stockhausen's thinking regarding *Sunday*. With only a meditation on the 'mystical union' of Eve and Michael, Lucifer is scarcely to be seen, and so his characteristic musical line or 'Formula', filled with eleven-tuplets, angular leaps, and sung numbers, is almost totally absent. Lucifer and his signature music make brief appearances in the fourth scene, *Düfte-Zeichen*, and again in the 'reminiscences'—of musical quotations from earlier operas. These reminiscences are prominent in the opera's final scene, *Hoch-Zeiten*. Notwithstanding their orientation towards the past, Stockhausen explained them in terms of the forward development of human consciousness and, presumably, greater diversity. In an interview with Jörn Peter Hiekel, he explained that the quotations were 'projected only as memories within the new context of the choir and orchestra' (xv. 296–7).

Describing *Sunday*'s quotations as moments that open up the cyclical nature of the heptology might again lead some to draw comparisons with Wagner. For example, it is possible to imagine a close alignment between Stockhausen's 'reminiscences' and the way Wagner repeats many leitmotifs at the end of *Götterdämmerung*. But Stockhausen routinely dismissed comparisons with Wagner as irrelevant. In an interview with Wibke Bantelmann, he admitted that he occasionally attended Wagner operas but 'went back home during the performances'. What bothered him was 'the whole pomp. And principally the strange retrospective overemphasis on German godliness or gods and their families.' Constantly undergoing variation, *Licht*'s music instead 'refers to the quality of the composition of the cosmos, the universe, and also the microworld of atoms, molecules, cells and so forth' (xv. 73–4). While it is hard to argue that Stockhausen's operas lack pomp, one could also read the whole *Licht* project as a progression from the composer's ego (represented by the autobiographical nature of *Thursday*) to the universal (the use of multiple languages and tempos in *Sunday*), something that would also set him apart from Wagner.

More detailed information regarding the specific structure and approach to composing *Sunday* can be found in the elaborate composition booklets that Stockhausen produced for his courses in Kürten. In addition to the material on *Sunday*, volume 15 includes a lengthy section containing many details of these yearly courses, which started in 1998 and still occur biennially. Founded shortly after Stockhausen's 1996

Darmstadt appearance,¹⁵ the annual festival brought together over a hundred young artists, seasoned veterans, and neophyte Burghers in a small community setting that offered intensive coaching, lectures, and a remarkable series of performances. The documentation provided in *Texte* gives some feel for what it was like to be at the festivals, which did so much to keep Stockhausen's music relevant to the many who attended.

While they provide a rich variety of material about the last three *Licht* operas, the new volumes of *Texte* also elucidate many aspects of the earlier instalments—although volumes 5–8 were dedicated specifically to them. One particularly important clarification concerns a Hitler quotation in *Luzipolyp*, a comic section of the *Monday* opera. The quotation, 'seit 5 uhr 45 wird jetzt zurückgeschossen', was made on the eve of Germany's invasion of Poland. As Rautmann and Schaltz understand it, Stockhausen's use of Hitler's words (which they incidentally quote incorrectly) is a 'gag, without any inner compositional necessity . . . an excessive break of [the work's] own aesthetic'.¹⁶ In a seven-part series of radio discussions about *Licht* with Reinhard Erman, it becomes clear that Stockhausen thought of this terrifying quotation as a way to lend insight to the character of Lucifer—in this specific case, as a kind of general who lays claim to all things (xvi. 53). In fact, Stockhausen's expression of the Luciferian *Gestalt* has caused a great deal of misunderstanding. Stockhausen himself seems to have viewed the spirit of Lucifer occasionally acting tangibly against his work; as he explained to Erman, the 1981 strike mounted by choristers against the third act of the *Thursday* opera made it impossible to perform in its entirety for two weeks. Stockhausen dramatically played out the strike at the end of the third act of the *Saturday* opera, where Lucifer essentially 'causes' the entire show briefly to stop in its tracks, a victim of a musicians' union walkout enacted onstage (xvi. 151–2). If Lucifer caused problems for Stockhausen in reality, this *Gestalt* inspired some of the composer's greatest theatrical moments.

The Luciferian moment that probably caused the most trouble for Stockhausen occurred in 2001 after his notorious 9/11 comments. Volume 17 of *Texte* reproduces the lengthy Hamburg press conference of 16 September 2001 word for word (xvii. 209–33). The fallout from these comments, in which Stockhausen called the World Trade Center disaster 'the greatest work of art imaginable for the whole cosmos' (xvii. 230), was swift and dramatic. His words, uttered at a very sensitive time, appeared out of context in the German press, and were then parroted around the world. Since those dark days, critical opinion has softened considerably towards Stockhausen. In 2008, Alex Ross reflected on the scandal: 'Now that 9/11 has been exploited and trivialized in every conceivable way, the cryptic musings of an elderly German composer hardly seem worthy of notice.'¹⁷ Read another way, Stockhausen's comments do not seem cryptic at all, and perhaps even lend insight to the monumental disaster. When asked by a reporter whether there was any difference between artwork [*Kunstwerk*] and crime [*Verbrechen*], the composer noted that 9/11 was a crime

because those involved didn't consent . . . That's obvious. And no one announced that they risked losing their lives. What happened in spiritual terms, the leap out of security, out of

¹⁵ Comprehensive documentation on this can be found in *Karlheinz Stockhausen bei den Internationalen Ferienkursen für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, 1951–1996* (Kürten, 2001.)

¹⁶ Rautmann and Schaltz, *Passagen*, 387.

¹⁷ Alex Ross, 'Supersonic: Stockhausen's "Gruppen" at the Tempelhof Airport, in Berlin', *The New Yorker*, 13 Oct. 2008.

what is usually taken for granted, out of life, that sometimes happens to a certain extent in art, too, otherwise art is nothing. (xvii. 232)

Clearly, Stockhausen's comments were not intended to offend anyone, but reflected his inclination to see interpenetrations between art and reality.

Stockhausen's 9/11 comments did not just injure his public reputation; they also affected personal relationships. Wolfgang Rihm condemned his words as 'appalling and depressing', accusing Stockhausen of treating humanity merely as 'recipients' of his art; yet in a personal letter, Rihm poignantly expressed his hope that the good things Stockhausen brought into the world would endure (xvii. 237). In his response, Stockhausen explained that he had sensed his comments would be misinterpreted and admitted, 'I don't know how my mouth went out of kilter'. Perhaps Stockhausen didn't help his case, however, when he acknowledged that he recognized the NDR journalist who later took his comments out of context, pointed his finger at him, and said loudly, 'You are also Lucifer' (xvii. 239). A brief clarification, which included Stockhausen's apology, appeared on 20 September 2001 in *The Express* newspaper (xvii. 240). The whole episode clearly left a scar on Stockhausen, and later he dug in his heels. In a 2005 interview with Teresa Castanheira he said defiantly, 'I was completely misquoted after the press conference and I have never excused myself for what I had said' (xvii. 354).

Although this incident has long since passed, Stockhausen's reaction to the World Trade Center attacks continues to be one of the first things that the public associates with him. While his personal feeling that 'Lucifer was there' may no longer be particularly controversial to anyone, the episode offers insight into a deeper element of his thinking. Richard Schechner suggested that some of the outrage over Stockhausen's words arose from the implicit idea that art might inhabit the realm of politics: art as action, not as representation.¹⁸ This view—whereby art is decoupled from a modern capitalist perspective and separated from a moralistic, ideological, or religious messaging—is strikingly similar to the attitude often taken in *Licht*. Perhaps Stockhausen realized this when, during his 9/11 comments, he advised listeners to 'adjust their thinking' for what he was about to say (xvii. p. 230). Indeed, many will find Stockhausen's comments less contemptible than the commodification of the act of terror itself: on a recent visit to the tragic site I was bombarded with offers of commemorative T-shirts, mugs, iPhone cases, and other chotzkies. Perhaps Lucifer's last laugh is seeing ground zero as a bizarre memorial-cum-tourist centre.

As the furore over his remarks receded and work on *Licht* drew to a close, Stockhausen began his last work-cycle, *Klang*. Volume 17 of *Texte* contains plentiful documentation relating to this *opus ultimum*.¹⁹ Here, Stockhausen's focus turned from the days of the week to the hours of the day: each hour is associated with a piece. Stockhausen's interest in colour, so vital to *Licht*, deepened as he linked each *Klang* piece to a value on Wilhelm Oswald's colour circle.²⁰ For those familiar with the superformula of *Licht*, which

¹⁸ Richard Schechner, keynote address at the 1992 Association for Theater in Higher Education Conference, accessible online as '9/11 as Avantgarde Art?', www.academia.edu/3225627/9-11-as-Work-of-Art (accessed 9 Nov. 2015).

¹⁹ Although most of the *Klang* material appears in vol. 17, some is scattered among other volumes (such as the sketches in vol. 16, pp. 299–300). This displacement makes it more difficult to synthesize the material.

²⁰ Ostwald sought to do in his colour wheel what Stockhausen professed to do with his serial method: bring an arithmetical progression of sensations into harmony with a geometrical progression of stimuli. Based on Ewald Hering's idea of four 'psychological primaries' (red, yellow, blue, and green) Ostwald's circle was highly influential for artists in the De Stijl group such as Doesburg and Mondrian. See John Gage, *Color and Meaning: Art, Science and Symbolism* (Berkeley, 1999), 257–8. Stockhausen's earlier version of the colour scheme for *Klang*, shown in a sketch

determined much of the later execution of the cycle, it might have come as a surprise that *Klang* never had such a strict, overarching plan (although each individual piece is based upon the same double tone row). Stockhausen's sketches indicate that he researched many ideas about how Western and Eastern cultures view the hours of the day, looking for ways to enhance his own experience through the music he eventually composed.²¹

Perhaps Stockhausen took a freer approach to composing *Klang* because he sensed that he might not have much time left.²² In the end, he only finished twenty-one of the planned twenty-four hours. While he composed the *Licht* operas at a deliberate pace, it is clear that *Klang* was considerably reconfigured, presumably because of Stockhausen's desire to move extremely rapidly towards its successful completion. While the first four hours are significant pieces in themselves, they cost Stockhausen considerable time and effort to compose. As late as September 2006, the fifth hour, *Schönheit*, was slated to be both a solo piece and an instrumental trio for flute, bass clarinet, and trumpet.²³ The sixth hour was to have been an electronic piece, *Cosmic Pulses*. But in September 2006, Stockhausen decided to place only the solo version of *Schönheit* (which he renamed *Harmonien*) into fifth place, and moved the *Schönheit* trio to sixth. For hours 7–12, he rapidly composed a series of permuted trios for various groups of instruments, based on the music of *Harmonien*. Consequently, *Cosmic Pulses* moved to the thirteenth hour and formed the 'seed' of its own series of derivative works: the so-called 'Urantia' subcycle.²⁴ Each of these pieces, scored for selected layers of *Cosmic Pulses* and a live soloist, bears a name from the Urantia book.

Much has been written about Stockhausen's relationship with this unusual book in recent years.²⁵ Stemming from the Seventh Day Adventist movement, the Urantia book is an unusual mix of Christianity and science fiction that appealed strongly to Stockhausen. *Texte* includes a fascinating document, which until now has not been known. Stockhausen's first contact with the book was through a mysterious man who attended a February 1971 performance of *Hymnen* in New York City's Philharmonia Hall. As urban legend has it, he wore a long beard and carried a shepherd's staff. Calling Stockhausen a 'minister of sound transmission', he presented the composer with a copy. *Texte* reproduces an odd napkin Stockhausen found inside his original copy of the book, which contains the man's name, phone number, address, and other information about the rock and theatre scene in New York City (xvi. 372). This

from 2003 (xvii, p. x), indicates that the composer originally thought of starting from black (hour 1) and ending with white (hour 24), progressing through a very different spectrum.

²¹ In his recent book on *Klang*, Leopoldo Siano deftly traces some of these influences, which include the monastic prayers of the office as well as the Chinese *chi*. Leopoldo Siano, *Karlheinz Stockhausens letzter Kompositionszyklus Klang. Die 24 Stunden des Tages* (Signale aus Köln, 19; Vienna, 2013), 34–55.

²² A postcard Stockhausen wrote to Thomas von Steinaecker in 2005 suggests he may have had doubts he would live past 80; *ibid.* 284.

²³ *Ibid.* 127.

²⁴ Kohl suggests that by doing this, Stockhausen may have been after a subdivision of *Klang* into three groups of pieces in a distributive serial pattern of 7:8:9. See Jerome Kohl, 'Harmonies and the Path from Beauty to Awakening: Hours 5 to 12 of Stockhausen's *Klang*', *Perspectives of New Music*, 50 (2012), 476–523 at 520. This theory is appealing in view of Stockhausen's propensity for numerical proportions. Of course, Stockhausen reused material in many other earlier pieces: in *Prozession* (1967), performers are supposed to draw from the composer's earlier works, and the *Tierkreis* melodies (1974–5) formed the basic content of longer pieces such as *Sirius* (1975–7) and *Musik im Bauch* (1975).

²⁵ Marcus Bandur, "... alles aus einem Kern entfaltet, thematisch und strukturell": Karlheinz Stockhausen und die Rezeption des *Urantia Buch* in LICHT", in Imke Misch and Christoph von Blumröder (eds.), *Internationales Stockhausen-Symposium 2000: LICHT* (Signale aus Köln, 10; Münster, 2004), 136–46. See also Siano, *Karlheinz Stockhausens letzter Kompositionszyklus*, 149–65.

document offers a potentially fruitful path that could enhance research into Stockhausen's unusually favourable reception within circles of American esoteric thought.

Indeed, *Texte* provides an intriguing context for Stockhausen's fascination with the star Sirius, a fixation that has caused many eyes to roll through the years. Speaking to Ralf Grauel, Stockhausen said: 'I was educated on Sirius and would like to go back there, although for the time being I still live in Kürten near Cologne' (xi. 299). Later, the composer clarified his stance when he remarked to Stefan Holmström and Karl Tiderman that he felt 'Sirius spirit', which he characterized as 'extreme musicality and extreme openness for unknown musical forms' (xvii. 167). Earlier in 1978, Stockhausen explained that he had a kind of 'inner knowledge' of his alleged extraterrestrial origins, but also remarked that it was usually better to be silent about such things in public since it led to so many misunderstandings and false interpretations (vi. 365–6). Perhaps it is best to locate these statements within the realm of the composer's private, mystical world. Nevertheless, they suggest that Stockhausen's epistemological foundation was strongly linked to his inner imagination. This curious admixture of scientific interest and individual subjectivity was paramount to his thinking.

Texte not only documents Stockhausen's professional career; it also dwells on his personal life by reproducing innumerable domestic documents that could seem trivial. However, these sometimes hold unexpected meaning for his musical endeavours. In volume 3 of *Texte*, Stockhausen listed the garden plantings at his home in Kürten. Morgan ruefully presented this as evidence of a peculiar 'hold' Stockhausen seemed to have over his followers. But the most recent *Texte* provide additional evidence for Stockhausen's horticultural interests: numerous elaborate sketches, photographs, and hand-drawn maps of plantings grace its pages (xiv. 399–404; xvi. 340–2, 375–6, 388–90). The vegetable world occasionally played an overt role in Stockhausen's composing: for example, in a section of *Licht-Bilder* (a scene from *Sunday* from *Licht*) singers name fifty-seven trees, plants, and fruits.²⁶ The scene concludes with a section devoted to the theme 'God in Everything', an idea that Thomas Ulrich locates in Plotinian philosophy. As Ulrich writes, 'the One is the light that shines through everything, but only the individual becomes visible—just as light itself remains invisible for the human eye and I can only see it in contact with the appearance of what it is shining on'.²⁷ It is therefore the innumerable plants, animals, stones, and other nameable objects that bear witness to 'God's reflected splendour'.²⁸ Ulrich makes a strong case for the importance of Plotinian thinking in Stockhausen's musical project. Understood from this perspective, the unusual emphasis on domestic gardening begins to make sense.

At times Stockhausen displayed his compositional swagger, though sometimes it was tongue-in-cheek. 'Bruckner should pack his things and go home. He has no idea how slow and dark and black I could go. Not to mention Mahler' (xvii. 147). Sometimes, Stockhausen's bravado is less amusing. 'I had the highest respect for [Messiaen], and when I think of him now, I say he was my master for a certain time. But my relation to the past is extremely limited now. Nobody can teach me something' (xiv. 78). The composer was not afraid to ask difficult questions to those in power or to point

²⁶ The names of these organisms are not given in vol. 15, as might be expected, but appear rather in the score itself (Kürten, 2007), p. xi.

²⁷ Ulrich paraphrases Plotinus, Ennead 1, Tractate 6, Section 9, second to last paragraph. (<http://sacred-texts.com/cla/plotenn/enn069.htm>, accessed 8 Nov. 2015). Stockhausen must have been read this too, as he quoted the same citation in a 1998 sketch for *Sunday* (xv. 74).

²⁸ Ulrich, *Stockhausen: A Theological Interpretation*, 87.

out their hypocrisy. In response to a birthday wish by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Stockhausen asked—on the back of a postcard—why the Bundeskanzler hadn't once attended a premiere during his long term in office (xvi. 306).

But for all of Stockhausen's bluster, he did not lack a sense of humour.²⁹ When a piece of music paper tore, Stockhausen wrote: 'Here was my bottom-left symphony: somebody must have ripped it off. Now nobody will hear it again?' (xvi. 463). *Texte* contains many amusing anecdotes as well. 'My favorite present as a child was a little wooden hammer which I always carried in a loop fixed to my apron. I would hit at anything which caught my attention' (xvi. 452). These moments shed light on another, more human aspect of Stockhausen. In between these moments of levity, he worked constantly: in an interview with the singer Björk he remarked: 'I miss a lot of what life has got to offer' (xiv. 192). To Hölstrom he said: 'Before they start digging my tomb, I think I will have worked a lot, you know. Therefore, I [have] made it very difficult for me to die' (xvii. 164). Not wanting to leave his memorial to chance, Stockhausen made an astonishingly detailed sketch of his last resting place. His gravesite is in a quiet rustic cemetery above the town of Kürten (xiv. 465).

Are we in a better place to evaluate Stockhausen's legacy now? I would answer in the affirmative: clearly, *Texte* serves as an essential and central assembly of resources for study and reflection. It could also be a useful addition to many libraries: for those institutions that do not have the resources to purchase a great many Stockhausen scores, the essentials of every piece can be gleaned from *Texte*. While the earlier tendency to present material uncritically has continued in volumes 11–17, Misch has done a good job of bringing some semblance of order to a very diverse assemblage, and her indexes at the end of each volume are most useful. Volume 10 of *Texte* ends with a lengthy bibliography. There is no corresponding resource in the new volumes, but admittedly such a thing would now probably end up as a book in itself. While these seven new volumes can be exasperating in the way they juxtapose fascinating interviews and important sketch material with seemingly irrelevant Stockhausenalia, can the editor be blamed for deciding to provide a surplus instead of a deficit?

²⁹ Georg Henkel's book *Kösmisches Lachen* (Hamburg, 2012) is a marvellous new study of humour in Stockhausen's works.