

**HARRISON
BIRTWISTLE** "Gawain" at Salzburg Festival

**GEORG
FRIEDRICH
HAAS** Celebrating his 60th birthday

**LUCIANO
BERIO** On the 10th anniversary of his death

**KAROL
SZYMANOWSKI** On the instinctual life of sounds

**ARNOLD
SCHÖNBERG** Orchestral version (1914) of the "Chamber Symphony"

**DAVID
SAWER** "Theatre inspires me"

**VYKINTAS
BALTAKAS** A profile



19. JULI — 1. SEPTEMBER 2013

IM FOKUS: HARRISON BIRTWISTLE ·
TOSHIO HOSOKAWA · TÖRU TAKEMITSU

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Dear Music Lovers,

“Institutions are nothing without the people who actually help the wheels to turn. I was unable to see that when I was young. The strength of the institutions which are crucial for our artistic development and production capabilities is mainly dependent on the imagination and courage of just a few people,” Mauricio Kagel once said. Nobody doubted that he was referring above all to **Otto Tomek**, one of the defining personalities in the New Music scene, without whose courage, imagination and strength music history after 1945 would certainly have developed very differently.

Otto Tomek passed away earlier this year after a fulfilling life. In this issue, you can read about what he meant to Universal Edition and its composers. We also remember **Luciano Berio**, who died ten years ago, with a touching poem by Eduardo Sanguineti.

In the UK **Harrison Birtwistle's** *Gawain* is considered one of the most significant works for 20th-century music theatre. However, the opera has never been staged in the rest of Europe. This is due to change, as *Gawain* is to be performed in the *Felsenreitschule* at Salzburg Festival from 26 July onward. The storyline is based on a medieval heroic epic from the Arthurian saga and includes a host of elements that are typical for the genre: gloomy castles, eerie nocturnal apparitions, magic powers, political intrigue and amorous confusion. We visited Birtwistle in London and asked him about the work.

Georg Friedrich Haas turns 60 on 16 August and we celebrate his birthday with a special section. In January Simon Rattle conducted *in vain*, the forward-looking ensemble composition which has gained cult status, for the first time and has nothing but praise for the work: “It requires patience and it requires trust, but it’s a staggering experience and one of the first great masterpieces of the 21st century.” In an interview, Haas himself describes the sounds for which he has a particular preference: “I am interested in the unbelievably intense sound quality of ‘purely’ intoned intervals. An overtone chord with pure tuning.”

“Your letter dated 8 June which I just received has filled me with the greatest pleasure,” Emil Hertzka wrote to **Karol Szymanowski** in 1919. Wolfgang Molkow uses a number of interesting references to describe how this great Polish man – who is still underestimated even today – came to Vienna, to UE, and how he found his style and his inspiration.

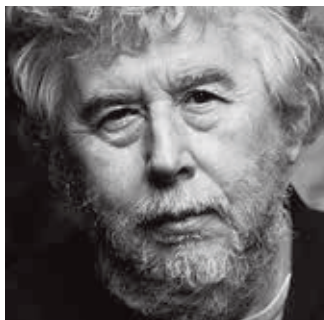
In an interview with **David Sawer** we travel once more to England, where we are allowed an insight into his work. Just a short time ago, Sawer enjoyed major success with the premiere of *Flesh and Blood* in London. As an interesting aside: Sawer was one of the extras when *Gawain* was premiered in 1991.

Vykintas Baltakas is a composer who likes to surprise himself with the music that he writes, and therefore does not work according to a prefabricated aesthetic programme. We introduce one of the last composers who Otto Tomek brought to Universal Edition.

We hope you will enjoy this issue.

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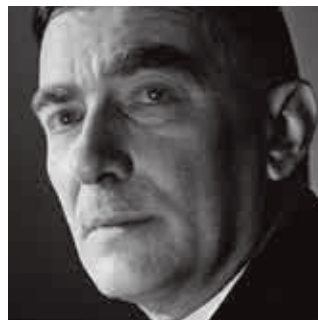
Correction: In our last issue we neglected to credit Richard Dixon as the translator of the article “Those Studio Days” by Umberto Eco.



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*GEORG
FRIEDRICH
HAAS*

The premiere of "limited approximations" by Georg Friedrich Haas for six pianos tuned at twelfth-tone intervals and orchestra was not just a sensation, but one of those half hours in which music history is made. The sound of the grand pianos blended seamlessly. Like melting pebbles, their liquefied notes flowed through the layers of the orchestra, creating tectonics devoid of humanity like before the beginning or after the end of time, with something threatening about their autonomy. Like seething seas, the sound seemed at one point to tip over towards the listeners. And if some chords sounded from a distance like sevenths in Anton Bruckner's music, then only as a Fata Morgana of a process that has as much to do with tonality as the genesis of the Alps. In this process, the familiar structure with twelve-tone steps is pulled away from under your feet, while a different, highly sensual and physically tangible connection ensues. Before you know what is happening, you are pulled into the gravitational field of a different planet. Or perhaps it is the Earth, viewed from a different perspective.

Volker Hagedorn (Die Zeit; 15 September 2011; "Meltdown in slow motion")

Deceptive spirals

On the music of Georg Friedrich Haas

BY WOLFGANG SCHAUFLEER

The fact that recognition was a long time coming, but was then all the more intense, may have something to do with the fact that Georg Friedrich Haas conquers new musical territory in his works, step by step and with great consistency, inviting his listeners to join him on auditory adventures whose radical nature and beauty they must first learn to grasp. The word “adventure” has been carefully chosen. Being prepared to experience the music of Georg Friedrich Haas also means letting go; it means making a journey to an unknown destination. It means taking a risk and entrusting yourself to Haas. There is no other way to find out what lies behind his music. It is a case of all or nothing. And he will reward you richly for this trust.

With his awareness that the system of equal temperament fails to offer him possibilities for expression with sufficient differentiation, Haas develops and refines sounds whose fascination is based on the use of microtonality.

Haas would presumably object to this observation. He stresses that there is not just one single microtonality. Those who restrict it to halving semitones to form quarter-tones miss the essence of the concept. The sensory attraction of the multifarious sound has become a key component of Haas’ musical thinking. Shifts, overtone harmonies, pulsing beats – these can form worlds that are in conflict with each other and complement each other as mirror images. Haas’ creativity is ignited by this and leads into areas whose foundation is not as secure as it often seems – and so it is hardly a coincidence that Franz Schubert is hugely important to him.

His music often particularly allows audibility of the difference between the familiar and the possible. It is a challenge faced by both musicians and listeners. The listener must be prepared to experience different auditory coordinates – and then can expect to encounter

potentially addictive sounds. Haas has composed several works that must be played in total darkness: a tribute to his love of haziness and the resultant sensitivity of perception.

Haas himself says: “I do not see night-time as a romantic concept of sweet dreams, but more as a continuation of the concept of being surrounded by darkness, in the sense of being mentally deranged – as a moment of grief, hopelessness, darkness. The “night side” of things is essential to my music. This concept describes something that plays a major role in my spiritual consciousness (and probably that of many other people as well).”

In response to the question as to whether there is a direct relationship between night-time, light and darkness, or whether this plays out across several different levels, Haas answers: “These relationships probably do always exist, but while composing, and particularly in the case of the *Concerto for Light and Orchestra*, my focus is very specifically on the perception of darkness – or, as in *Hyperion*, the perception of light – as a musical instrument. This is something rather different to the metaphorical concept of night that I was talking about before. However, in the string quartet “*In iij. Noct.*”, the concept of night is connected to the actual absence of light: for me as a composer, when the historical Gesualdo quotation occurs in the middle of the piece (according to the golden ratio), the link between the actual night-time in which the piece is being played and the metaphorical night-time of the historical quotation becomes tangible as an element of expression.”

The musicologist Bernhard Günther writes: “When you listen to music, the function of melodic lines, pitch systems of equal temperament and bars whose beats have graded emphasis roughly corresponds to that of banisters,

handrails, and also the familiar size and arrangement of the steps when you walk up and down a flight of stairs. Even subtle deviations from the standard dimensions, perspectival distortions such as those encountered in the Vatican or Odessa steps, are unsettling. In a now-famous lithograph by Maurits C. Escher, the upper and lower end of a staircase join up to form a kind of spiral staircase with only one complete turn, creating an unreal microcosm of aimlessness." He therefore delivers a precise description of Haas' "deceptive spirals".

The milestones in Haas' oeuvre include the Hölderlin chamber opera *Nacht* (1995/96), premiered at Bregenz Festival where the Poe/Kafka opera *Die schöne Wunde* was also realised in 2003. The formally daring ensemble composition *in vain* (2000) is almost a classic work in more recent ensemble literature.

As in his *Violin Concerto* (1998) harmonic structures formed out of overtone rows collide with chords based on tritones or fourths/fifths which lead into sheer endless sound loops. Haas' recent compositions include large orchestral works which are based on the findings from *in vain* and open the door even further to new sounds and sound experiences. In *Hyperion*, a *Concerto for Light and Orchestra*, he created "forty-five unforgettable minutes" (*Die Zeit*) in 2006 at the Donaueschingen Music Days. His orchestral work *Bruchstück* (2007) was labelled "music of spellbinding power". And in 2011 the newspaper *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* described his work *limited approximations* for six microtonally tuned pianos and orchestra simply as a "musical sensation".

***The sensory attraction
of the multifarious
sound has become a key
component of Haas'
musical thinking.***

At Salzburg Festival last summer Haas contributed a work that was inspired by Mozart's Horn Concerto, but without a soloist: "... e finisci già?" Haas explains the basic concept: "At the beginning of the concerto movement Mozart places the D major chord exactly in the position of the overtone chord – in Süßmayer's version this scoring blurs and becomes a rich major chord. This overtone chord is the centre of my short piece, out of which the beginning of the movement

unfolds, as written by Mozart – in four different temporal elongations and contractions simultaneously." He sees Mozart's fragment as an impressive personal document. Above the notes, which mostly only consist of the bass line and the solo part, Mozart had written Italian texts that give evidence of two different elements for Haas: the fact that Mozart used the parameter

of "technical difficulty" with a positively dramatic touch ("Ahi – ohimè! – bravo, poveretto!") and that Mozart obviously felt the formal specifications of the Rondo to be a constraint. It is easy to imagine that Haas sympathises with Mozart here.

Simon Rattle recently conducted Haas' music for the first time (see pages 15–17). In a way, this prepared the audience in Berlin for the new work that the Berlin Philharmonic commissioned Haas to write and will even take on tour to the Carnegie Hall in autumn 2014. The timing could hardly be better. This September Haas will take up his post as Professor of Composition at Columbia University in New York. ↵

On the magic of “pure” intervals

Georg Friedrich Haas in an interview
with Heinz Rögl

Mr Haas, you have found a “sound” – an unmistakable style. How easy is that for a composer to achieve?

Haas: Even though it wasn't your intention, I almost take that as a reproach. My initial response must be that I hope one of my next compositions will have some quality about it that can't be described as “typical Haas”. Sitting down and crafting your own “personal style” certainly doesn't work, and other composers have never succeeded in doing that either.

Staying with the recognition factor and this alleged personal style: your music grew, in a purely technical respect, out of aspects such as an interest in the range of overtone colours in music, or the meticulous exploration of microtonality as first adopted by the composers Ivan Wyschnegradsky or Alois Hába. And you have independently developed and adapted microtonality.

Haas: Just to bring things back down to earth a bit as far as microtonality is concerned: of course it plays a major role in my compositional work, but I don't believe it plays a significantly larger role than in the work of the majority of my colleagues.

For example, at a panel discussion in Warsaw I told Enno Poppe that if one were to hold an Olympic Games for microtonality, he would finish quite a few places ahead of me. The harmony of Ivan Wyschnegradsky, who was one of the pioneers of quarter-tone music, certainly plays a central role in my music, although not in the fact that it is quarter-tone, but in the semitonal approach also

used by Wyschnegradsky. If I do quote him, then it is more the non-quarter-tone qualities of the quarter-tone composer. That puts things back into perspective.

I have a rather ambivalent attitude to quarter-tone music. At home I had two pianos tuned a quarter-tone apart which enabled me to explore the concept, and it was naturally very illuminating to experiment with it with a partner as well. However, quarter-tone writing is certainly very abstract and also something that is difficult to grasp just by listening to it. I have experienced excellent orchestras, including those that play a lot of New Music, where the musicians produced the quarter-tones with a relative lack of clarity that was far removed from the precision displayed in their accomplished semitonal playing.

And so by far the more important element in your music is the connection to the spectrum of overtones?

Haas: This plays a major role in my work. I am interested in the unbelievably intense sound quality of “purely” intoned intervals. An overtone chord with pure tuning.

We are now touching on the expressive components of your music, which also – and this is where we enter the dangerous waters of verbal and thus ideological interpretation and signification – aims to convey messages. In a spectrum that ranges from desperation and sorrow to beauty, passion, intoxication and ecstasy. It is impossible not to be affected existentially by music such as “in vain”.

Crafting your own “personal style” certainly doesn't work.

Haas: Well, of course I'm pleased that it is perceived in this way, but I am unable, or hardly able, to talk about it. My decision when I was 17 years of age to be a composer and not an author might have had something to do

perceive the moment when the music from the beginning returns at the end as anything but oppressive. That is enough. You don't need any more. And nowadays we have no need to remember the political situation which

“My decision when I was 17 years of age to be a composer and not an author might have had something to do with the fact that I noticed that I cannot express myself as precisely in words as in sounds.”

with the fact that I noticed that I cannot express myself as precisely in words as in sounds.

You are right, there is sorrow in my music, there is fear, the feeling of being driven, of implacability, of being taken somewhere regardless of whether you want to or not. But – with very few exceptions – it is certainly not the case that I sit down with the aim of setting an aesthetic programme or a story to music. Sometimes it begins with moods. In the case of *in vain* it was my consternation at the formation of a coalition government with the far right in 2000; I composed a piece in which the formal progression revives content at the end of the work that had previously been believed overcome.

As the years have passed, *“in vain”* has become cult music that astonishes the listener primarily through its enchantingly beautiful sound.

Haas: Other people may respond differently when they hear it, but I still cannot imagine that anybody can

gave birth to the piece, thank goodness. At the moment I am glad that this piece has outlived the government. That is a fact, at least.

Your “breakthrough” as an internationally renowned composer in the late eighties was followed by an even larger number of impressive pieces than ever before, starting in – say – 1988/89. Do you see yourself engaged in continual, even linear development in your compositions? Are earlier works put into perspective for you?

Haas: The *Duo* for Viola and Prepared Piano was composed in 1984 and I still consider it to be one of my best compositions. The C minor melody at the end, which is repeated a number of times by the viola – whose strings are retuned every time the melody returns – so that the tonality kind of melts away, is certainly something that could exhibit a “personal style”, if that is what you are looking for. Even though it sounds entirely different to my other compositions, and you wouldn't immediately associate →

“The Hagen Quartet uses the expression ‘Haas intonation’ when they play romantic or classical music with pure intonation.”

it with me. And I hope that I will be able to write other pieces that are entirely different in the future as well. The works that were written ten years ago can't really be described as old.

Do you write differently for various groups, ensembles or orchestras, depending on the commission?

Haas: Yes. I always try to compose for each situation in which the work will be performed. I can illustrate that using specific examples. *Poème* was a commission for the Cleveland Orchestra and I knew there would be hardly any rehearsals because they are extremely expensive in the USA, but I also knew that performers are excellently prepared when they arrive at rehearsals, unlike in Europe. There is a sociological difference: if a musician in the USA arrives at a rehearsal unprepared, he loses his job. If a musician in Europe prepares for a rehearsal, he gets angry glares from the others. That's just the way it is, and you have to realise it. I encountered the exact opposite with *Natures mortes* in Donaueschingen, where there were far more rehearsals than usual. And I knew that Sylvain Cambreling was conducting; hardly anybody else is as familiar with my music as he is. In that work I could afford myself the luxury of writing five different overtone rows for a large orchestra. They needed six rehearsals plus realisation. *Bruchstück* has a single overtone chord, *in vain* has twelve – because it was for Klangforum.

That means you can do it if you examine each situation.

Haas: The psychology of 24 people is so fundamentally different from that of an orchestra with 85 or 100 members that things which are possible with 24 cannot be realised with 100. My music is still utopian, it still cannot always be fully realised, but after five or ten years it does become possible as by then word has somehow got

around and the music has become firmly established. And I can tell you something else: the *String Quartet No. 2*, which was premiered in 1998 at the Konzerthaus in Vienna, was written for the Hagen Quartet whose members are very open-minded with regard to modern music but tend to focus more on music of past eras. Clemens Hagen, who was also the first soloist to play my *Cello Concerto*, told me later that they use the expression “Haas intonation” when they play romantic or classical music with pure intonation.

While getting to grips with my piece, they were therefore also made aware of the problems they encountered when playing the other kind of music as well. It is my great hope that orchestras will also understand this, even though it is much more difficult to achieve because of the size of the groups. And I also hope that they realise that I work with exactly the same issues that they are dealing with when they grapple with Schubert and Bruckner. The quality of the performance would benefit greatly from this. Even in tonal music, the strings or wind instruments must produce (and must have produced) microtonal intonation in order to present an expressive performance. The interesting thing is that the composers have always left this to the performers, and it might have something to do with the fact that you would have had to create special musical notation for it. But these are areas with which the instrumentalists are definitely familiar in their tonal music-making when they adjust the tuning of chords. And where there is still a lot of scope for compositional development. ↵

“... where you discover where music came from”

Simon Rattle on “in vain”

Georg Friedrich Haas' *in vain* is a really astonishing work of art. How to describe it? First of all, for everybody involved in New Music, it is one of the only already acknowledged masterpieces of the 21st century. And he said himself to me that he could never imagine that a piece lasting just about an hour for a large ensemble of players, using almost no kinds of conventional tuning, and of which 20 minutes is played in complete and utter darkness – he could not imagine that at first it would ever be played, let alone the fact that it has become really a cult wherever it is played. And it seems never just to be played once: the minute people have heard it they are hungry for more.

When I first rehearsed with the musicians of the Orchester-Akademie, with whom we are playing it, I tried to find ways to describe the piece. And what was fascinating was that actually there was very little music that you could compare it with. Some of it sounds like Ligeti, the kind of scurrying figurations that you hear in the *Violin Concerto* as though there are a hundred of Alice's rabbits in Wonderland, disappearing down the holes. Some of it sounds maybe like a little bit of Ligeti's *Atmosphères*, with this extraordinary intergalactic stillness. But most of it sounds like simply nothing else at all. If you imagined a kind of Rothko painting in music, you might get close, because the piece, like these paintings, seems to throb and glow. One of the things about the paintings is, the longer you look, the more dynamic they seem to be. This is very, very true of this piece also.

There is another wonderful metaphor which he uses, which is that he was very, very inspired by the idea of M. C. Escher and the staircase, which seemed always to be going upwards and you found yourself simply back at the beginning once more.

The way the sound works is almost like an optical illusion. And it is the opposite of the idea of Sisyphus, who simply was condemned to push the same stone up

the top of the hill and have it fall down with him again. In this piece you climb up the stairs, and you seem to go higher and higher and higher, but actually you find yourself back where you start again.

And this somewhere has to be the meaning of *in vain*. The piece was composed as a response to the rise of the far right in Austria at the end of the 20th century, and has partly to do with Haas' despair at this situation. But in fact it is not a tragic or a political piece, it is more as though you are wandering into some kind of extraordinary forest, some kind of primeval darkness, where you discover where music came from.

So just to describe it, it starts with a flurry of sounds, almost like some kind of aural snowstorm. And through these sounds you begin to ... [sighs] ... if you can hear lights, you hear lights! You have to use mixed metaphors in this piece. But then gradually, as the snowstorm dies down and the long notes become heard, the lights in the audience become lower and lower and lower, and suddenly you are plunged astonishingly into complete darkness. And this is where the music sounds as though it comes out of some kind of primeval swamp, as though it is struggling to be born. You hear the opposition of the pure notes with notes of a slightly lower pitch or higher pitch, as though they are fighting against each other, or as though you are sticking a knife under your skin – I'm sorry for all these metaphors. And at a certain point it is as though the music is struggling to be – it's a very long, slow, patient birth.

The strings come to a pause on a chord, and suddenly the harp is heard playing, and the immediate feeling is a jolt of: “The harp is terribly out of tune!” But in fact the harp is playing versions of the natural harmonics that you get on any instrument, on any brass instrument. With our modern system of tuning, we have had to make many compromises with actually what is a natural chord. And →



© STEPHAN RABOLD
Simon Rattle

what Haas has done is to go back to the original tuning that you would get if you blow through a horn without adjusting anything with your lips. And it is a very, very particular sound, it has almost a primeval feeling.

Now this piece is all about oppositions of all types: about light and darkness. But it is also about the pure, original tones almost fighting with our modern sounds. And a great deal of the opening of the piece is simply exploring what these chords do, they are like extraordinary halos of sound.

And then it feels to me as though you are hearing the music that could have been in Wagner's subconscious before he started writing the *Rheingold*, with its extraordinary E flat major, the beginning, which is just one chord. But this is the chords from much longer ago, it is the chords of the natural scale. And the trombones and horns play this, and it sounds as though they are calling us to some kind of ceremony. At the climax of the work there are ten of the most astonishing minutes of music anybody has ever written, and it can only remind me of the level of music that Ligeti was writing, our most recent great composer.

And at this point, when the lights go down a second time, what you realise is that you are hearing somehow a real, new harmony being born. The players play in complete darkness, they have little modules that they have to memorise, but to memorise ten minutes of music is a really extraordinary achievement, this is what we have been working on – even today, as I speak. And we have been working on it also in total darkness, so it is a shock suddenly to be sitting in front of these lights.

What you hear is based often on C major and the C major chord – but the real, natural C major chord. And it throbs and glows in this total darkness, as though you are seeing some kind of psychedelic vision. And there is a feeling, if you are an audience member, that something really new is happening, and a kind of natural harmony is being found, not only in the music but in the world. I am sure this is what Haas had in mind. And you feel as though you are on the verge of some extraordinary illumination, some understanding that was not there before.

But then, very slowly, the lights come on, and as the lights come on the music gets once more stuck on this extraordinary Escher staircase, and you simply don't know where you are. And it is as though the rhythms of the machine have become jerky, it is moved away from its natural primeval state, and this vision has been lost again. And in fact the piece winds up faster and faster and faster at the end, in the way it had wound down earlier. And then, like the end of Berg's *Wozzeck* or the end

of Schönberg's *Erwartung*, it winds and it suddenly stops in mid-air. And it has been *in vain*.

It has been an amazing experience working with the young musicians of the Orchester-Akademie. Some of them have had experience in contemporary music, some not. Nobody has had experience in music quite like this. If you write not in the normal tones that we play in, but in these microtones – what they call the spectral school of composition – you are almost having to reinvent music every time you write it. But this piece seems to have such a powerful impact on people that I'm sure it is going to be one of the pieces in musical history about which people can say: "This really began something new."

When we first started to work the musicians said: "What is this? I mean, surely this is crazy, can we do this?" And so I sent them away to listen to *in vain* and a couple of them said: "Well, we thought this was crazy. But we listened to it last night, and neither of us found we could sleep. The impact is so powerful." It reminds me of the greatest pieces of Olafur Eliasson, very, very strongly; particularly the work in the last Berlin exhibition he had, where you walked into a gigantic room which was full of smoke and extraordinarily bright lights came to you in the smoke, so you were completely disorientated and almost drowned with colour.

The piece has a similar impact to that. The minute I started studying it I thought of Eliasson and his works. There was a very strange moment, the first time I sat down late at night and listened to the whole piece in one sitting. And in the middle of it Olafur sent me an email, which I saw on the computer at the same time. I thought: "Well, this is some kind of sign. We are all thinking of the same thing." And indeed he will come to the first performance, because on that evening we started corresponding and writing about it.

So this can really be a new beginning. Please listen to it, please come and hear it live if you can, otherwise listen to it, experience it, it is really not quite like anything else. It requires patience and it requires trust, but it is a staggering experience and one of the first great masterpieces of the 21st century.

This introduction was given by Simon Rattle for the performance of "in vain" in the Philharmonie, Berlin on 18 January 2013

GEORG FRIEDRICH HAAS

in vain (for 24 instruments)

Orchestration: perc(2), hp, acc, pno, sax, vln(3), vla(2), vc(2), cb

prem. 29.10.2000 [↗] [Cologne, Klangforum Wien](#), cond. Sylvain Cambreling

in vain

für 24 Instrumente (2000)

Georg Friedrich Haas
(*1953)

$\text{♩} = 60$
konzertmäßige Podiums- und Pulbeleuchtung (bis Takt 70)

LICHT

1. Flöte
2. Flöte
Oboe
1. Klarinette
2. Klarinette
Sopran-
saxophon
Fagott
1. Horn
2. Horn
1. Posaune
2. Posaune

Marimba
Vibraphon

1. Schlagzeug *ppp*
2. Schlagzeug *p*

Harfe
Klavier *ppp*
Akkordeon *ppp*

$\text{♩} = 60$

1. Violine *ppp*
2. Violine *ppp*
3. Violine *ppp*
1. Viola *ppp*
2. Viola *ppp*
1. Violoncello *ppp*
2. Violoncello *ppp*
Kontrabass



*Georg Friedrich Haas, "Hyperion",
Concerto for Light and Orchestra,
Donaueschingen Music Days 2006*
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"I am interested in the unbelievably intense sound quality of 'purely' intoned intervals. An overtone chord with pure tuning."

Georg Friedrich Haas