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### Prologue

A strangely normal story

These recordings were the result of my collaboration with the "Ensemble Lacide", made up of faculty members of the Hochschule für Künste, which was for a short time resident in Bremen. Some of the works already existed, such as the accordion solo *bhi* (written in 2004 for Margit Kern, published the following year on the Zeitklang-CD *Hearts* by Margit Kern) and two pieces I wrote for this ensemble. Following the production (11.-15.05.2007!) the CD project was finalised in talks with the producers. Budgets and other logistics were also discussed. Time passed by. On 1.1.2011 I met Dr. Julia Schröder with the request to write about the pieces for the CD booklet. Time continued to pass. There were still no funds to produce the CD. Yet more time passed. Many of the other works were written, but there were unanswered questions concerning the recording and the publication of the CD. Still more time passed. In April 2019, the CD was to be produced. Julia Schroeder and I agreed to leave the texts in this booklet unaltered.

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My thanks for support and collaboration goes to:

Christian Rollwage (CD graphics and my sound-tinkerer), Ruth und Rolf Pfenninger (remedial teachers and suppliers of honey), Armin H. Säbel (friend and companion), Gertrud Kuehne (landlord), Felix Rühling (music notation) and my daughter Felicitas. Sincere gratitude also to editor Marita Emigholz and sound mixer Renate Wolter, both from Radio Bremen, for their friendly and constructive collaboration. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Julia Schröder for her work and patience. I would also like to thank the *Oldenburgische Landschaft* for their support. Without the enthusiasm and willingness of Margit Kern, Katharina Rikus, Roswitha Killian, Jessica Rona and Olaf Tzschoppe in agreeing to take part in this project, these recordings would never have been made. To them I am particularly grateful.

Regarding the cover: *Sunseeker* (Sonnensucher) by Angela Kolter, 1989, photographed by Hervé Maillet. Thanks to both of them.

Eckart Beinke, in December 2018.

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### Dear Prudence

Chamber music by Eckart Beinke

The title of Eckart Beinke's CD almost defines it as a concept album. Eckart Beinke discovered the word 'Prudence' in attempting to translate the German 'Besonnenheit'. In English it used to be common practice to use virtues as girls' names. There really was a girl called Prudence, for whom The Beatles wrote their song *Dear Prudence* (1968): "The sun is up, the sky is blue, it's beautiful and so are you". Even though Beinke does not quote from the song, it can be understood as a reference to his musical expeditions into rock. However, *Dear Prudence* can also be understood as addressing individual musicians as well as listeners. The three solo pieces on this CD were actually created for the musicians that commissioned the pieces, always with the physical procedures of playing the respective instruments in mind. *Tre voci* (2005) was written for three voices, vocals, accordion and percussion. Despite this, it can almost be defined as study in unison-writing. Beinke uses linear developments which are partially doubled by instruments in several octaves. Accompaniments become independent rhythmic fields and figures. As well as unison writing, there are microtonal elaborations of the prime, which create vibrations as a focus on a single note. The text sounds as if from a foreign language. It actually consists of senseless syllables juxtaposed as permutations of the

dedicatee's name: "pi-pa-po go-ha ya ya ni" was dedicated to composer Younghi Pagh-Paan on her 60th birthday.

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As well as the subtle humour of this birthday song, there is at the end of this work a reference to Pagh-Paan's political and social work: "You talk so much, I'd rather you gave me something to eat" This is a quotation from a programme about child poverty, an issue which Beinke also broaches in *o.T.* The viola solo *prelude* (2004) sounds as if two, sometimes even three, strings are sounding simultaneously. This technique is already found in Johann Sebastian Bach's compositions for solo string instruments, in which he achieves a pseudo-polyphony. To achieve this, notes in higher and lower tones are played in quick succession, so that the ear perceives two melodies, a higher and a lower one, sounding as if they are played together. In Beinke's *prelude* there are passages in three voices, e.g. when two two-tonal glissandi are played on two strings, and a rhythmic, repeatedly plucked tone (A flat) is added in the left hand. This pizzicato tone is one of several motives, which recur throughout the piece. Descending arpeggios are developed, and the A flat is intermittently hummed by the viola player with a closed mouth as a third voice. The piece actually is written in a micro-tonally expanded harmonic language based on the tone row of the harmonic series. For example, the centre of the piece contains two-part harmonics with microtonally "coloured" intervals such as the 11<sup>th</sup> overtone on the third string (c) sounding at the same time as the 8<sup>th</sup> on the fourth string (a quarter tone below c sharp).

Many such titles can be found in Beinke's body of work. From the early *Wanted: Patrons no student finance* (Mäzen gesucht kein BAFÖG) (1988), which can be understood as a real cry for help, to the contradictory *Wading in the undergrowth* (Watend im Gestrüpp) (1991).

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*Au Bacque* (2003), which a German speaker would likely pronounce as 'Au Backe' – 'Oh dear'. *In the closeded door* (In der zuen Tuer) (1990) also demonstrates a playful way with words. "When I'm writing for percussion", Beinke has said in conversation, "I have to see the person playing in my mind's eye - how they move." The virtuosic vibraphone solo starts with a continuous figure. The paradoxically irregular regularity can be heard in the high d''', against which are heard the low notes E flat, B flat, F flat. The intervals of the first, broken "chord" are intentionally dissonant: the small ninth and the tritone are one of the most dissonant intervals. In repetition, however, they develop a life of their own and are heard as a recurring sonority. This creates a texture akin to Minimal Music, which also works with similar repeated, rhythmic patterns, which continuously change. But in the way it continues, Beinke's music is different as he describes: "The musical events are stagnant for a while and only change in the number of repetitions". Through volume and high speed, significant energy is used and ebbs away like a diminishing pain. How often does a figure have to be repeated to evoke this feeling?" To evoke this emotion, he organises the heightened amount of repetitions in a structure of prime numbers, that lessens, which is heard – reinforced by a ritardando – as a deceleration to the end. The door is closed. By now, the listener has grown accustomed to the sound and is perhaps now '*behind the closeded door*', which has a peculiar resonance: The vibraphone motor ensures its own sound quality, contrasting with the dry, articulated sounds of what follows.

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In this piece, something impossible can be heard: the fixed, tuned metal plates of the vibraphone, actually glissando downwards, bending their pitch. Such microtonal colourations and continuous changing of tones within a glissando can be found throughout Beinke's works. This can possibly be traced back to his experience with pitch-bending in rock music. Electric guitars have a tremolo arm, with which these microtonal changes of a note can be created – alternatively, the guitarist simply

bends the neck of the guitar. On an accordion, they are also possible with special techniques, as can be heard in *bhi* (2002/03). The piece is notated in quarter tones and uses pitches of the over-tone spectrum, as opposed to the 12 pitches of the chromatic scale.

This is enhanced by differentiated dynamic markings including sudden sforzati. The repeated accents are described by the composer as “stoic”. *o.T.* (2007) for vocals and viola is, formally speaking, two amalgamated compositions: The work begins with solo viola, while in the middle section the viola accompanies the singer. The compositions overlap and the work ends with a solo for vocals.

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Even though the composition is untitled and defies word-setting, it includes a special layer of speech. The text here set is taken from a passage from the Old Testament, a sentence in the translation by Jean Ziegler, “Each child which dies of hunger is murdered”, and a quote by Luther, which is supposed to be clearly understood. “This is the word”, the singer begins, “hear it”. The message of this heartfelt composition is, of course, meant to be clearly understood. The text governs the nuances of expression in the music and is subject to a new interpretation through the choice of and the juxtaposition of the quotations.

While *o.T.* (“Without title” extends back to the old testament, the final piece on the CD touches on more recent issues. On the one hand is a scenario of a (nuclear) war, where the injured are sorted into three categories: Treat, don’t treat, and check again later. The other issue addresses a modern, everyday phenomena, the understanding of which assumes media literacy: *Triage (switched)* (*Triage: (geswitched)*) (2006/7) for accordion, percussion and viola hints in its subtitle: ‘switchen’, is the German equivalent of the English ‘to switch’, denoting the alternation between one thing and another, used mostly used to describe the rapid and frequent switching between TV channels or CD tracks. By extension, in this piece, a person switches between different sonorities and gestures. In *trriage*, this is translated into musical moods and techniques. By the end, the listener has arrived back at the first ‘programme’, as is to be understood by the characteristic motive of a repeated note and its connection with the upper repeated second.

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There are several such motives, variously ascending or (sometimes simultaneously) descending. These may be broken chords or glissandi; triangular shapes play an important, role, hinted at by the title. This could also be a reference to the line-up of the three musicians. As well as recognisable motives and their manipulations, a layer of ‘melting sounds’ can be heard, which are continuously warped in microtonal changes. In the final episode, within the last third of the work, the percussionist is allowed to create a verbal notation using two superballs on a tam-tam. From this odd layer of noise with its unpredictable scope, the viola and the accordion sometimes emerge, grotesque or organ-like, like different programmes which have successfully emerged through the grey and flickering TV screen, before they submerge and are lost again. “Menacing, grotesque, questioning melody? Everything may be heard. Free association is open to everyone!”  
Dr. Julia H. Schroeder (2011)

To the biographies of the performers:

## JESSICA RONA

...was born in Miami, USA. She studied viola under Margaret Pardee (Juilliard School of Music, New York) Thomas Riebl (Mozarteum Salzburg) and Hatto Bayerle (Musikhochschule Hannover). Afterwards, she completed an additional degree in practical performances for contemporary music under Johannes Schöllhorn. Jessica Rona has played at countless international music festivals, including the Ensemble Modern Akademie, the Luzern Festival Akademie directed by Pierre Boulez, the Impuls Festival Graz and the World New Music Festival 2006 in Stuttgart. In 2004, she was a scholarship holder at the Centre for Contemporary Music Hellerau. She has worked with important contemporary composers such as Beat Furrer, Georg Friedrich Haas, Jürg Wyttenbach and Chaya Chernowin. She regularly plays a part in premieres and has played with various ensembles, like the Ensemble Aventure, Musikfabrik NRW, oh ton-Ensemble, Sur Plus and the Ensemble Phoenix. Rona's musical work has been awarded with numerous prizes at international competitions, such as the scholarship prize of the Förderpreis der Patronatsgesellschaft Baden-Baden and with prizes at the Vienna International Competition and the Kings Young Artist Competition. She performs as a solo artist as well as a chamber musician at important venues in Europe and the US. This has led her to perform at venues such as the Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall, ZKM Karlsruhe and the ORF.

## KATHARINA RIKUS

The Swiss Alto Katharina Rikus was born in Liestal, daughter of composer Klaus Huber and flutist Susanne Huber. She studied at Musikakademie Basel, Musikhochschule Saarbrücken at the Indiana University Bloomington and with Jolanda Magnoni in Rome.

For three years, Katharina Rikus was part of the Ensemble of the Kammeroper Frankfurt, further engagements led her to the Bremer Theater, the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden and the Staatsoper Stuttgart, where she worked on the premiere of Younghee Pagh-Paan's opera 'Moon Shadow'. For over ten years, Katharina Rikus has intensely dedicated herself to contemporary music. Among the key pieces in her repertoire are Schönberg's 'Pierrot Lunaire', the 'Folksongs' by Berio and 'Le Marteau Sans Maître' by Boulez. Katharina Rikus performs at well-respected international festivals, such as the Warschauer Herbst, Klangspuren in Schwyz, the Internationalen Ferienkursen für Neue Musik Darmstadt or the Lucerne Festival. She has premiered numerous pieces that were written for her. She has worked with well-known artists such as Kent Nagano, Nikolaus Lehnhoff, Lucas Vis and the Arditti Quartett. Since 1997, Rikus has taught at the Hochschule für Künste Bremen and teaches courses in Switzerland and the Netherlands.

## MARGIT KERN

"The literal embodiment of music, by which I mean the physical aspects of instrumental play, draw me in with almost magical force."

Margit Kern grew up near Darmstadt and studied accordion with Hugo Noth and Matti Rantanen at the Sibelius Akademie in Helsinki. She won first prize at the International Gaudeamus Competition for Interpreters of Contemporary Music. She performs in solo recitals and as a chamber musician on tours in many European countries as well as the US and South Korea. She works with the oh ton-ensemble, l'art pour l'art and has played as a guest with the Ensemble Modern, Musikfabrik NRW, Seoul Spring Festival, the Weltmusiktagen Stuttgart, Musica Viva in Munich, Perugia Classica Festival and many more. In 2008, she was a guest on Forum Neue Musik on Deutschlandfunk with her solo recital '*in the mirror-me*' (three human images) ("*im Spiegel-ich*" (drei Menschenbilder)). She has worked frequently with many composers like C. Seither, E. Kim, A. Schlünz, Y. Pagh-Paan, G. Staebler, M. Stahnke, E. Beinke and S. Odeh-Tamimi as well as many others. In 2005 she published her first solo CD called *Heart*. Margit Kern teaches at the faculty of music at Hochschule für Künste Bremen.

## **OLAF TZSCHOPPE**

... was born in Kiel. He was a scholarship holder of the DAAD and won the Interpretationspreis "Das blaue Band" at the Dresdner Tage für Neue Musik in 1994 and the Prix de Academie Charles Cros in 2004. Tzschoppe is a member of the world-renowned solo ensemble Les Percussions de Strasbourg and of the Ensemble für zeitgenössische Musik SurPlus, Freiburg. He performs at concerts with both of these ensembles in Europe, the Americas, Asia and West Africa. As well as regular performances as a solo artist, Tzschoppe also plays with the MusikFabrik Köln, Ensemble Modern, Frankfurt, the Klangforum Wien, as well as in various chamber music formations (e.g. Zsigmond Szathmary, organ). Tzschoppe teaches percussion at the Hochschule für Künste Bremen.

## **ROSWITHA KILIAN**

The violist Roswitha Kilian studied under Serge Collot in Paris and Hirofumi Fukai in Hamburg. Subsequently, she studied at Master's level under Wolfram Christ (Lübeck), Fjodor Drutschinin (Hamburg), Hatto Beyerle (Goslar), Harolf Schlichtig (Locarno) and with members of the Amadeus-Quartett Norbert Brainin, Sigmund Nissel and Martin Lovet (London). She debuted solo with the viola concert by Bela Bartok and the premiere of the viola concert "L'Enracinement" by Takashi Fujii (Zuerich), as well as the "Sinfonia Concertante" by Mozart with the Augsburgers Kammersolisten. Roswitha Kilian has extensive orchestra experience (Orchester der Stadt Freiburg i.Br. und der Stadt Luzern, NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg and Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg), as well as substantial concert experience in chamber music in various ensembles (string quartets and other instrumentations). Roswitha Kilian as a violist with the NATHAN QUARTETT in Hamburg as well as organiser of concerts in Basel and Hamburg.