Karlheinz Essl

Curriculum Vitae

Biography

Born 1960 in Vienna. Austrian composer, performer, improviser, media artist and composition teacher. Karlheinz Essl attended the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna (1979–87), where he studied composition with Friedrich Cerha and electro-acoustic music with Dieter Kaufmann. He also studied musicology and art history at the University of Vienna (doctorate 1989 with his thesis about *Anton Webern's Concept of Synthesis*). Active as a double bassist until 1984, he played in chamber and experimental jazz ensembles. As a composer he has contributed to the *Projekt 3* composition programming environment of Gottfried Michael Koenig at Utrecht and Arnheim (1988-89), which later transformed into his own *Real Time Composition Library* (RTC-lib) for Max/MSP/Jitter.

Karlheinz Essl also served as *composer-in-residence* at the Darmstadt summer courses (1990–94) and completed a commission for IRCAM (Paris) in 1993. Between 1995–2006 he taught Algorithmic Composition at the *Studio for Advanced Music & Media*

Technology at the Bruckner University, Linz. Since 2007, he is professor of composition for electro-acoustic and experimental music at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. 2016 Research Fellow at the Queensland Conservatory of the Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. Between 1992-2016 he was the music curator of the Essl Museum in Klosterneuburg.

Works

His work with computers (with emphasis on algorithmic composition and generative art) and a prolonged occupation with the poetics of serial music have been a formative influence on his compositional thinking. He has frequently sought to combine music with other genres and has collaborated with the graffiti artist Harald Naegeli (*Partikel-Bewegungen*, 1991), the writer Andreas Okopenko (*Lexikon-Sonate*, 1992–8), the architect Carmen Wiederin (*Klanglabyrinth*, 1992–95), the video artist Vibeke Sorensen (*MindShipMind*, 1996, a multimedia installation for the Internet) and the artist Jonathan Meese (generative video and sound environment *Fräulein Atlantis*, 2007).

During the 1990s he carried out many additional projects for the Internet and became increasingly involved with improvisation. In 1997, Karlheinz Essl was featured at the *Salzburg Festival* with portrait concerts and sound installations. In 2004, Karlheinz Essl received the „Cultural Prize for Music" of the state Lower Austria.

Besides writing instrumental music, Karlheinz Essl also works in the field of electronic music, interactive realtime compositions, generative arts and sound installations. He develops software environments for algorithmic composition and acts as a performer and improviser, utilizing his own computer-based real time composition environment m@ze°2 and also instruments like electric guitar, toy piano and music box.

Performances

Essl's works has been performed at the most important international music festivals such as Wien modern (Vienna), Salzburg Festival (Salzburg), Musikprotokoll (Graz), Ars Musica (Brussels), Musica Presente (Milano), Présences (Paris), Sonar (Barcelona), Time of Music (Finland), ISEA (Chicago), Convergence (New London), NEMO (Chicago), ISCM World Music Days (Croatia, Romania, Poland), ULTRASCHALL (Berlin), Foro Internacional de Música Nueva (Mexico City), Art meets Media (Tokyo), Rainy Days

(Luxembourg), Música y Escena (Mexico City), Klangspuren, Archipel - Musiques d'aujourd'hui (Genève), PORTO FRANKO GogolFEST (Ivano-Frankivsk) etc.

Collaborations

He collaborates with high-class ensembles such as the Arditti Quartet (London), Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt), Het Nieuw Ensemble (Amsterdam), Ensemble InterContemporain (Paris), Klangforum (Vienna), Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna, Elision Ensemble (Australia), ensemble recherche (Freiburg), Champ d'Action (Antwerp), Orpheus Trio (Vienna), Ensemble Intégrales (Hamburg), STROMA (New Zealand), Transmission Ensemble (Montréal) etc.

Lectures

Furthermore, Karlheinz Essl has given lectures and workshops all over the world, for instance at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music, KlangArt Congress (Osnabrück), Florida Electro-acoustic Music Festival, Harvard University, New England Conservatory of Music (Boston) and the music resp. art universities of Toronto, Montréal (McGill), Oaxaca, Morelia and Guadalajara (México), Copenhagen, Mainz, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, Cologne, Essen, Groningen, Hilversum, Korfu, Valencia, Taipeh, Nottingham, Brisbane, Helsinki, Kiev, Riga etc. Additionally, has published numerous articles about contemporary music theory and computer-aided composition.

Contact

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