

The MARKUS STOCKHAUSEN Continuum



By the age of 26, trumpet virtuoso Markus Stockhausen had absorbed more experiences and styles on the musical world stage than most other musicians will in a lifetime. Malcolm Ball meets with this true chameleon of contemporary music.

It doesn't matter how much we disagree with the comparison of parent and children relationships in the performing arts world, it's a human condition that we have to say 'they're the son or daughter of so and so - so they're bound to get on'! Often of course this isn't always the case but certain individuals with successful or famous Mums or Dads do shine through and make their mark simply due to their talent whether inherited or not. One thinks of Kirk and Michael Douglas, Judy Garland and Liza Minelli and closer to home, our own Stan and Clark Tracy.

The Stockhausen family seems to have been way up front when the talent was dished out. Karlheinz Stockhausen fathered six children most of whom had a good deal of natural musical talent and three continue to carve more than successful careers in the music business. Majella, Simon and Markus Stockhausen have all been involved in their father's work as well as pursuing their own individual careers in music.

It took four months and many faxes and phone calls until on a bright August afternoon I finally met Markus Stockhausen at his impressive converted farmhouse in the tranquil countryside outside of Cologne. This time span and organisational nightmare reflects the incredibly busy schedule this 42 year old is emersed in. By the way, I shall write in first name terms throughout as using the surname Stockhausen will get too confusing.

Markus's mild mannered and congenial air made for a very relaxed and revealing meeting. Along with a refreshing pot of Darjeeling tea and unsweetened organic cookies which befits his Yogic lifestyle, we began by speaking about his first influences in jazz and trumpet. He has certainly inherited his father's gift for a clear, focused and communicative delivery of information as well as a stunning memory for names and dates.

His first participating role in a live performance was probably at the tender age of four when he appeared in his father's work 'Originale', a music theatre piece involving actors, instrumentalists and composers as well as a part for a child who plays with blocks, building them into towers, but also acts as a silent observer of what the adults are up to.

It was at the slightly more mature age of six when he began piano lessons and at

the age of twelve in the 7th class of school he had to choose a second instrument. Markus says that he was always attracted to the trumpet. Whenever he attended rehearsals of his father's music he would always stand close to the trumpet section so it was natural for him to choose this as his second study instrument. One of his trumpet teachers at this time was Robert Platt and it was he who gave Markus a copy of Freddie Hubbard's album 'First Light' (perhaps a prophetic title!) and it was this, Markus says that 'opened the door'. This experience led to the formation of his first band at the school using synthesisers borrowed from his father, gongs, electric guitars etc. and the music was a mixture of Jimi Hendrix, jazz & blues and Avant Garde elements. It appears that jazz and improvised music was where Markus found most joy with the trumpet. Classical music came later when embarking on teaching and competitions where he found he had to know the Haydn, Hindermith, Mozart etc. (He has recorded the Haydn trumpet concerto with a cadenza written by his father on Stockhausen Edition CD 39) The other key figure in his jazz studies was Manfred Schoof whose Summer school Markus attended as well as his jazz classes held at the music school in Cologne. Here they would play standards and develop skills in small combo playing. Also teaching on the Summer course was American trombonist Jiggs Whigham who gave Markus a lot of albums by artists such as Art Farmer, Count Basie, Stan Kenton, Booker Little, Thad Jones & Mel Lewis etc. etc. and Miles (In a Silent Way) of course. Like all good aspiring jazz musicians Markus searched out and became involved in all the best jazz happenings in Cologne at the time. These included big bands led by Kurt Edelhagen who used to invite players who were living in Europe at the time such as Art Farmer, Shake Keane etc and later the Peter Herbolzheimer big band which boasted some of the best jazz players in Europe. It was at this time in 1974 that Markus founded his first jazz quintet called KEY. They played original material and toured throughout Germany including the Newcomer Jazz Festival in Frankfurt.



Markus and Malcolm

It became apparent early in Markus's career that original material and improvisation was to lead the way in his musical creativity rather than is often the case with young players of studying the 'American way' where there is always a danger of producing good players who can imitate the older players and styles but struggle to find voices of their own. Markus spent a Summer course at Berklee in

1976 but soon returned to pursue his own musical path in Germany and Europe.

It was during 1975 that work with his father had started intensively. SIRIUS was the first work by Karlheinz Stockhausen that required the performers to be in full costume at four different positions in the performance space, so new concepts in performance had to be learnt. Markus was still completing his classical exams, playing in big bands and improvising, together with his father's work and this constant to and froing from differing styles is one of the reasons that I believe has kept his playing style fresh and original.

From 1977 onwards Karlheinz Stockhausen began work on LICHT (LIGHT) a cycle of seven operatic/theatre works, some lasting up to 5 hours, each representing a 'day' of the week. (Readers can find a more detailed account of this and Karlheinz Stockhausen's work in my exclusive interview with him published in AVANT Issue 5 or on the Stockhausen home page on the net. <http://www.Stockhausen.org>) The first opera in the cycle to be completed was Donnerstag aus Licht which includes a major role for trumpet and is dedicated to Markus. In fact the second act MICHAEL'S REISE is a trumpet concerto, which now has him not only in costume but acting, moving and playing from memory. In 1980 after some re-shuffling of personnel the group KEY became RIOT (a name that Markus didn't particularly identify with) who invited Kenny Wheeler to join them on a 14 date concert tour playing Wheeler's music and arrangements. Sadly only the odd radio broadcast was made of this group but no commercial recordings. 1980 also saw the first incarnation of the trio which was to last four years with Rainer Brüninghaus and Jon Christensen. Later, Freddie Studer replaced Christensen on drums and the group embarked on two tours of Central and South America. After the first tour the trio recorded what was to be Markus's first ECM date CONTINUUM which for the then 26 year old remains still an unforgettable experience. After his meeting with Manfred Eicher whose search for clarity and

transparency in the sound were exactly what Markus was looking for, it became clear to him that "this should be my label". This album remains a classic in the ECM catalogue with Brüninghaus's Steve Riech-ish underpinning and crystalline piano work and Studer's propelling cymbal lines providing the perfect foundation for Markus to produce an almost celestial sound on trumpet that incorporates circular breathing and a tone quality that is rare anywhere in jazz or classical music.

Subsequent recordings on ECM were CITY OF EYES with Ralph Towner, Gary Peacock, Paul McCandless and Jerry Granelli which Markus found far less comfortable possibly due to the peer and experience element of these seasoned players. A much happier collaboration was on COSI LONTANO with Gary Peacock, Zoro Babel and long time friend and associate, pianist Fabrizio Ottaviucci whom he met in 1987 when he was asked to do a Summer course in Assisi, Italy. Ottaviucci eventually joined the group KAIROS which Markus had set up after the Brüninghaus period with the idea of playing more unconventional and experimental music. This group was the first to include Markus's brother Simon Stockhausen who "although much younger, about 15 or 16, played crazy enough". Other members included American composer and keyboard player Michael Doherty, Trilok Gurtu and Zoro Babel.

Out of this grew the next major ECM project APARIS. Markus saw an important musical relationship developing with brother Simon and decided to compose more structured music. In fact in 1988 the Town and Country Club in London invited them to perform a concert and billed them as the Stockhausen Brothers. They played the first set and Jan Garbarek played the second. Initially the rhythm tracks were sequenced and played by computer but later Jo Thönes joined to play live drums whose set up was half electronic and half acoustic and in 1989 the first APARIS album was produced. I always remember growing more and more irritated during 1990 when listening to England's only so called jazz radio station, Jazz FM, continuously playing the track Carnival from this CD. As much as I enjoyed the track I eventually rang the station and enquired as to why they didn't play other tracks that explored the improvisational side of the music more to which the reply was 'Carnaval has

a nice tune'... which only confirmed to me the fact that Jazz FM really should be re-named Tunes FM as it never really plays jazz at all, just tunes, so now if I want to listen to tunes I tune into Radio 2!

The second APARIS album DESPITE THE FIRE FIGHTER'S EFFORTS... appeared in 1993.

Over the years there were times when Eicher and ECM for various reasons were not able to realise certain projects that Markus wanted to pursue so he looked to other labels to collaborate with. Fortuitously the Cologne based EMI Classics approached him and there began a string of varying releases starting with a duo album with organist Margareta Hürholz (NEW COLOURS OF TRUMPET AND ORGAN) with contemporary music by Loquich, Jolivet and K. Stockhausen. This was followed by NEW COLOURS OF PICCOLO TRUMPET where Markus is joined by the very fine Detmolder Kammerorchester under Christoph Poppen with works by Fasch, Krol, Leopold Mozart and Bach linked with some interesting improvisatory fragments. However, the bureaucracy of big money making music industries raised it's ugly head again and decided to delete it from the catalogue just a year or two after the release. Well..., given the choice of a well recorded, well performed album of trumpet concertos and the Spice Girls, what would you pick??!!

In 1991 Markus and Simon were commissioned to write a piece for the fifth anniversary of the Cologne Philharmonie. This became 'The Cologne Music Fantasy' and was performed by the APARIS line up although not recorded by ECM. The copy I have is on UBM Records GmbH, Aachener Strasse 1112a, 5000 Cologne 40 Germany. Markus's eyes light up when he speaks about these pieces and it is true to say that there is a lot of fun and frolics in this music, and displays the compositional development of the brothers. This was followed five years later by a commission to write a piece for the 10th anniversary of the Cologne Philharmonie which became the JUBILÉE album and uses the radio big band of WDR plus various soloists. Markus comments that "maybe Jubilée isn't as strong as the first Cologne Music Fantasy, it's a bit loaded and we were under not only time pressure but the pressure of surpassing what we had done five years previous. There was the big band, five soloists,

dancers, lasers, fireworks and more than 100,000 people watching it. The whole area below the Philharmonie the so called Rhinegarten was packed with people as well as on the bridges and across the Rhine. It was like a big city party!" In between these two commissions they produced the album CLOWN, five pieces of which were originally written as music to accompany a play by Heinrich Bierl and was submitted to EMI as something that could satisfy the record company's request for a 'cross-over' album. Six more tunes were added but due to incredibly poor promotion and publicity it made little impression on the commercial market. This goes back to my point of the 'famous father' mentality with the promoters pushing that relationship rather than the musicianship and creativity of the album.

This experience led to Markus's increasing lack of faith and disillusionment with the whole music business, a story that is becoming all too common now with many artists worldwide. Big business + artistic integrity = disillusionment !

His most recent release on EMI is Stockhausen plays Stockhausen, a CD that Markus dedicated to Karlheinz Stockhausen's 70th birthday and features music from his father's works SIRIUS, IN FREUNDSCHAFT and the LICHT cycle. Included on this album is perhaps one of Karlheinz Stockhausen's most intimate and expressive pieces written for Markus - PIETÁ is part of a scene from the second act of Dienstag aus Licht and is recorded here as a version for soprano and quarter tone flugelhorn.

For me, the most intriguing release on EMI was SIEBEN PSALMEN - Meditations in words and music. Markus told me "that the former boss of EMI Classics, Dr. Krajewski was always interested in new and ground breaking ideas for the label and he had heard that I liked to do meditative music and combine different elements, so I contacted the visionary Pater F. Mennekes who runs his church in Cologne like an art gallery, to discuss the possibility of taking seven Psalms which would be recited and accompanied to music written and played by myself and Simon". Pater F. Mennekes himself was the narrator, the Irish singer Nóirín Ní Riain adds her pure unaffected vocals along with Christoph Schumacher on gongs, cymbals and tabla to produce an album of perhaps not the greatest music but with a great

deal of good feeling and spirit.

His natural affinity to ECM and Eicher's work has never ceased and together with Arild Anderson (bass) and Patrice Heral (percussion) he is recording a trio album of what he says is his "favourite improvising ensemble to date". They have a two week tour in December and the album should be completed and released in 2000.



Returning to his work with his father, it was after *Donnerstag aus Licht*, that Markus' involvement became less and less. There were several reasons for this but the main deciding factor was the amount of time needed to prepare for these works which in the case of *Donnerstag* took many months, even years of sheer hard labour and total commitment. Not only learning the incredibly difficult trumpet part from memory but the movements, staging and, gestures etc. are all meticulously annotated. The 2nd act trumpet concerto, *MICHAEL'S REISE UM DIE ERDE* (Michael's Journey Around the Earth) was re-scored by the composer from full orchestra to 2 keyboards, 2 percussion and 6 wind and brass and in 1989 the work was recorded on ECM New Series label after an extensive tour including 10 concerts in Italy. *Samstag aus Licht* was the next completed opera and although the trumpet persona of Michael features less than in *Donnerstag* (*Donnerstag* is Michael's 'day') it's role is still important. The piece that has become a solo item from *Samstag* is the *Upper Lip Dance* for Piccolo trumpet which follows on from the 'funky' *Nostril Dance* for expanded drum kit. (These wacky titles are explained in more detail as mentioned before in the Stockhausen article in Issue 5).

Montag aus Licht followed and this was when Markus decided to have a complete break from this particular musical way of life. As it happens, there is no trumpet part in Montag so his involvement, would probably have been on synthesiser along with Simon who at this time was still very much involved. During the tour of MICHAEL'S REISE, K. Stockhausen began speaking about his forthcoming opera, Dienstag aus Licht. After initial reluctance to be involved due to the war/fighting theme of the piece, Markus decided to participate as the trumpet parts were to be expanded to three players in act 2 and nine in the opening, Dienstags Gruss (Tuesday Greeting) so he was able to assemble close friends and students to take part.

Freitag aus Licht was the next completed opera and like Montag has no trumpet part.

It was with great disappointment that Karlheinz Stockhausen received the news that Markus did not want to be part of Mittwoch aus Licht where the trumpet was to reappear. Markus proposed friend and colleague Marco Blaauw for the part who had already performed in Dienstag and in the end everyone was happy including father. Markus will however be involved in Sonntag aus Licht the last opera in the cycle. His father has already agreed to write a piece for Margareta Hürholz (organ) and Markus.

So there has been many 'ups and downs' in Markus' relationship with his father but they have never broke completely which is sadly not the case with Simon who after an upset with father has not been able to reconcile after some years. Such are the problems of close family working relationships!

Markus continues duo work with Simon as well as the partnership with the actress Hanna Schygulla who recites texts over music partly composed and partly improvised by the brothers together with percussionist/composer Manu Tsangaris.

Since 1987/88 he has also collaborated closely with Helmut Luz the sculptor who produces his own mystery plays around his creations and in 1992 Markus was asked to write a piece to be performed at a festival in the walled city of Neuf-Brisach where Luz was to install his creations.

Originally the piece was to be for 200 brass players led by eight principle players situated at the eight points of the star shaped fort but eventually this figure dropped to 80. Some were students and some were professionals including Maurice André and Edward Tarr. The work, named Klangstern (Sound star) had to some degree picked up a few tips from his father's work as the eight groups of trumpeters all have choreographed movements to make until at the end all eighty merge together to form a spectacular finale. It may also be a point of interest that if you reverse the syllables of the title Klangstern you get Sternklang the title of Karlheinz Stockhausen's work of 1971!

The following year, Luz again initiated a festival at Neuf-Brisach and this time he invited Mauricio Kagel to write a piece. This became a trumpet quartet called Fanfanfaren. Markus assembled a group of three close musical friends, Andreas Adam, Marco Blaauw and Achim Gorsch all of whom participated in Dienstag aus Licht and these together with Markus became THE MICHAEL TRUMPETERS. In 1995 they were invited to perform an outdoor concert in the historic courtyard of the Architecture Faculty in Genova, Italy so they drew up programmes that accommodated solo works to works for four trumpets such as Britten's Fanfare, a short fanfare by Stravinsky, an arrangement of Summa by Arvo Pärt, Trio by Sofia Gubaidulina as well as Tuesday's Farewell from Dienstag aus Licht and TRUMPETENT by K.

Stockhausen. In 1996 they premiered Que Pasa En La Calle (What's Happening in the Street?) by the Dutch composer Theo Loevendie and this Summer they premiered a piece by Danish composer Nils Rosin Schae which grew out of a commission they gave when performing at The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen in 1996. They have another premiere coming up in October this year by German composer Isabel Mundry and more are lined up for the next couple of years.

Because of the musical and acoustical nature of the ensemble, they enjoy performing in what might be called non-concert hall environments such as churches, cathedrals and the outdoors. Markus tells me that most of the Michael Trumpeters material is recorded and they are just waiting to record the latest pieces before they make a selection to

produce their first CD.

As for the future? Well nobody knows what the future holds for Markus Stockhausen least of all Markus himself. Yes his diary is well booked up with various commitments, more events with Helmut Luz in Rome, Athens and possibly Istanbul depending on the outcome of the recent earthquake, more dates with The Michael Trumpeters, a performance of the Trumpet Concerto by York Höller, more work with Hanna Schygulla and possibly a tour to China of the APARIS group if the organisers can get it together. A particular highlight that I will be looking out for is a tour with the Tunisian singer and oud player Dhafer Youssef whose vocal pyro-technics lie somewhere between a Middle Eastern Muezzin and Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan with an accuracy and pitch range of cosmic proportions! His first album has recently been released on the enja label and boasts a true global village band of musicians: Dhafer Youssef, Nguyễn Lê, Renaud Garcia-Fons, Deepak Ram, Zoltan Lantos, Achim Tang, Jatinder Thakur, Patrice Héral, Carlos Rizzo and Markus.

At the Leverkusen Festival he will appear with his dancer wife Britta Rodenkirchen along with Simon, Fabrizio Ottaviucci and Tony Buck on percussion. This band works under the title of Possible Worlds which was the name of a project that he recorded in 1995 (CMP CD 68) whose members then were: Markus and Simon Stockhausen, Fabrizio Ottaviucci, Rohan de Saram (cellist from the Arditti Quartet) and Ramesh Shotham (Indian percussion). The aim of Possible Worlds is to bring people together spontaneously to perform intuitively, he says "the new and unknown stirs interest and curiosity. Our music is truly created anew from moment to moment. The listener senses this and is somehow participating in the creative intuitive process. The known has its limits. Our music is full of surprises, full of unexpected events. It strives to meet the demands of a discerning 'art' music listener and most importantly to touch the innermost soul of his being."

At the Expo 2000 in Hanover he will be performing a series of six concerts, hopefully in churches where the use of ambient reverberation becomes an integral part of the performance. The title of these concerts will be 'Music and

Mystic' and they will be all duo concerts with friends and colleagues who, over the years, Markus has felt a strong spiritual relationship. The artists will be: Enrique Diaz, Nóirín Ní Riain, Dhafer Youssef, Fabrizio Ottaviucci, Manus Tsangaris and Simon Stockhausen. He will also continue the annual Stockhausen Summer Courses in Kürten working with students on his father's music.

So the future as always is very open and unpredictable for Markus Stockhausen but one thing is for sure that because of these disparate musical elements in his life, this musical chameleon will always be producing new colours wherever he goes and whoever he goes with.

Perhaps his own motto for life sums him and his philosophy up the best:

*Rejoice
The time has come
that you shall remember who you are.
For ever have you been and shall eternally be.
You have come to feel the joy of creation,
to see its beauty and infinitely love all there is.
For all is Thyself.
Each moment you create yourself and a thousand worlds around.
Your being is bliss, perfection and joy.
Rejoice my friend, rejoice!*

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Concert information, discography and news can be found on Markus Stockhausen's Homepage
at <http://www.markusstockhausen.com>

Malcolm Ball 1999

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