Seven violin duets on 12 notes

Little playbook introducing the latest music

Preface

These duets try to work against the ignorance and the resulting denial of the 12-tone-technique. The violin duets show the formal principles of the 12-tone-technique in the simplest way and in familiar forms, that an understanding shouldn't be too difficult.

The 12-tone-technique is not the invention of a single person, but the insight of many musicians, which they attained from the development of their art. The principles to operate with the 12 notes are maybe just a transition, but in any case a beginning to tame the tremendous expansion of the musical expressions and put them in a comprehensible theoretical shape.

The developments continue and I wish contemporary composer would think more about the audience. But I also wish the audience could provide more impartial understanding for the composer's train of thoughts: The meaning of these duets is to lighten the music lover's understanding.

Helmut May
(September 1958)
1. Canon

Formed of the Prime row (P):

The sign ↘ finishes the row, but does not imply any musical cut.

Cheerfully

Violin

Vln.1

Vln.2

Vln.1

Vln.2

Cheerfully
2. Melody

Formed of the Retrograde (R) of the Prime:

Moderately lively

Vln.1

Vln.2

(pizz.)

arco

cantabile
3. Scherzo

Formed of the Inversion (I) of the Prime:
Vln.1

Vln.2

113

Vln.1

Vln.2

121

Vln.1

Vln.2

129

Vln.1

Vln.2
4. Chaconne

Formed of the Retrograde-Inversion (RI):
5. Song

Formed of the Prime row and the Retrograde of the Prime row. From measure 12 everything is played backwards.
6. Dance

Formed of all 4 possibilities: P, I, R, RI
cresc. molto

RI (10-12)

RI (1-9)

D.C. al Fine
poi Coda

Coda
7. Invention

Formed of all 4 possibilities

Strongly, lively