

## HANS THOMALLA

### LIST OF WORKS (SELECTION)

#### SOLO

EJKo741 violoncello 15'  
**Cello Counterpart**

EJKo742 piano 13'  
**Piano Counterpart**

EJKo743 percussion 8'  
**Percussion Counterpart**

#### CHAMBER MUSIC

EJKo744 amplified piano, 21'  
**wild.thing**  
2 percussion

EJKo746 flute, clarinet, piano, 17'  
**Moments musicaux**  
viola, violoncello

EJKo747 oboe, clarinet, 16'  
**Stücke Charakter**  
piano, violin, viola,  
violoncello

EJKo748 saxophone, piano, 12'  
**Lied**  
vibraphone

EJKo749 string quartet 13'  
**Albumblatt**

EJKo751 saxophone quartet 5'  
**Albumblatt II**

EJKo750 soprano, piano 5'  
**Three Desert Songs**

EJKo753 trumpet, trombone, 16'  
**Wonderblock**  
electric guitar,  
piano, 2 percussion,  
violoncello

EJKo752 saxophone, 14'  
**Fracking**  
string trio

### ENSEMBLE/ORCHESTRA

EJKo754 soprano, ensemble 29'30"  
**The Brightest Form of  
Absence**  
(0-1-1-0, 1-1-1-1,  
multimedia-composition,  
piano, percussion,  
video: William Lamson  
strings: 1-1-1-1-1),  
live-electronics (with  
2 sound directors),  
video

EJKo756 chamber orchestra 17'  
**Ausruff**  
(or large ensemble):  
1-1-2-0, 0-2-1-0,  
harp, piano, guitar,  
percussion, strings:  
6-5-4-4-1, live-  
electronics (with  
sound director)

EJKo755 intermezzo for 9'  
**Flüchtig**  
orchestra (2 percus-  
sionists, , electric  
guitar, strings:  
10-8-8-6-3)

### MUSIK THEATRE

EJKo757 dramatic soprano, 90'  
**Fremd**  
choir (8 alt, 16 tenor,  
opera in three scenes,  
one intermezzo  
and one epilogue  
16 bass), orchestra  
(2-2-2-2, 4-2-2-1,  
2 percussionists,  
piano, guitar, strings:  
10-8-8-6-3), stage-  
instruments, mar-  
ching band, live-  
electronics (ad. lib.)



**EDITION JULIANE KLEIN**

Chodowieckistraße 15/1, D-10405 Berlin, Germany  
Tel. +493044045164, E-Mail: info@editionjulianeklein.de

**WWW.EDITIONJULIANEKLEIN.DE**



**Hans Thomalla**

sempre non legato  
sempre non vibr.

Schallrohren zu  
Close zusammen spielen

weisse Tasten Cluster  
white-keys Cluster

pppp sempre

Vorschlag vor der Zeit  
Gracenate before the Beat

schwarze Tasten Cluster  
black-keys Cluster

Schwelung / Beatings  
Schwelung im Mehrklang hervorheben.  
Kein Vibrato, Triller etc.!

Amplify beating/interference in multiphonic. No vibrato, triller etc.!

Schwelung / beatings

cresc. poco a poco

EDITION JULIANE KLEIN

## HANS THOMALLA

### BIOGRAPHY

- 1975 born in Bonn
- 1994-99 Studies in Composition at the Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Frankfurt a.M.
- 1999-2002 Assistant Dramaturg at Staatsoper Stuttgart (produktion dramaturg for "Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern", "Die Gezeichneten", "Les Contes d'Hoffmann" et al.)
- 2002-07 Graduate Studies at Stanford University
- since 07 Associate Professor of Composition at Northwestern University (where he also directs the Institute for New Music)

### HONORS AND AWARDS

- 1996-99 Scholarship by the Studienstiftung des dt. Volkes
- 2002-04 Scholarship by the DAAD for studies at Stanford University
- 2002-07 Alice Wilbur Chapman Fellowship at Stanford University
- 2004 Kranichsteiner Musikpreis
- 2006 Christoph Delz Preis
- 2006-07 Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center
- 2009 CIRA Grant (Collaborative Initiatives for Research in the Arts) at Northwestern University
- 2011 Award by the Ernst v. Siemens Musikstiftung
- 2013 Faculty Research Grant at Northwestern University
- 2014-15 Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

### PERFORMANCES, ENSEMBLES AND MUSICIANS

Donaueschinger Musiktage, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, ECLAT Festival Stuttgart, Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik, Ultraschall-Festival Berlin, Darmstädter Ferienkurse, Staatsoper Stuttgart, Ensemble Recherche, Ensemble Ascolta, Ensemble musikFabrik, Arditti Quartett, Spektral Quartett, Ensemble Talea, Ensemble Modern, Münchner Philharmoniker, Trio Accanto, Nicolas Hodges, Lucas Fels

## PORTRAIT

What does Jimi Hendrix have to do with Frédéric Chopin? Not much at all, until they met in a piece by Hans Thomalla in 2004. You might think Chopin's serene salon elegance would have no chance against Hendrix's rock excesses. But in the course of his piece *wild.thing*, Thomalla perforates and disassembles the originals, until the manic drums and the melancholy piano voice permeate each other. The uninhibited, but then completely solitary drum beat and the aimless piano suddenly become part of a common gesture.

*wild.thing* is typical in many ways for the aesthetic horizon which forms the background to Thomalla's compositions. On the one hand, the composer, who was born in Bonn in 1975, alludes to his generation's aesthetic openness: where Thomalla brings together different, historically disparate sounds, he does not exclude popular culture. And on the other hand, the material Thomalla chooses usually comes from a particular meaningful context, giving his work a semantic framework. When, in *Moments musicaux*, he juxtaposes a passage from Brahms's clarinet quintet with several figures from a study by Theobald Böhm, the intimacy of chamber music meets up with the rationalised acoustic idea of the virtuoso flautist, internalisation meets up with externalization. Thomalla makes this contradiction the departure point for a musical movement, it becomes the beginning of a "semantic drift" during which the "conceptualisation of sound gradually slips away" (Thomalla) and something new and individual comes into being.

When he quotes Brahms or Chopin, Thomalla enriches his works with a certain historical aura. Even a tonal chord is enough to explode the avant-garde soundscape. For Thomalla, history is never historicism, but rather a way of ascertaining his own position. He refuses to adopt traditional stylistic elements uncritically – be it a certain sound or rhetorical flourishes – and works against the "sell-off of semantic clichés" (Thomalla). The historic reference becomes tangible in the figure of *Bebung* [trembling], which serves not only as a baroque ornament, but also as an emotional category of the musical subject in the string trio of the same name; or in *Ausruff* – a dispositive, with which

he fathoms the acoustics of *sforzando*, the rhetoric of shock, and the sheer emotion of the scream to discover what they have in common.

Acoustic phenomena such as *Rauschen* [noise] can become objects of interest in the same way as musical forms such as the character piece in *Stücke Charakter* and the *Albumblatt* in the string quartet of the same name. In the series of compositions *Counterparts* on the other hand, the abstract musical figure is confronted with the materiality of the instrument: the bow of the cello seems to rebel against the melody; the uncontrolled hopping movement of the superball attached to the top of a mallet makes a well-formed rhythmic scheme impossible. In addition, Thomalla's musical questions tie up with social, sometimes positively existential questions. When he determines foreignness in his opera *Fremd* as an aesthetic and political position, it is in the knowledge that he too experiences his material as "something foreign".



szene photo of „Fremd“, Staatsoper Stuttgart 2011

Thomalla once described himself as a speechless rhetorician. That is correct, in so far as he is at first an observer of his chosen historic material and therefore speechless. It is not until the analytic act of composition that he perceives language, his own and others. And then Thomalla is of course, not a "speechless rhetorician" – not only because he is capable of speaking so eloquently and intelligently about music, but also because he gives his works a personal signature, just as if thinking about music had its own specific sound.

(by Björn Gottstein)