



Charlie Morrow

STRAUSS METAMORPHOSEN
for 23 solo strings 10 5 5 3
1944-45
2013



© Other Media Barton Vermont (ASCAP). All rights reserved.

Photo © LISA KAHANE, NYC

com·pose – put together

re·com·pose (rĕˈkəm-pōz')

tr.v. re·com·posed, re·com·pos·ing, re·com·pos·es

1. To compose again; reorganize or rearrange.
2. To restore to composure; calm.

reˈcom·po·siˈtion (rĕˈkɔ̃m-pō-zĭsh'ən) *n.*

The FreeDictionary by Farlex

Charlie Morrow (born Charles Morrow, February 9, 1942) is an American sound artist, composer, conceptualist and performer whose work connects leading edge ideas and technologies with archaic and shamanistic practices. His numerous and diverse creative projects have included chanting and healing works, museum and gallery installations, large-scale festival events,

Negotiation with the musical past was an element in Morrow's compositional thinking, along with a taste for musical pranks. His "Very Slow Gabrieli" (1957) is a dramatically slowed down realization of Giovanni Gabrieli's "Sonata Pian' e Forte" for double brass ensemble. A later collage work, "Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves" (1992), shows a mature late twentieth-century imagination engaging in unexpected ways with late medieval style.

The Little Charlie Festival, a five-day celebration of Morrow's life and work held in New York City during Fall 2010, gave some indication of the category-defying scope of his creative activity.

Julian Cowley

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlie_Morrow

STRAUSS METAMORPHOSEN is a work recomposed through systematic and often audible procedures. Since 1957 my journey in sound has been informed by my love of mathematics and chaos, the new and the old revealing a language-music-biologic continuum.

Avery Jimerson, Seneca Indian songster says of the songs he sang. “I got them from my ancestors and fixed them up.”

My first and latest works are pranks.

– *Charlie Morrow*

Strauss Metamorphoses string orchestra 2013
10 5 5 3

A new composition derived algorithmically from the original.

Gymel version: following the Medieval improvisation format, all players, reading from the 23 original parts, are given a start time and an ending time. They must start together end together.

Between the beginning and the end they are free to improvise around the written part, based on rules of engagement.

The conductor starts the work and ends it. During it, the conductor is a low key trickster and clown, interrupting too serious exchanges and moderating disputes.

Action version (option)

The ensemble is seated either on rolling chairs, diverse chairs and sofa or is standing. The musicians can move freely. They either memorize the parts, or move their music pages on portable stands, lyres or human page holders.

Recomposition of Metamorphosen has resonance as Strauss, 80 years old in 1944 while writing the Metamorphosen, is bridging, transitioning war ending and his pre war sentiments, much as recomposition bridges 21st century remix with old ideas of authorship.

Metamorphosen

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Metamorphosen, *Study for 23 Solo Strings*, subtitled “In memoriam”, [1] is a composition by Richard Strauss, scored for ten violins, five violas, five cellos, and three double basses. It was composed during the closing months of the Second World War, from August 1944 to March 1945.[2] Strauss dedicated it to Paul Sacher.[1] It was first performed in January 1946 (by Paul Sacher and the Zürich Collegium Musicum).

It is widely believed that Strauss wrote the work as a statement of mourning for Germany’s destruction during the war, in particular as an elegy for devastating bombing of Munich, especially places such as the Munich Opera House. This view, which began in the late 1940s, was supported and strengthened by a 1951 study, although Strauss, who died in 1949, never said what the piece was about. A differing view was published in the 1990s by Timothy L. Jackson who, after a careful analysis of sketch materials, concluded that *Metamorphosen* was a philosophical, Goethean study of the underlying cause of war in general; the cause being the bestial nature of humankind. Jackson’s view is that in *Metamorphosen* Strauss used the classical concept of metamorphosis as a process of transcending from the mundane into the divine, but inverted it such that the outcome of metamorphosis is not an attainment of the divine but rather a descent into bestiality. Another 1945 piece, *München*, is clearly a memorial for Munich and scholars have associated the sketches of *München* with *Metamorphosen* since the 1950s. Jackson argues that scholars have assumed the early sketches of *München* were the basis for *Metamorphosen* based on weak, even untenable assumptions.[2] This new view has gained some acceptance,[3] although the view of *Metamorphosen* as an elegy for Munich is still widespread.

Near the very end of the piece, several bars of the funeral march theme from Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony are quoted explicitly in the bass part, accompanied by the words "In Memoriam!" in the score. The *Eroica* theme is motivically related to the main themes of *Metamorphosen*, but Strauss wrote that the connection did not occur to him until he was almost finished. There are several theories about how and why Strauss quoted Beethoven, and who or what "in memoriam" refers to. In 1947 the critic Matthijs Vermeulen claimed the whole piece was an elegy for the Nazi regime, and "in memoriam" referred to Hitler himself. This theory was quickly and strongly denied by Willi Schuh, who had been involved with the work from the beginning. Schuh claimed that "in memoriam" referred not to Hitler but Beethoven, and most scholars since then have supported this idea. Another theory involves Beethoven's *Eroica* having originally been dedicated to Napoleon but after Beethoven's disillusion with Napoleon rededicated "to the memory of a great man", while Napoleon was still alive and in power; Strauss's quotation of the *Eroica* and writing "in memoriam" can be seen as having interesting parallels with Strauss's own involvement and rejection of Hitler and the Nazi regime. Beethoven had ironically "buried" and memorialized the still-living Napoleon. Strauss could have been pointing to a famous precedent for his own rejection of a tyrant he had once supported.[2] Against all these specific theories is the fact that Strauss was fond of oblique references and multiple layers of meaning and connotation. Strauss may have considered the quotation and words "in memoriam" as having many meanings.[2]

As one of Strauss's last works, *Metamorphosen* masterfully exhibits the complex counterpoint for which the composer showed a predilection throughout his creative life.

References

1. Verschaeve, François (2007). What's what in titles of classical music-- and beyond: a dictionary of titles. p. 236. OCLC 55510094 | isbn=978-0-9738454-1-9. Retrieved 22 October 2011.
2. Jackson, Timothy L. (1997). "The Metamorphosis of the Metamorphosen: New Analytical and Source-Critical Discoveries". In Bryan Gilliam. Richard Strauss: new perspectives on the composer and his work. Duke University Press. pp. 193–242. ISBN 978-0-8223-2114-9. Retrieved 19 October 2011.
3. Schmid, Mark-Daniel (2003). The Richard Strauss companion. Greenwood Publishing Group. p. 222. ISBN 978-0-313-27901-0. Retrieved 19 October 2011.

Categories:

- 1945 compositions
- Compositions by Richard Strauss
- Compositions for string orchestra
- Funerary and memorial compositions

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License

RECOMPOSITIONS

Slow Gabrieli - Sonata Pian e Forte	12 part brass	1957
Psychic Music - any source	any	1957
Interruption Music - any source	conducted group	1957
Twinkle	string trio	1967
O Vos Omnes - Victoria	4 part brass	1969
Beethoven Opus 81a Les Adieux	piano	1970
Air Music - any source	any	1971
Schubert. Wanders Nachtlied	violin, piano	1971
Hymn Transformations	SATB voices	1972
Kaddish in Tibetan Style	voice and gong	1974
Distributed Symphonies - any	orchestra	1975
Bicentennial Drums & Bugles	many bugles, drums	1976
Majorca Fantasy. Nam Jun Paik	cello, synth keys	1988
Did George Sand Kill Chopin?		
The Dogs - Zweitausand Eins	dogs	1990
Lully - Overture to Alceste	synths , drum machine	1990
Star Bangled Banner, Moving My Vowels	voice(s)	1990
Hard Times and Culture. Juan Downey video		
Strauss - Blue Danube	synth, CD player	1991
Mozart Sonata 11A K331	midi piano	1992
Mozart Sonata 12 K332	midi piano	1992
Zapping, Swatch watch. Nam Jun Paik	watch program	1996
Strauss Metamorphoses	23 solo strings 10 5 5 3	2013



“Charlie Morrow’s works extend well beyond the conventionally defined parameters of a composer or conductor, as this catalog of Recomposition works dramatically illustrates.”

Charles Bernstein

“He is, from where I see him, both the leading proponent of an active ethnopoetics in avant-garde musical performance & a master of new technologies as they come into contemporary practice. It’s this dynamic of old & new, approached from so many different directions, that a gathering like this makes plain.”

Jerome Rothenberg