

Stockhausen, In the Sky I am Walking

Notes by the composer on the work, including score excerpts

(English pages from the bilingual booklet to Stockhausen-Verlag CD 20;
pp. 7, 9, 11-17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25)

In the spring of 1972 I composed **ALPHABET for Liège**, a four-hour long work with 13 situations in which acoustical vibrations modulate matter (also living things). These situations are performed **simultaneously** by 18 musicians in a complex of 14 rooms, which are connected by open windows and doors. The public comes and goes freely from room to room. The world premiere took place in Liège on September 23rd 1972 in the basement rooms of the radio and television building in the *Palais des Congrès*, which at that time was just being built. The shell construction, which had just been completed – i. e. there were no doors or studio windows – was completely whitewashed for ALPHABET – ceilings, walls, and floor . . .

One of these 13 situations has “*no special function*”: a duet for voices, entitled after the beginning of the text

“In the sky I am walking . . .”

(American Indian Songs).

It was composed in June of 1972 in barely a week. This duet can also be performed by itself, independent of ALPHABET. Helga Hamm-Albrecht (mezzo soprano) and Karl O. Barkey (tenor) sung the four-hour world premiere and many public performances, as well as numerous radio recordings and the record production for *DGG*.

“**In the sky I am walking . . .**” can be performed by two female singers (this combination was originally foreseen), or two male singers or one female and one male singer, and transposed according to the vocal range.

The work is composed as a musical-scenic unity. The singers sit with legs crossed on a rug facing each other, on the floor at the front edge of the stage at the eye-level of the audience. Every movement is exactly notated – from the rhythm of the eyelids to the ecstatic dance.

The sung text is – as in my earlier works like *MOMENTE* or *STIMMUNG* – a mixture of poems, onomatopoeic articulations (bird calls, wind, war cries, etc.), *unusual calls* and *arbitrary names (magic names)* to be freely chosen by the interpreters; interrupting calls, free intimate texts (*whisper erotic things to a lover, which you would not directly say to him*), a freely told fairy tale, which is about sounds, names like *Jillina*, *Jika*, *Jillaika* (pet names for the English author Jill Purce, who participated in *ALPHABET* as pendulum specialist in the scene *Magnetize food with sounds*) or *Eagloo* (one of the many birdman names of the composer) or purely tonal vowel and consonant formations, interspersed with finger snaps, clapping, foot stamps, etc.

I chose twelve short poems or aphorisms or prayers – however one wishes to call them – from the anthology, *American Indian Prose and Poetry*, edited by Margot Astrov. It contains messages spoken – probably also sung – by American Indians. For this reason I chose the subtitle **American Indian Songs**, although no melody of these songs is handed down in the book mentioned.

Though I have completely transformed and enlarged these sayings into a complex new text adhering to musical laws, it is nevertheless revealing to point out the order of the 12 sayings as I have composed them. Important is the change of mood: dream – love – war – love – death – opening prayer of the sun dance – dance of death – plaint against the fog – quetzal bird – good weather – love – vision.

The texts are always sung in English.

“**Am Himmel wandre ich . . .**” is dedicated to Helga Hamm-Albrecht and Karl O. Barkey.

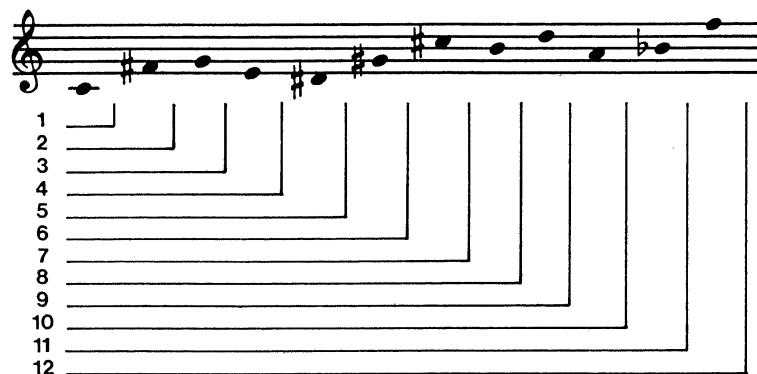
The score is published by the *Stockhausen-Verlag*, 5067 Kürten, Germany.

9

“**In the sky I am walking . . .**” is comprised of **12 scenes**, which follow one another without a break, and are composed as a musical whole. In each scene, one *Indian Song* is used.

The first song is composed with only 1 pitch, the second song with 2 pitches, etc., and the twelfth song with 12 different pitches.

This is the tone row which in its unfolding results in all melodies of the work:



The development from melodic simplicity in the first song to the fully chromatic twelfth song corresponds to the rhythmical development from the simplest synchronism at the beginning and gradual shifting through syncopated beats after or before the pulse, polymeter of varying bars, reaching free polyphonic superimposition of completely unmeasured rhythmic layers with *accelerando to ecstatic* near the end.

Partiturausschnitt 1

① DREAM SONG (Chippewa)

In the sky - - I am wal-king, Bird A Bird I, I ac-com-pa-ny.
In the sky - - I'm wal-king, A Bird Bird I ac-com-pa-ny

Partiturausschnitt 1

sprechen

Score Excerpt 1

spoken

Partiturausschnitt 2

BEIDE instrumentale, kindliche Stimme bis ⑫
Stimme bis ⑫
beide schauen in entgegengesetzte Richtung

ganz verständlich

sich plötzlich ansehen

frei - unregelmäßig

leiser

tr unregelmäßig

BEIDE Rhythmus und melodische Linie mit Handzeichen

UNABHÄNGIG, nicht synchron

SYNCHRON

Score Excerpt 2

BOTH with instrumental, childlike voices until ⑫

both look in opposite directions

completely comprehensible

suddenly look at one another

free - irregular

softer

irregular trill

BOTH rhythm and melodic line with hand signs

INDEPENDENT, not synchronous

SYNCHRONOUS

12

Partiturausschnitt 2

⑪ LOVE SONG (Aztec)

I know not / whether thou / I know not / whether thou / I rise up with thee / I rise up with thee / thou art with me / In my dreams / thou art with me / I lie down with thee / I lie down with thee / I lie down with thee / I lie down with thee / I know it is thou / mo-ving within my heart / I know it is thou / mo-ving within my heart

UNABHÄNGIG, nicht synchron
unregelmäßig

SYNCHRON

in my years

Partiturausschnitt 3

SONG OF A MAN WHO RECEIVED A VISION
(Teton Sioux)

12 mit Zeigefinger auf Partner zeigen - manchmal Blüten über sie (ihn) werfen

unterbrechen ad lib., aber Rhythmus weiterdenken

FREUDIG

be- hold [o → u] Sa- cred she has been made

Handflächen oberhalb des Kopfes nach vorne halten, die gestreckten Daumen mit den Spitzen gegeneinander

BEIDE rit.

Friends, be- hold! [o → u] Sa- cred I

rit. BEIDE accel.

have been made. Friends, be- hold!

accel. sehr deutlich

man-her I have been in- flu- enced

In a sa-cred

14

die 2 müssen synchron bleiben; jeder kann unterbrechen, muss aber im Rhythmus weiterdenken.

starr

var

ad lib.

da capo

accel. nach allen Seiten schauen

1x Wdh.

starr

starr

Leise

ad lib.

ad lib.

ad lib.

da capo

At the ga-the-rings of the clouds. Sa- cred sa- cred I have been made Sa- cred I have been made

vornüber schaukeln, mit steifem Rücken

unregelmäßig

ad lib.

accel. ekstatisch

ab und zu

einfügen

starr

den Partner anschauen

aufstehen

Beide sollen draußen noch singen und die letzte Klammer mehrmals wiederholen, bis man sie in weiter Ferne ver-klingen hört.

manchmal 2 Töne auf 1 Silbe immer anders verteilt

deutlich

UNABHÄNGIG

wie gesprochen

ad lib.

accel. ekstatisch

ab und zu

einfügen

starr

den Partner anschauen

aufstehen

Beide mit flach senkrecht vorgehaltenen Handflächen.

Beide gehen langsam hintereinander mit flach senkrecht vorgehaltenen Handflächen und geschlossenen Augen hinaus

[friends behold!]

vornüber schaukeln, mit steifem Rücken

see translation on next pages

Partiturausschnitt 3

FREUDIG

SYNCHRON

mit Zeigefinger auf Partner zeigen
– manchmal Blüten über sie (ihn)
werfen

Handflächen oberhalb des Kopfes
nach vorne halten, die gestreckten
Daumen mit den Spitzen gegen-
einander

BEIDE *rit.*

unterbrechen *ad lib.*, aber Rhyth-
mus weiterdenken

BEIDE *accel.*

sehr deutlich


nach allen Seiten schauen

1x wdh.

starr

wiegend

leise

Die  müssen synchron bleiben;
jeder kann unterbrechen, muß aber
im Rhythmus weiterdenken.

Score Excerpt 3

JOYOUS

SYNCHRONOUS

point index finger at partner –
sometimes throw blossoms over her
(him)

hold palms of hands facing forwards
above the head, thumbs extended
with the tips touching

BOTH *ritardando*

interrupt *ad lib.*, but continue
thinking the rhythm

BOTH accelerate

very clear


look to all sides

repeat once

motionless

rocking

soft

The  must remain synchronous;
each singer can pause, but must
continue thinking the rhythm.

16

vornüber schaukeln, mit steifem
Rücken

unregelmäßig

UNABHÄNGIG

deutlich, wie gesprochen

accel. bis ekstatisch

ab und zu N (Name) und U (un-
gewöhnlicher Laut) einfügen

manchmal 2 Töne gebunden auf 1
Silbe, immer anders verteilt

starr

den Partner anschauen

aufstehn

Beide gehen langsam hintereinander
mit flach senkrecht vorgehaltenen
Handflächen und geschlossenen Au-
gen hinaus.

Beide sollen draußen noch singen
und die letzte Klammer mehrmals
wiederholen, bis man sie in weiter
Ferne verklingen hört.

sway forwards, with back rigid

irregular

INDEPENDENT

clearly, as if spoken

accel. until ecstatic

now and then insert name and un-
usual call

sometimes 2 notes slurred on 1
syllable, always differently
distributed

motionless

look at partner

stand up

Both go out slowly behind one an-
other, with hands, palms forward,
held flat vertically in front of them,
and with eyes closed.

Both should go on singing outside
and repeat the last bracketed sec-
tion, until one hears them ringing
away in the far distance.

17

The composition of the diverse expressive possibilities of the texts and the *differentiation* of the dynamics follows a similar curve of expansion and increasing enrichment.

Degrees of dynamics and dynamic curves are notated **relatively**. Twelve forms of dynamics are given in the score, and the interpreters decide on a *version*, i.e. they decide the order of the available forms of dynamics for the twelve songs. The first *version*, which is the version on this CD, was made in collaboration with the composer.

The same holds true for the final determination of the **tempi**. There are twelve **tempo forms**, the order of which is chosen by the interpreters for one version.

For a long version of the work (for instance 4 hours in ALPHABET for Liège) the 12 songs can be sung four times 1 through 12 (with 3 intermissions of about 15 minutes). Each time the dynamics and tempi can be ordered in a different way.

For a very long version (possibly with two alternating pairs of singers or changing combinations of singers) the 12 songs may be sung 12 times in the order:

1, 1 + 2, 1 + 2 + 3, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4, etc. until 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12, and then 2 . . . 12, 3 . . . 12, etc. until 10 + 11 + 12, 11 + 12, 12.

Each time a song is repeated, it should be varied in dynamics and/or tempo according to the notated forms.

For the version which is recorded on this CD, the following order was chosen for the forms of dynamics and tempo:

19

<i>mf</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>f</i> <u>dominierend</u> einzelne <i>pp</i>	<i>pp</i>	<i>f</i>	oft [<i>p</i> ←]
①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
mäßig	langsam-accel.	Tempo schnell wechseln	sehr langsam und kurze schnelle Stellen	schnell	langsam

mäßig

langsam – *accel.*

f dominierend

einzelne *pp*

Tempo schnell wechseln

sehr langsam
und kurze schnelle Stellen

schnell

oft

langsam

moderate

slow – *accel.*

f dominating

single *pp*

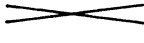
quick change of tempo

very slow
and short fast passages

fast

often

slow

von Ton zu Ton oder Gruppe zu Gruppe Lautst. wechseln	einzelne <i>ff</i> <i>pp</i> dominierend	$p < ff$	$[f \xrightarrow{\text{oft}} ff]$	$ff > p$	
7	8	9	10	11	12
oft rit.	rit.---accel.	oft accel.	sehr schnell	schnell-rit.	schnell und kurze langsame Stellen

von Ton zu Ton oder Gruppe zu Gruppe Lautst. wechseln

from pitch to pitch or group to group change dynamic

oft *rit.*

often *rit.*

einzelne *ff*

single *ff*

pp dominierend

pp dominating

oft *accel.*

often *accel.*

oft

often

sehr schnell

very fast

schnell - *rit.*

fast - *rit.*

schnell und kurze langsame Stellen

fast and short slow passages

21

Both singers who sing on this record have performed my work *STIMMUNG* many times, and they have experienced hundreds of rehearsals with me. Since the world premiere of “*In the sky I am walking . . .*” they have performed this work from memory.

Already on the occasion of the premiere I wrote in the program notes: “The singers should only perform this music if they can completely identify with *what* they sing.”

Therefore, he who does not innerly experience, “*In the sky I am walking, a bird I accompany*”, he who has the slightest misgiving when he sings, “*Ye gods who dwell everywhere*” and – imagining a dying person between the two singers – “*In the place where I sit, I am making you a spirit*” and “*Grandfather, a voice I am going to send, all over the universe: I will live!*” and “*I am created by the one and only God*”, and at the end – pointing to the partner – “*Sacred she has been made, sacred I have been made*”, he should not perform this music.

During the recording I have attempted to make everything clear **acoustically**: the entrance of the singers; the rustling of the clothing; the creaking of the floor; singing in all directions; going into a corner of the room and whispering into the corner; covering the face with the hands while singing; lying down on the ground and singing to the ceiling; taking a bowl full of water and sprinkling the partner with water; dancing and turning while singing, clapping, stamping, and much more until the slow exit singing and ringing away in the far distance.

As the singers bring to life within themselves an inner pure spiritual world, within the listener similarly the inner spiritual world can awake and the inner eye can see all the pictures of the ritual scenes, really SEE. The best is to close the eyes and listen with headphones, if no excellent loud-speakers are available.

About the recording

Production and final editing for *Deutsche Grammophon* took place in the *Old Herkules Hall* at the *Residenz* in Munich: from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on February 23rd 1977, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on February 24th, and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on February 25th.

The singers were Helga Hamm-Albrecht (mezzo soprano) and Karl O. Barkey (tenor).

Recording Supervision: Rudolf Werner; Sound Engineer: Karl August Naegler.

Musical Direction: Karlheinz Stockhausen.

In 1991 the recording was acquired from *DGG* for this CD.