

Tala (1987)

Introduction

The orchestral work Tala is partially inspired by authentic Indian music and partially by western Variation techniques. It can be considered as a tale in five acts, wherein the theme "cycle" stands central.

The Indian Tala

In parts one, three and five the theme "cycle" is developed in a constantly recurring cyclical drum pattern, that in a certain sense shows affinity with the tabla patterns of Indian Classical music. The Indian term for such a cyclical pattern is "tala". Every tala consists of a certain number of beats, 'matra', and is divided in a particular way. The division is not so much noticeable through differences in emphasis on the separate beats as through the different sounds of the strikes.

The sound of each strike is translated into a syllable, "bol", such as for example Dha, Dhin, Ta, Ge,....etc. In this way there arise in each tala a number of groups, "Vibhaga". The first beat of every tala is called a "sam".

Part Two and Four

In parts two and four which are related to each other the theme of the cycle is developed. In these parts no actual use is made of rhythmical tala patterns, but of melodic figures which continually varied are repeated. There are two main points:

- a. a constantly varied and returning bass pattern.
- b. a double beat motif in the wind and brass.

Because the instrumentation is at first thin and after each variation increasingly fuller one can talk of a slow orchestral crescendo. The climax is reached when the two main points are combined in superposition.