

Minimal Music in the Low Countries

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Source: *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, Deel 54, No. 1 (2004), pp. 31-78

Published by: Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis (KVNMM)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20203896>

Accessed: 15-09-2017 13:52 UTC

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MINIMAL MUSIC IN THE LOW COUNTRIES*

The music by Karel Goeyvaerts (1923–1993) and Louis Andriessen (1939) can be researched as well-defined case studies of European minimal music. Goeyvaerts and Andriessen are considered the most important composers of the second half of the twentieth century from Belgium and the Netherlands respectively. They both come from the same region, they belong to the same language area, and their compositional developments are very similar. Both composers used serial techniques and wrote open forms. They were both to a great extent inspired by American minimal music and developed it into a personal, ‘post-minimalist’ variant. It is true that this evolution did not run entirely parallel and that the importance of the compositional techniques mentioned above in the respective oeuvres differs, largely due to the age difference between both composers, and therefore to the different moment that they started to embrace the ideals of the new music. However, for both of them the compositional techniques and stylistic characteristics of minimal music form an essential part of their language. This article will examine the adaptation and transformation of these stylistic characteristics, using representative works by Goeyvaerts and Andriessen as examples. Incidentally, other composers of minimal music from Belgium and the Netherlands will be discussed too, so finally the question can be answered whether there is such a thing as a style of minimal music that is specific for the Low Countries, of which Goeyvaerts and Andriessen could be seen as epitomes.

When discussing the influence of American minimalism on European composers, it is important to examine exactly which aspects have been borrowed. Minimal music is not a style that has one well-defined point of departure and it is not a homogeneous style either. It is no wonder that there is a certain amount of variety within the minimalist repertory, as its roots range from non-Western (African, Indian, Balinese, ...) music and jazz, to serialism and the Fluxus happenings. Of all the characteristics that are mentioned in connection with minimal music, such as diatonic harmony, extended duration, additive principles, compact canonic structures, reductiveness, simplicity etc., there are two categories which can be considered the basic principles of the different poles within minimal music: the repetitive and the conceptual type.

The *repetitive* type includes all variants of minimal music in which there is a high degree of repetition, regardless of the way it is worked out: homophonic or polyphonic, additive or cyclical, through the superposition of motives, or through canonic phase shifting. Repetition is essential in this type of minimal music, however, it is hardly ever exact repetition, but repetition combined with a (very gradual) process of development or expansion.

The other type of minimal music deserves the adjective ‘minimal’ more by nature, as it includes all kinds of minimal music that focus on the reductive character,

the minimising intervention. As the concept 'minimal' plays a central role here, this type can be called *conceptual*. This reductive concept can be combined with a repetitive setting, but does not need to be. The distinction between the two types of minimal music certainly does not mean that there is no connection at all. This reductive type always starts with a concept, which can even be an abstract idea, hence the close relation with the Fluxus movement. La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #7* (the perfect fifth *b - f#* with the instruction 'to be held for a long time') is strictly speaking not repetitive, however, it certainly is minimalist. The essence is the idea of a specific interval that is stretched out over an extended length of time. The musical implication of this is indeed of a different order than Fluxus works such as George Brecht's *Piano Piece 1962*, in which a vase of flowers is placed on a piano. However, the premise that a concept is realised, does still apply. Both the later works by La Monte Young in which the vertical organisation (intervals in just intonation) predominates – projected, as it were, in time during the semi-improvised performance – and the paradigm of 'music as a gradual process' of Steve Reich, can be considered conceptual. The position in relation to these poles always varies from composer to composer, both in Europe and in the United States.

KAREL GOEYVAERTS: STATIC MUSIC

Many a commentator considers it a radical change in style or even a lack of consistency that one of the founders of serial and electronic music in Europe also embraced minimalist aesthetics. However, they overlook Goeyvaerts' idiosyncratic idea of serialism. During the Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt Goeyvaerts described the underlying principle of his *No. 1 Sonata for 2 Pianos* in 1951 as 'static music, i.e. music conceived as a projection in time and space of a basic idea generating the structure'.¹

As we know, Goeyvaerts' ideas had a considerable influence on the young composers who were present in Darmstadt in general, and on Karlheinz Stockhausen in particular. The latter becomes apparent from, for example, the intensive correspondence between both composers in the period 1951-1955, in which the development of early serial and electronic music is documented step by step. Further details of Goeyvaerts' view as quoted above, can be found in his letter to Stockhausen of 9 September 1953:²

Only what corresponds with the immobility of Being appears to me to be a valid principle. Now listen, I entreat you, please, please try to understand what I can only express badly: my principle represents a series of identical sounds which are only expanded and reduced proportionally in time and space. This is conceived *as a principle*; where the structure that is being formed requires it, the sounds of the piece develop from these basic sounds. I have written this to you before: the principle is immobile like the absolute spirit, the structure represents the movement of living people. Therefore, the

'identical sounds' are all expansions and reductions in space and time of the same form (identical frequency, atmospheric pressure and duration that are proportionally expanded and reduced). These expansions and reductions, however, only exist in the 'optical field' of time and space. They do not have an absolute existence. As absolute existence we always have the utmost, (in nature) inconceivable Oneness: Unity itself. The immobility of Being is not distorted by these expansions and reductions. The significance of this principle is, *that it suggests an organisation of space and time that is purely static, without developing a specific form.*

It becomes clear from this quotation that, besides the highly metaphysical approach of Goeyvaerts' compositional thinking, his aesthetic aims may just as easily be reached through the serial compositional technique he used in the early 1950s, as through the minimalist and repetitive techniques he would use twenty years later. All the more reason to put the sharp distinction between serial and minimal music which is postulated in musicological literature, into perspective. For Goeyvaerts both techniques were merely subcategories of a 'static music'. A non-dynamic form could even be constructed with the enormously differentiated parametric values of serialism, as long as these values are equidistant ("proportional expansions and reductions of time and space") and are treated equidistributively (which is implied by the serial technique). Consequently, all dimensions of a composition are perfectly symmetrical. Both the choice and the organisation of the material meet the principle of inversion, and the cross form and circularity that result from its consequent application. In his *Composition No. 1* from 1950-1951 Goeyvaerts only partly succeeded in this: as a whole this work is still a compromise between a static (in the middle movements; cf. the title of the work: 'Number 1') and a dynamic form (in the outer movements; cf. the subtitle: 'Sonata'). It was not until his *Opus 2 for 13 Instruments* from August-September 1951 – the first completely serial work in European music history – that Goeyvaerts achieved an integral static structure, in which everything, from the smallest detail to the overall form, is determined by the principle of inversive symmetry. In *Opus 3 with Bowed and Struck Tones* from 1952 it becomes apparent how unrelenting minimal, static music can be: each tone is followed by a rest, and these isolated tone-points together do not form a linear process (movement), but a projection in space and time of a structure (stasis). Also *Composition No. 5 with Pure Tones* (sine waves) (1953), *Composition No. 6 with 180 Sound Objects* (1954) and *Composition No. 7 with Converging and Diverging Levels* (1955) embody the unchangeability of Being that Goeyvaerts sought after.³

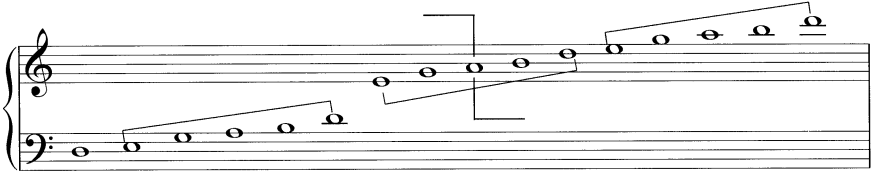
In an article from 1983 Herman Sabbe already pointed out the prefiguration of American minimal music in Goeyvaerts' *Composition No. 4 with Dead Tones* from 1952,⁴ one of the first examples in music history of a score for electronically generated music. This tape composition is in fact a pure temporal structure: four sounds with an equal duration, of which the frequency, amplitude and timbre can be chosen freely, are repeated unchanged throughout the entire piece. Only the duration of the rests between these 'dead tones' is varied, following an arithmetical sequence. The four lay-

ers of sound start simultaneously, but through the systematic reduction and expansion of the rests between each layer of sound there is a shift in their superposition: these sounds evolve from being completely simultaneous to being completely successive, and vice versa. This work anticipates the most important stylistic characteristics of American minimal music from the 1960s, and those of Steve Reich in particular, more than a decade earlier: the technique of phase shifting, music as a gradual process on the basis of a minimum of material and obsessive repetition. It is true that, in 1952, Goeyvaerts did not have any experience at all with electronic sound production. Therefore the reduction to the organisation of duration – from a practical point of view the easiest dimension to realise in tape music – was probably due to technical limitations rather than to a conscious aesthetic choice. This hypothesis appears to be confirmed by the fact that the (electronic) serial works that succeeded *Composition No. 4*, demonstrate a greater complexity and ‘maximisation’ of the musical information.

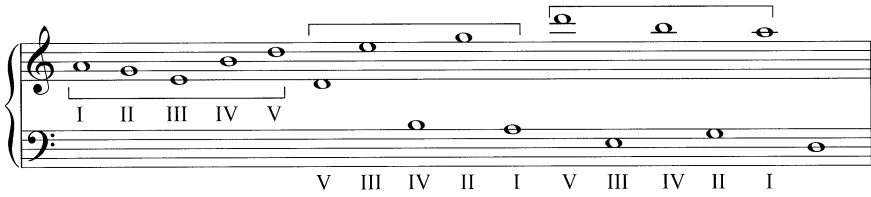
After the creative outburst of American minimal music and its reception in Europe, repetitive elements appeared again in Goeyvaerts’ work in the context of his experimental and aleatoric output. In works such as *Pianokwartet* (Piano Quartet, 1972), *Landschap voor Annette Sachs* (Landscape for Annette Sachs, 1973) and *Op acht paarden wedden* (Betting on Eight Horses, 1973) mobile, aleatoric structures were for the first time combined with obstinate repetitions. The eight horses which the title of the latter work alludes to, are eight tracks which the composer, or another ‘performer’, may superpose as desired for a reproduction by means of a multi-track tape recorder. Two elements are of importance here: the systematic use of tape echo on track I (repetitiveness), and the presence of an extremely slow ascent, followed by an equally slow descent lasting in total fifteen minutes (minimalism) on one of the other tracks. This shows that, like with Steve Reich (*It’s Gonna Rain; Come Out*), the phenomenon repetitiveness appeared with Goeyvaerts in the context of tape composition (tape loops) as well. The next important step in the development of Goeyvaerts’ minimalist style was the work *Pour Tcheng* (1974), named after the Chinese instrument with sixteen strings for which it was written. As was the case with American composers of minimal music, non-Western music in which there was, according to Goeyvaerts, a non-teleological approach of time, proved to be an important means to realise the idea of a ‘static music’. The sixteen strings are tuned pentatonically and – with the exception of the added lowest final note *D* – are ordered perfectly symmetrically around the central axis *A* (Example 1). Example 2 shows the order in which these notes are introduced.

The two permutations of the original pentachord are identical (V-III-IV-II-I),⁵ on the understanding that each note is always presented in a different octave. This is done in such a way that it results in a fan-shaped expansion of the range (with only a small contraction again at the end). The fixation of octaves and consequent open (or closed) fan-shapes are pre-eminently compositional techniques of serial music (Webern, Boulez, Goeyvaerts, Nono and Stockhausen). The sketches show that Goey-

Example 1. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Pour Tcheng*.



Example 2. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Pour Tcheng*.



vaerts did consider another characteristic of serial writing, namely the (extreme) differentiation of the sound parameters, but that he eventually rejected it. In the end no traces of the alternative tunings of the instrument and above all of the extensive catalogue of performance techniques given in the sketches, can be found in the composition. The same applies to a sketch of a fairly complex construction of temporal modules, that eventually is reduced to a most simple form (Example 3). After element I has been repeated a number of times, the following elements are added one by one. The elements always occur at the same pitch and in the same place in the temporal

Example 3. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Pour Tcheng* (© 1974 by Belgian Centre for Music Documentation; all rights reserved).



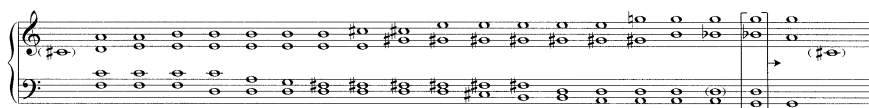
module, although they do not always need to be present after they have been introduced. In fact the temporal module is filled in sparsely at the beginning and the end of the composition, and heavily in the middle (with as maximum the presence of all five elements in the temporal module). The circular structure suggested by the way the fixed temporal module is filled in (sparingly–heavily–sparingly), is supported by the vibrato markings (slow–fast–slow) in the score and by the emphasis on elements I and II at the beginning and the end of the composition. Thus in the end nothing of the originally fairly complex concept for this work remains. However, continuity and repetitiveness, gradualness and circularity bring about the aesthetic aim of the composition ('a slow fan-shaped development of a very simple musical event') all the better.

In another experimental composition from this period, *You'll Never Be Alone Anymore* for bass clarinet and tape (1975), Goeyvaerts taps other sources for his future full-fledged minimal music style. For the production of the tape Goeyvaerts asked four people without a musical background to each manipulate three sinus tone generators in such a way that the sounds would evolve as closely as possible to each other in an extremely slow way from the lower limit to the upper limit of the audible spectrum and vice versa. The whole process, which Goeyvaerts compared in his programme notes with a 'cosmic breath', lasts more than 42 minutes, with some accidental stray tones that desperately try to return to the frequency range of the others. Here the tape acts as an impression of time which, as a rule, goes by unnoticed, but which is sometimes characterised by a sudden fierce unrest. The bass clarinet part, written for Harry Sparnaay, mainly consists of verbal psychological specifications, besides a few musical instructions. The bass clarinet part represents the individual who successively discovers himself, confirms himself and finally integrates himself in time and in the world; the title of this composition refers to the completion of this process. In other words, this music is highly conceptual and, like Goeyvaerts' serial works, although in a different way, it also has an important temporal-metaphysic component. There are no patterns of systematic repetition, and yet this work is highly minimalist because it is restricted to one overall curve that encompasses the 42-minute composition, and because the musical material that is used, is extremely reduced and simplified. *You'll Never Be Alone Anymore* is, in other words, an archetype of a work that is minimalist without being repetitive.

Besides their enchanting sound the compositions *Ach Golgatha!* for positive organ, harp and 3 percussionists (1975), *Pour que les fruits mûrissent cet été* for Renaissance instruments (1976) and *Mon doux pilote s'endort aussi* for four-part mixed choir (1976) have in common that they are Goeyvaerts' first main works in which repetitiveness in its pure form has become the predominant principle. Nevertheless, there are still some remnants of the previous experimental-aleatoric phase and the

composer still leaves some choices to the performers. In the three works the number of times a module is repeated, is not defined. In the choral work the density (the way the modules are filled in horizontally and vertically) is not entirely determined, in *Pour que les fruits...* there is a limited freedom of choice as regards pitch, and also in *Ach Golgatha!* there are some choices as regards pitch in the percussion part. However, in the three cases this indeterminacy is only a peripheral characteristic of the work. The 'aleatory' is regulated, and the composer stays in complete control of the way the form unfolds. There is always a fixed temporal module that is exactly repeated a varying number of times, before a slight melodic and/or rhythmic change occurs. This results in a very gradual transformation: in *Pour que les fruits...* an expansion followed by a (symmetrical) reduction, in *Mon doux pilote...* a gradual expansion, and in *Ach Golgatha!* a permanent metamorphosis of the accompanying pattern from the contralto recitative from Bach's St Matthew Passion after which it was named. A concise analysis of *Mon doux pilote...* and *Pour que les fruits...*,⁶ as well as a comprehensive discussion of the latter work⁷ have already been published. Therefore we will restrict ourselves here to some additional analytic remarks on the choral work.

Example 4. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Mon doux pilote s'endort aussi*.



Example 4 shows a harmonic abstract that can be found in the sketches for *Mon doux pilote...* There are in total 18 four-part chords which evolve extremely slowly from a close to a wide spacing. Although no traces of this can be found in the sketches, it is evident that this progression is directed from the symmetrical axis $c\#'$: the first chord is built around this symmetrical axis, in all but one of the solo interventions (module 14: $B\flat$) the reciting tone is $C\#$ (modules 10-11: $c\#'$, module 22: $c\#''$, modules 26-27: $c\#'$) and the latter solo intervention clearly marks the central axis $c\#'$ of the soprano and bass of the final chord ($G-g''$, the target notes of the expansion process as regards pitch and octave registers). Goeyvaerts kept fairly strictly to this harmonic abstract. Only the final chord is stripped of its tonal character, by leaving out the d and replacing the $b\flat'$ by a' .

It is of greater importance that Goeyvaerts spread these 18 chords out over 28 temporal modules by building up the first chord over 4 modules (consequent addition of a chordal note) and by repeating some chords with (modules 10-11, 14, 22, 26-27) or without (modules 18-20) the addition of solo interventions. In a four-part choral composition 28 is not only the obvious multiple of 7 (Goeyvaerts' fetish number, from *Number 1* from 1951 to his last work, the finale of *Aquarius* from 1993), but the text of this choral work, which is based on a poem by Giorgio de Chirico, also

consists of exactly 28 syllables. As was the case in the early serial works, the slow unfolding of a 'static form' is based on principles such as the gradual expansion of the musical space, symmetry and numeric constructivism. Thus the aesthetic maxim from the early 1950s ('static music, i.e. music conceived as a projection in time and space of a basic idea generating the structure') remains applicable to a choral composition which, through the sensuous beauty of its sound and its ethereal-meditative character, appears to be exactly the opposite.

In his five *Litanieën* (Litanies, 1979-1982), which many consider his most important repetitive compositions, Goeyvaerts combined some principles from the previous group of works, such as the use of fixed temporal modules, gradual construction/deconstruction of a layer of sound and the superposition of various layers of sound. The composer himself characterised these *Litanieën* as 'emotional, repetitive and having a fairly closed form'.⁸

The emotional element is based on aspects such as beauty of sound, simple relationships, new tonality and a resemblance to (early-)romantic melodic gestures and their corresponding expressive rhetoric.⁹ The first time the emotional component occurred explicitly was in a work from 1975 (*Erst das Gesicht, dann die Hände und zuletzt erst das Haar* – First the Face, then the Hands and Finally the Hair), a work for chamber orchestra based on Bertold Brecht's *Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen* (Ballad of the Drowned Girl), that would also inspire Goeyvaerts after a near-death experience in 1990 to write *Das Haar* (The Hair), his 'sonorous diary of the great transition'. An exhaustive analysis of the five *Litanieën* would go too far. Therefore we will restrict ourselves here to a comprehensive analysis of *Litanie I* for piano (1979), followed by a comparative commentary on the five *Litanieën*.

As is often the case, Goeyvaerts wrote programme notes for *Litanie I* which provide a good starting-point for the analysis:

The litany is a repetitive form of prayer. Possibly it is the oldest form of religious invocation, as the term 'litany' simply means 'prayer'. The sacred meaning of the obstinate repetition can still be felt today, or can be felt again by those who are able to return to the basic values. This 'litany' for piano is a primitive piece, constructed out of a number of overlapping repetitive sequences. Each sequence has a gradual expansion and reduction of its components, in other words, they are stammered at first, then they acquire a fixed form and become particularly intensive, and finally they slowly crumble and disappear. The last sequence presents the material of the first sequence again with a slight change in one aggregate in view of the conclusive character of the end' (text in the score of *Litanie I*).

One look at the first page of the score illustrates the written explanation (Example 5). The fixed temporal module is formed by a group of two measures, each consisting of 10 crotchets. The work is entirely through-composed in the same tempo, the same metre and the same fixed temporal module: in total there are 73 temporal modules

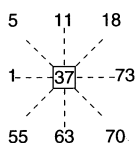
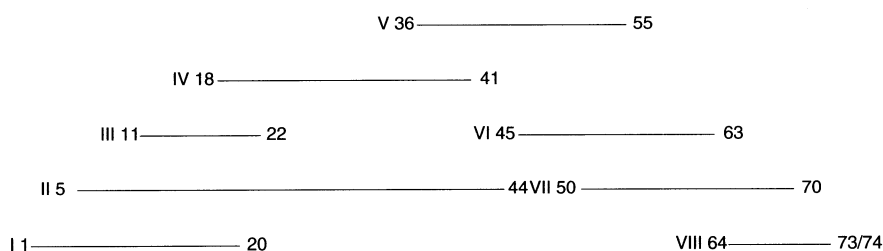
Example 5. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I* (© 1979 by Belgian Centre for Music Documentation; all rights reserved).

(in other words 146 measures), and for the sake of the 'conclusive end' they are followed by a final chord in a lower register. Exact repetition of a temporal module only occurs as an exception, and always has a clear formal function (temporal modules 1, 3 and 5: beginning of the work; temporal module 62: preparation for the return of Sequence I). In other words, the repetitive character is not based on the repetition of temporal modules as a whole, but on the way the temporal modules are filled in. The same tones or aggregates are repeated in the same rhythmic-metrical position in a temporal module on the understanding that, with each repetition, a slight addition (in the construction phase) or a slight reduction (in the reduction phase) occurs. In other words, we are dealing here with the 'construction/reduction technique' from the earliest stage of American minimal music in general, and that of Steve Reich in particular. In Example 5 temporal module 1 is exactly repeated, in temporal module 3 (which itself will be repeated in turn) 4 aggregates are added (marked by +), in temporal module 5 (and 6) this pattern (left hand) is expanded by another aggregate, in 7 there are no additions and in 8 another 2 aggregates are added. The most complete appearance is reached here: from temporal module 9 there is a very gradual reduction until only one aggregate (the last but one) remains in temporal module 20. Following the composer's example we will call this entire process in which an appearance is as a rule gradually constructed and then deconstructed, a sequence. Such a sequence is demarcated by the first and last appearance of just one element of the complete appearance. Consequently sequence I occurs from temporal module 1 to temporal

module 20. As shown by the music example (and the programme notes), Goeysvaerts does not wait until a sequence has come to an end and has disappeared before he lets a new sequence start. From temporal module 5 he, for example, combines sequence I, which is then still fully in construction, with the entry (right hand) of sequence II. In the most dense passage (temporal modules 18–20) Goeysvaerts places no less than 4 different sequences on top of each other: here sequence I has almost completely withered, sequence II is repeated unchanged, sequence III is quickly reduced, and sequence IV is introduced and constructed very rapidly. *Litanie I* contains altogether 7(!) different sequences, and finally the circle is closed by the repetition of the first sequence. The relationships between the sequences are presented graphically in Figure 1, which clearly shows the overall symmetrical layout. The temporal centre (temporal module 37) is in the overlap of sequence IV and V, the first and the last 4 sequences are symmetrically gathered around this temporal centre and the duration of the two ‘outer’ sequences (I+VIII, and II+VII respectively) is exactly halved in both cases.

Furthermore the set-up of the various sequences deserves our attention. As mentioned above, the whole construction phase of sequence I is shown in Example 5. This sequence consists of 4 three-part aggregates. Aggregate 1 and 2 are inversions of each other. As regards duration (quaver), dynamics (*mf*) and articulation (accent) this sequence is limited to only one value. The sound is chromatic and dissonant, and because of its low register, this sequence acts as a rhythmic-harmonic foundation.

Figure 1. Relationships between the sequences of *Litanie I*.



Example 6. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence II.

In sequence II, the longest of the work (Example 6), the familiar construction/reduction technique is combined with a process of motivic transformation (Examples 6 through 11 give the first and then the most complete presentation of the sequence). The starting-point is a rhythmic cell of 2 quavers and a crotchet. This cell is not only extended, but pitch material is also exchanged between the various metric-rhythmic positions, and furthermore motives are repeated and split. From temporal module 17 new aggregates are added, intervals are changed and ‘figurative’ semi-quavers are added. The function of all of this is the gradual integration in sequence IV, which is introduced from temporal module 18: in other words, sequence II is transformed in such a way that it is finally completely incorporated into sequence IV. From temporal module 17 the fixed dynamic relation *f-p* for the first and the second part of each temporal module respectively, is abandoned in favour of homogeneous *p* dynamics, which also strongly supports the ‘disappearance’ of sequence II. Because of its greater range, its higher register and its rhythm that is complementary to sequence I, sequence II acts as a ‘melodic’ upper layer, of which the thematic transformation in the reduction phase leads to a fusion with sequence IV.

Example 7. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence III.

Sequence III (Example 7) is related to sequence I as regards rhythm, interval material of the aggregates and the limitation to one value as regards duration (quaver), dynamics (*ff*) and articulation (no indication). On the other hand, the systematic addition of anacrusis in the construction phase corresponds with sequence II, and sequence III also stands midway as regards the register. Finally, the perfect symmetrical grouping of the 4 aggregates around the middle axis of the temporal module is notable.

Example 8. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence IV.

Sequence IV (Example 8) then enters with four times the same rhythmic-symmetrical cell, disregarding the metric positioning – like in Messiaen’s ‘rythme non rétrogradable’. The interval material of the cells is so closely related to that of the aggregates of sequence I that they appear to be a rhythmic elaboration of them. The rhythmic density greatly increases at the beginning of this sequence, not only because the shortest rhythmic values occur here, but also because no less than 4 sequences are superimposed. The reduction phase is just as radical: only a few elements from sequence IV (and from sequence II that is completely incorporated) remain. Thus the temporal centre of the composition is characterised by an extreme thinning out.

Example 9. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence V.

Sequences V (Example 9) and VI appear to be each other’s mirror image. In both cases there is a construction in 2 phases. In sequence V first the centre of the temporal module is filled in with a perfectly symmetric figure, and only in the second phase the beginning and end of each temporal module is filled in (from the inside out). For this Goeyvaerts used a single value as regards duration (semi-quaver), articulation (accent) and dynamics (the pairs *ff-mf* for the beginning and *ff-p* for the end of the temporal module; cf. also the dynamic pair *f-p* in phase 1 of this sequence). The register contributes to this sequence gradually taking over the function of upper layer from sequence II.

Example 10. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence VI.



Sequence VI (Example 10) is also constructed in 2 phases. However, here first the beginning and the end of each temporal module is constructed, and then the middle (from the outside in). Sequence VI is in two respects different from the others. For the first (and the last) time Goeyvaerts breaks away from the fixed temporal module by already letting the sequence start at the end of the previous temporal module, and by continuing it until the next temporal module has started. Furthermore, both phase 1 and phase 2 are only constructed and are not followed by a reduction process. The reason for this is obvious: this results in a strong momentum towards the repetition of sequence I. The dynamics are restricted to one value throughout the sequence (*f*), and the register indicates that it acts as a bass layer.

Example 11. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Litanie I*, sequence VII.



Sequence VII (Example 11) combines perfectly well with this, as it gradually takes over the function of upper layer from sequence V. As the construction phase has then just been completed, sequence VII also has a momentum towards the repetition of sequence I. This condensed, but exact repetition of the first sequence closes the circle of this litany. Behind the metaphors for this piece which Goeyvaerts gave in his programme notes ('sacred meaning', 'obstinate repetition', 'return to basic values' and 'primitive piece') lies a rational construction, by which both the individual parameters (time, pitch, register, articulation and dynamics) and the overall macrostructure (proportionality, symmetry and circularity) are just as stringently controlled as they used to be in the serial works.

In what sense do the five *Litanieën* form a cycle? The instrumentation could suggest an intentional, cyclic, or even symmetrical ordering:

Figure 2. Summary of the analyses of the five *Litanies*.

	LITANIE I	LITANIE II	LITANIE III
Form	single movement through-composed closed	single movement through-composed closed	single movement through-composed closed
Structure	8 sequences in superposition circularity (seq. I=seq. VIII) seq. I: 1-20 (20) seq. II: 5-44 (40) seq. III: 11-22 (12) seq. IV: 18-41 (24) seq. V: 36-55 (20) seq. VI: 45-63 (19) seq. VII: 50-70 (21) seq. VIII: 64-73/74 (10)	alternation sequence-refrain layers within seq. in superposition circularity (seq. I=seq. V) seq. I: 1-44 (44) refr.: 45-48 (4) seq. II: 49-72 (24) refr.: 73-76 (4) stretto: 77-80 (4) seq. III: 81-110 (30) refr.: 111-114 (4) seq. IV: 115-150 (36) caesura: 151 (1) seq. V: 152-179 (28) refr.: 180-189 (10)	13 sequences in superposition linearity seq. I: 1-35 (35) seq. II: 20-43 (24) seq. III: 35-74 (39) seq. IV: 37-55 (19) seq. V: 42-102 (60) seq. VI: 51-73 (22) seq. VII: 79-133 (54) 134-237 (104) seq. VIII: 92-194 (102) seq. IX: 99-237 (138) seq. X: 141-237 (70) seq. XI: 167-237 (70) seq. XII: 187-237 (50) seq. XIII: 200-237 (37)
	symmetrically constructed around temporal centre (37)	symmetrically constructed around temporal centre (96)	
Fixed temporal module	2 x 10/4	4 x 5/4 (seq. I-II) 5 x 5/4 (seq. III) 6 x 6/4 (seq. IV) 4 x 5/4 (seq. V) 4+5+4+6 (=19)/4 (refr.) 1 x 11/4 (caesura) basic metre 5/4 (cf. relation no. of sequences and refrains) importance of prime numbers (metres 5/4, 7/4, 11/4, 19/4; 11 sections; 5 seq.)	1 x 6/8
	superposition of seq. brings about rhythmic density and neutralisation of metre	idem (layers within sequences)	idem

LITANIE IV	LITANIE V
single movement through-composed closed	single movement through-composed open (multiple form)
11 sequences in superposition + ostinato coda circularity (seq. I=seq. XI)	7 zones circularity (zone1=zone 7)
seq. I: 1-51 (51) seq. II: 4-56 (51) seq. III: 8-56 (48) seq. IV: 31-176 (135) seq. V: 67-112 (46) seq. VI: 85-108 (23) seq. VII: 105-136 (31) seq. VIII: 121-154 (33) seq. IX: 129-150 (21) seq. X: 147-164 (17) seq. XI: 165-195 (36) coda: 195-200 (6)	zone D: (7 seq.) zone C: (6 seq.) zone B ₁ : (5 seq.) zone A ₁ : (5 seq.) zone F ₁ : (5 seq.) zone E (6 seq.) zone D: (7 seq.)
	symmetrically constructed around tonal centre (A ₁) and temporal centre (cf. number of seq.)
2 x 4/4 or 12/8	zones and sequences each have their own metre. Web of cross-references between the seq. contrast between seq.
idem	idem

<i>Litanie I</i>	piano	solo instrument
<i>Litanie II</i>	3 percussionists	small ensemble
<i>Litanie III</i>	orchestra	orchestra
<i>Litanie IV</i>	soprano and 5 instruments	small ensemble
<i>Litanie V</i>	harpsichord and tape (or several harpsichords)	solo instrument

This intention is in any case denied by Goeyvaerts himself, who indicated that the choice of instrumentation was based on external factors (commissions for compositions by certain ensembles).¹⁰ In this article Goeyvaerts referred to the different character of *Litanie V*. In view of this, the *Litanies* can only be called a cycle because they are based on the same compositional technique (out-of-phase construction and reduction of various sequences in superposition), taking into account that *Litanie V* has some additional different formal and structural characteristics. Figure 2 summarises the analyses of the five *Litanies*. On the basis of the analysis of *Litanie I* above, the summary should be completely clear; only the analysis of *Litanie V* which is somewhat different, requires some further explanation.

For *Litanie IV*, the only vocal piece in this cycle, Goeyvaerts compiled a text that is constructed out of phonemes that do not form existing words when put together. In other words, the composer chose these phonemes for their timbre and treated the text as an instrumental, rather than a semantic element. This technique which Goeyvaerts called verbosony, occurs from *Goathemala* for mezzo and flute (1966) until his last opus *Aquarius* (1983-1993).¹¹ Nevertheless, the text of *Litanie IV* does in some places evoke associations with an existing word. In these cases the character and construction of the sequence in question are in keeping with this quasi-semantic element.

Litanie V for harpsichord and tape or several harpsichords is an open or multiple form, as the performer(s) need(s) to make decisions about the number of performers and consequently about the number of canonic parts, about the number of sequences that are placed on top of each other (density), about the order in which the sequences are played and about the place of the canonic entries. In this sense *Litanie V* bears remarkable resemblances to earlier works by Terry Riley (*In C*, and also *Keyboard Studies*, *A Rainbow in Curved Air* and *Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band*). However, the overall form of *Litanie V* is determined by the composer, resulting in the perfectly symmetrical and circular layout which can be seen in Figure 2. *Litanie V* modulates in descending steps, following the whole-tone scale on which each individual tonal zone is also based (coinciding of macro-structure and micro-structure).¹²

When zone D is reached again, the sequences should be played in the opposite order, which makes the work's cyclic form even better audible. Furthermore, various sequences are constructed entirely or partly symmetrically around a central axis. By building in both contrast and repetition (of melodic or rhythmic material, of absolute pitches and of stylistic characteristics) between the various sequences, the composer guaranteed the aesthetic efficiency of each choice the performer makes. Goeyvaerts has thus conceived the whole of the sequences taken together as a unity of which the parts are interchangeable and freely combinable.¹³

With a few exceptions Goevaerts conceived the works he wrote after the *Litanies* both as autonomous compositions and as the basic music for a scene of his opera *Aquarius* (1983-1993). This group of works, and consequently the opera too, appears to be greatly heterogeneous as regards compositional technique, style and aesthetics. This can partly be explained by the dramaturgic requirements: Goevaerts always selected that idiom, that fulfils the dramaturgic function of the scene in question best. However, there is also a more abstract aesthetic reason for this choice. The two acts of the opera each contain five scenes. Most scenes are musically exactly the opposite of their corresponding scene in the other act. Through this disposition Goevaerts underlined the extreme oppositions in his *magnum opus* that, because of this and despite of its astrological-apocalyptic subject, manages to overcome the intoxication of the New Age aesthetics and ideology. Consonance is combined with dissonance, musical rigidity with liveliness, simplicity with complexity, accessibility with obstinacy: only when *Aquarius* is seen as a 'purely static filling in of space and time' (see note 2) the listener can come to terms with the juxtaposition of the various aesthetic characters. To which degree can characteristics of minimal music in general, and the style of the *Litanies* in particular, still be found in this opera (and in its corresponding satellite works)? In nearly all the works from this group the degree of repetition is fairly high, as the composer liked to work with short segments, demarcated by caesuras, that are repeated in a varied way. Nevertheless, this way of writing is a far cry from the procedures Goevaerts used in the *Litanies*, as will become clear *infra* from the commentary on *Voor strijkkwartet* (For String Quartet). The only work in which a fairly strict repetitive texture plays a central role, is the fourth scene of the first act of *Aquarius*. The diagram below gives an overview of the genesis and the satellite works of this most repetitive work from Goevaerts' last creative phase:

- *Zum Wassermann* (To Aquarius) for chamber orchestra (1984): part 4
- *Pas à pas* (Step by Step) for piano (1985)
- *Aquarius* ('stage cantata') for 8 sopranos and 15 instruments (1989): act I, scene 4
- *Opbouw* (Construction) for symphony orchestra (1991)
- *Aquarius* ('opera') for 8 sopranos, 8 baritones and symphony orchestra (1992-93): act I, scene 4

Despite their different instrumentation and duration all these works are based on the same musical material and the same processing of this material. They have the use of a fixed temporal module and the gradual build-up, followed by the disintegration of musical cells throughout the repetitive texture in common with the repetitive style of the *Litanies*. However, there are also remarkable differences. The fixed temporal module is 'more flexible', as regards both the internal filling in and the demarcation. Furthermore, the reduction process can lead to such a thinning out of multi-tone, dissonant chords, that tonal triads remain, defining a tonal centre. Naturally, 'tonal zones' already occurred in *Litanie V*, but those were rather determined by the dia-

tonic nature of the tonal material. In Act I, scene 4 of *Aquarius* it concerns tonal triads that are first completely immersed in strongly dissonant aggregates, before they gradually become audible. However, the most important difference with the style of the *Litanies* is that the sequences are not superimposed. In other words, only one repetitive-evolutional element is worked out at the same time. Thus in this compositional cluster Goeyvaerts discards the charm of different simultaneous, but autonomous processes that each develop at their own speed and in their own way. To compensate this, the temporal modules are characterised by more capricious transformations and a more complex texture. Two factors come more to the fore here: density (the number of tones that are used – horizontally and vertically – in a temporal module) and variability (the number of differences with the previous temporal module). On the basis of these two factors Goeyvaerts created a number of fluctuations. It is characteristic for this ‘projection in time and space’ that density and variability do not exactly coincide, but occur out of phase. No doubt this and the unremitting elaboration, strictly adhering to the basic principles, contribute to the fact that the fourth scene of the first act of *Aquarius* (and the related compositions) is the most radical and obsessive repetitive work by Goeyvaerts. Like in *No. 3* or *No. 4* the listener can experience himself what the uncompromising musical realisation of the ‘stasis of Being’ means.

The last composition Goeyvaerts wrote that had nothing to do with *Aquarius*, is equally unremitting and fascinating. It is the piece *Voor strijkkwartet* (1992) that in conclusion will be discussed as a representative example of the compositions in which repetition plays an important part, without it being the main compositional element. Concretely this means that a considerable number of musical elements are elaborated. Therefore these works can hardly be regarded as strictly repetitive or minimal music. They will be discussed here via *Voor strijkkwartet* (1992) – as *pars pro toto* –, because they nevertheless induce a distinctly ‘static’ musical experience of time, which they share with genuine minimalist works. Goeyvaerts appears to emphasise the eminent abstract character of this composition through the titles he chose for the three movements of this string quartet:¹⁴ *De kwadratuur van de cirkel* (I, The Quadrature of the Circle), *Kringloop met opwellingen* (II, Cycle with Impulses), and *Polygoon met cirkeltendens* (III, Polygon with a Circular Tendency) are named after structural principles, more specifically the ones he was obsessed with since the 1950s (stasis and circularity).

The ‘theme’ of movement I (Example 12, m. 1–5/6) contains all that is necessary to undermine its traditional function – postulating a stable musical idea that will be unravelled and elaborated in the course of the work: the rhythmic-metrical design is capricious, there is a great discontinuity because the 3 segments α , β and γ are separated by rests, the timbre is diffuse (*sul ponticello*, later flageolets), and the evaporation of the volume can be taken literally, ending in a measure of silence. Segment α starts with a major second, but as a whole it forms a chromatic aggregate of six tones. In segments β and γ the minor second and the minor third predominate. Together segments

Example 12. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Voor Strijkkwartet* (© 1993 by Belgian Centre for Music Documentation; all rights reserved).

Deze compositie werd geschreven in opdracht van "Antwerpen 93, Culturele Hoofdstad van Europa", voor het Arditti-Kwartet.

Voor strijkkwartet
Pour quatuor à cordes
For string quartet

Ca. 20'

1992

Karel GOEYVAERTS

I. De kwadratuur van de cirkel
La quadrature du cercle
The squaring of the circle

Tempo giusto (♩ = 126)

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

Sul ponticello

mf

mf

pp

mf

pp

Ord.

5

2

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

f

f

ff

mp

mp

10

mf

p

f

mf

p

f

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Example 13. Karel Goeyvaerts, *Voor Strijkkwartet* (© 1993 by Belgian Centre for Music Documentation; all rights reserved).

a (m 36-43)

36 arco (vicino al ponticello) *mf* arco *pp* *mf* Ord.^o

40 *f* pizz. arco pizz. *ff* arco *ff* arco (vicino al ponticello)

b (m 71-79)

71 arco (vicino al ponticello) *mf*

73 *pp* *mf* Ord.^o *pp*

77

Violin I: pizz., arco, pizz., arco

Violin II: pizz., arco, pizz., arco

Viola: f, ff, mp, p

Cello/Double Bass: f, ff, mp, p

c (m 106-112)
 Più mosso (♩=138)

106

Violin I: arco, mf, pp

Violin II: arco, mf, p

Viola: arco, mf, p, pp

Cello/Double Bass: arco, mf, 3

109

Violin I: mf, Senza vibr., pp

Violin II: mf, Senza vibr., pp

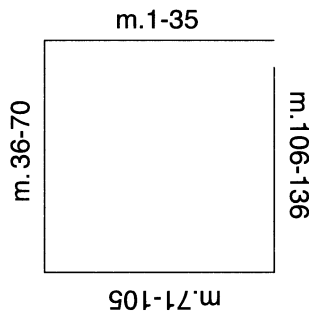
Viola: mf, Senza vibr., pp

Cello/Double Bass: p, arco, mf, pizz., mp

α and β close the circle: D_b (first note of α) - G (first note of β) - D_b (last tone of β). This is strongly reminiscent of the unaccompanied line at the beginning of *No. 1, Sonata for 2 pianos* from 1950-51. Thus, Goeyvaerts appears to close the circle of his oeuvre with this string quartet as well. After the complete measure of rest a fragment begins in m. 7 that may be not so much thematically, as structurally related to what came before: in mm. 7-8 the opening interval of segment α (the major second) is verticalised and expanded to a whole-tone scale, while m. 9 returns to the intervals of the segments β and γ (minor second, minor third). In m. 10-12 the two violins exactly repeat the pitch material of segment α in the same octave (but in a rhythmic form that recalls m. 8), while the viola emphasises pitch A , the only chromatic note that was still missing. We can conclude from this concise analytic description that the pitch material (intervals and absolute pitches) of an in itself unstable 'theme' is resumed in the further course of the piece. However, this resumption is particularly fragmentary and because of the great differences as regards articulation, timbre, dynamics, rhythm and contour, it can be seen as a transformation of structural characteristics, as a structural variant, rather than as a 'varied repetition of the theme'. Further on, however, distinct, varied repetitions do occur (Example 13: m. 36-43, m. 71-79 and m. 106-112).

These repetitions have the same relation to each other as the opposite sides of a square: in m. 1f and m. 71f the 'theme' is presented as a solo, and the repetition in m. 106f is the exact inversion of the repetition in m. 36f. The proportionality of all of this is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Proportionality of repetitions in *Voor Strijkkwartet*.



To explain the fact that the last 'side' of the square (m. 106-136) is the only one that does not consist of 35 measures, the hypothesis that the surface of a square can never be the same as the surface of a circle, can be formulated: the quadrature of the circle (the title of this movement) is indeed impossible without the contraction of one of the sides of the square. That the four 'sides' have exactly identical sections also suggests a careful planning of the temporal proportions: 6 (5+1) - 9 (8+1) - 4 (3+1) - 16. The indication (5+1) means that the section consists of 5 measures with sound, followed by 1 measure of rest. It has been mentioned above that each section is a 'struc-

tural variant' of the 'theme'. In addition, the last section of each 'side' turns out to be a variant of the previous three sections, each time omitting the measure of rest (5+8+3=16).

A static design, according to the geometric principles mentioned in the title, can also be found in movements II and III of this string quartet. This makes this music in an exceptional way equally 'frozen' as architecture (to paraphrase August Wilhelm Schlegel).

The *Kringloop* (Cycle) of movement II is, for instance, realised by circular interval structures: for the accompanying figure this is a descending whole-tone progression (bass note $F\sharp$, m. 1; E , m. 8; D , m. 21 until the circle is closed on $F\sharp$, m. 56), and for the 'theme' this is an ascending progression of perfect fifths (A_b , m. 3; E_b , m. 10; (B , m. 38); F , m. 41; C , m. 58). As the progressions contain lacunas, this *Kringloop* is *met opwellingen* (with impulses).

These underlying, proportional relations form the essence of a composition such as *Voor strijkkwartet*. Processes on the surface, however, are broken off abruptly. This music constantly comes to a halt, which is what makes it so obstinate. Goeyvaerts was clearly concerned with balances that spread out over the whole work. *Voor strijkkwartet* is a construction of sounds, the meaning of which is revealed by the piece as a whole, rather than by a superficial linear narrative of 'themes' or figures. Structural relationship and pure proportions come in place of a teleological musical discourse. Thus the aesthetic programme he formulated in a letter to Stockhausen in 1953,¹⁵ still fully applies to Goeyvaerts' last completed composition: 'The significance of this principle is, that it suggests an organisation of space and time that is purely static, without developing a specific form'. (see footnote 2 for complete quotation.)

LOUIS ANDRIESSEN: CONCEPTUAL MINIMALISM

If it was unlikely that Karel Goeyvaerts would get involved in minimal music because of his relation with serialism, then the same applies to Louis Andriessen. As he was born into a musical family, Andriessen was immersed in the classical tradition from a young age. For his father, the composer Hendrik Andriessen, French music was more of an important model than German Romanticism. Louis Andriessen had a formal music education with Kees Van Baaren, the first dodecaphonic composer in the Netherlands. He completed his studies in Italy with Luciano Berio from 1962 to 1965, which brought about a further connection with the aesthetics of the avant-garde and the aesthetics of Darmstadt in particular. It was also in this period that he visited Darmstadt for the first time (1963).¹⁶

Apart from the fact that Andriessen belonged to a younger generation than Goeyvaerts and the other members of the Darmstadt generation, he assimilated entirely different influences in this period as well, which makes his step towards minimal music seem less radical. As a teenager Andriessen was a passionate jazz lover. His favourites were the big band music of Stan Kenton, and the bebop of Miles Davis,

Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. The electrifying energy of Parker's saxophone playing (that would later be the incentive for his string quartet *Facing Death*) and the brass-dominated sonority of a big band (which is so recognisable in *De Staat* or *De Stijl*) form a musical atmosphere that contrasts with the classical and avant-garde aesthetics he got to know through his classical education.

After a much-discussed and extensively documented period in which his social-political involvement was the leading force behind his compositional activities (with as key work the 'opera' *Reconstruction*),¹⁷ Andriessen from 1971 started to assimilate elements of minimal music into his music. His reception of minimal music occurred in the first place from a political point of view, rather than from an aesthetic motivation:¹⁸

In the 1970s, I accepted minimalism as an important influence on myself; I included it in my musical development for political reasons. We were very active in protests against the Vietnam war; our activities were filled with the same intensity, craziness and anger as they were in America, even though the Americans were much closer to it, for it was their war. [...] All those things came together with the jazz influence and the avant-garde experiments.

The underlying political dimension has two aspects: in the first place, the influences of jazz and avant-garde, however different, were both emanations of a counter-culture that went against the established values which the left wing anti-establishment considered imperialist. The integration of minimal music of all things was only natural, as the roots of this music lie in both jazz and avant-garde experiments. Secondly, it was possible to interpret Terry Riley's *In C* politically.¹⁹ In this piece Riley acknowledged a non-hierarchical way of playing, in which all participating musicians have a significant individual freedom of choice, and in which they all contribute equally to the collective result. In number the truly minimalist compositions by Louis Andriessen are few. They are mainly works composed between 1971 and 1980, and even then during that period he also wrote works with few minimalist characteristics. Although minimal music is an important component of Andriessen's personal style, it would be wrong to identify his music with it entirely. Nevertheless, all strictly minimalist compositions do lie within this scope: *Volkslied* (Folk-song, 1971), *De Volharding* (Perseverance, 1972), *Workers Union* (1974), *De Staat* (The Republic, 1972-76), *Hoketus* (Hocket, 1976), *Symfonie voor losse snaren* (Symphony for Open Strings, 1978), *Mausoleum* (1979) and *De Tijd* (Time, 1980-81). Of these pieces *De Volharding*, *Hoketus* and *De Staat* are considered prototypes of Louis Andriessen's minimalist style.

De Volharding and *Hoketus* are exemplary works in Andriessen's minimalist oeuvre because of, on the one hand, the rigour of their minimalist points of departure and, on the other, their particular genesis. Both works lay at the basis of an ensemble

named after them, co-founded by the composer. De Volharding was founded in 1972 when jazz musicians and musicians with a classical training got together. The incentive was both musical (a way of making music and creating a musical feeling that was as much rooted in the drive of jazz and other 'light' music, as in the radicalism of the avant-garde) and political. The non-hierarchical way the group worked, served as a model for a radical left wing political awareness, corresponding with the prevailing attitude of that period. In this respect the idea behind this ensemble was very similar to the one that gave birth to the Scratch Orchestra in Great Britain. The musicians founding De Volharding themselves was also an act of protest against the musical 'establishment': the orchestras, ensembles and opera houses where the music of this young generation was not really welcome. Hoketus was brought about by a minimal music project with students from the Conservatory of The Hague. Also in this case the ensemble that was formed continued to exist, from 1976 to 1986, performing music that was specifically written for it. This repertory was much broader than the eponymous composition by Louis Andriessen that brought the ensemble into being.²⁰

When comparing the way the minimalist compositions by Andriessen are worked out to the American examples that inspired his minimalist style, remarkable differences can be found in the development of the musical material and in the use of harmony. Both aspects will be discussed here in turn. We will explain the differences through the musical content of the compositions in question, and through both the aesthetic and extra-musical motivations of the composer.

The earliest minimalist works by Louis Andriessen adopt the radicalism of the American point of departure. In *De Volharding* a strict reduction of the musical material is combined with very gradual additive processes. As is the case with Reich and Glass, the mechanism according to which the composition develops, is clearly audible. *De Volharding* consists of two clearly distinct parts: a piano solo in a *moto perpetuo* of demi-semiquavers, and a part for the entire ensemble (three trumpets, three saxophones, three trombones and one piano) in which entwined, short repetitive motives build up slowly evolving sound fields.

The extensive piano solo at the beginning of the composition, is built up according to a very straightforward additive process. In this process motives not only grow, shrink and regroup into new motives, but the pitch material is also consequently extended from the two notes *E* and *F* to the set of five notes *C, D, E, F* and *G* (in unit 10). This is followed by a fast reduction until only *C* remains, on which the new set *G, B, C, E* is constructed. This leads to the entry of the wind instruments that do-

Example 14. Louis Andriessen, *De Volharding* (© 1972 Donemus/MGN; used by permission).

♩ = 66 (♩♩ = 132)

nooit dim.

Pianosolo* *f* *geen Ped.*

* elektrisch versterkt of elektrische piano

± 10 ×

Steeds geleidelijk veranderen met minimaal merkbare overgangen via de aangegeven structuren

± 6 ×

Aantal maal herhalen: ad lib.

Pf

Pf

4 3 2

Pf

etc. alle geleidelijke overgangen stap voor stap

etc. via etc. naar:

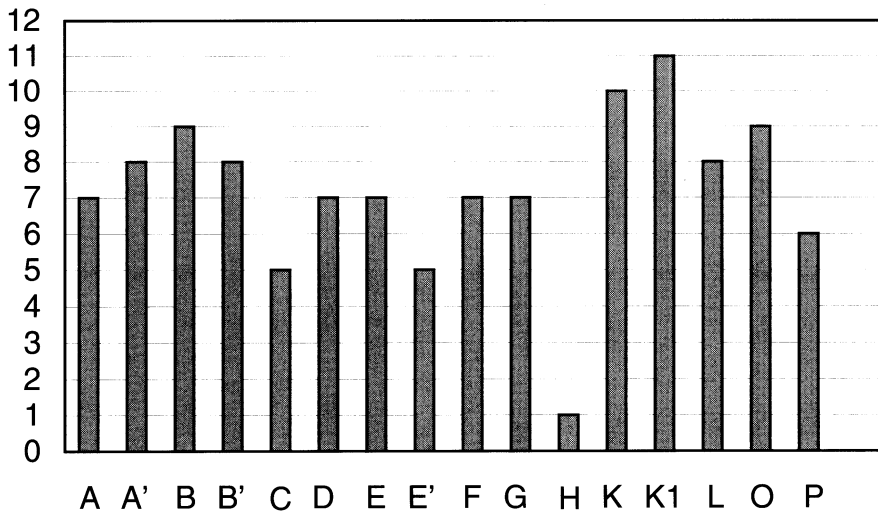
Pf

minate the second part of the composition. The score indicates that this clear process of the piano solo lasts ‘8 to 12 minutes or even longer’. Considering the unchanged loud dynamics, the reduction to one note value, the limited diatonic supply of pitches, and of course the additive process, this does not differ in any way from American examples such as *Two Pages* (1968) by Philip Glass (Example 14).

In the second part of *De Volharding* Andriessen uses a greater diversity. There are three types of segments that alternate in a non-systematic way: a static sound field that mostly consists of canonic motives (which resembles Terry Riley’s compositions most), segments in which a gradual process of transformation is carried out (like in the piano solo) and segments towards the end, in which all the instruments play in unison (Example 15).

Although the use of compositional techniques may still suggest a tribute to the American minimalists (the relationship of the second part with Riley’s *In C* is obvious), Andriessen’s treatment of the harmony offers a very different approach. The first part of *De Volharding*, the piano solo, nevertheless contains the minimalist diatonicism propagated by American composers. The selection of pitches shows a gradual increase from 2 to 5 pitches, and then from 1 to 4 pitches. This is a form of diatonicism that clearly stays under the maximum of 7 pitches that a diatonic element can contain.²¹ However, this harmonic concept completely changes from the entry of the wind instruments. The diagram in Figure 4 shows the number of different pitch classes per segment in the second part.

Figure 4. Number of different pitch classes per segment in the second part of *De Volharding*.



Although Andriessen does not present the complete chromatic range of 12 tones anywhere, it becomes clear that, after the subdiatonic first part, an evolution from predominately diatonic to predominately chromatic takes place in part 2 of *De Volharding*. The turning-point is in section K, which follows as a contrast to the unison on C of section H. Just like the passage with only a repeated C in unit 12 of the first part marks the transition from the first additive process (in which the set C, D, E, F, G was constructed and then deconstructed) to the second additive process (in which the set G, B, C, E is constructed), section H marks the transition from the first phase, characterised by a more diatonic harmony, to the second phase with a predominantly chromatic character. In both parts the unison on C provides a structural demarcation and thus a parallel between two musically very different parts. That these remarkable caesuras occur in unison on the note C of all notes, can be seen as an implicit reference to Riley's *In C* in which C acts as a key tone.

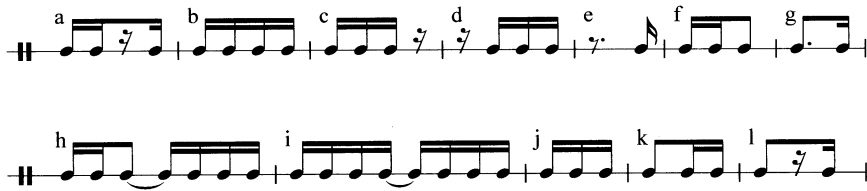
The systematism of the transformative processes, so characteristic for minimal music, which predominates in *De Volharding* and which would later also be a dominant factor in *Hoketus*, is absent in *Workers Union*, the third major work that Andriessen composed for De Volharding. The static character, the imperative to play loud, dissonantly and aggressively, and the adherence to continuous transformations of concise, rhythmically profiled motives show the piece to be a continuation of *De Volharding* and *De Staat*. Thus *Workers Union* contains a number of the essential characteristics that would continue to characterise Andriessen's later style. However, *Workers Union* is different from its neighbours because of its incorporation of indeterminacy as an essential element. This indeterminacy results from an approximate diastematic notation. The musicians ('any loud sounding group of instruments') play the same part together, but they may each determine the precise notes they play, taking into account the instructions of the composer that they should 'not play scales or conventional figures' and that they should 'make the piece sound dissonant, chromatic and often: aggressive'. A central line suggests the middle register of the instrument. The position of the notes in relation to each other suggests the direction and size of the intervals (Example 16).

Example 16. Louis Andriessen, *Workers Union* (© 1977 Donemus/MGN; used by permission).



For the greater part of the composition all performers are supposed to play the same part together. This results in what could be described as a rhythmic unison. Nevertheless, now and then short passages that have been notated for two parts for which the ensemble must split into two equal halves, break through this principle. But even in these passages the tension between the collectively performed rhythms and the individually chosen pitches results in a character that hardly differs from the real 'one-part' rhythmic unison. Therefore it is no wonder that the compositional technique almost entirely focuses on the rhythmical aspect. *Workers Union* is based on an obstinate rhythm in semiquavers, that now and again changes into triplets of quavers (see Example 16) and very occasionally into longer note values, most notably at the end of the piece. Andriessen shapes the flow of semiquavers by using a number of fixed rhythmic patterns based on quavers, which he can use as building blocks in numerous ways. Example 17 gives an overview of the different rhythmic patterns based on semiquavers which occur in *Workers Union*. Of these rhythmic models the patterns a, b and c occur most frequently by far; the other patterns are introduced more sporadically, breaking through the uniformity of its character. The construction, using these building blocks, does on a small scale manifest a systematic process, in which a new unit can be derived from the previous unit by means of additive processes, mirroring, elimination etc. Such continuity in the development of the material is, however, restricted to a very local level. There is no systematic development of these basic elements over a longer time-span. In this sense the work does not comply with the convention of gradual, straightforward transformation which distinguishes minimal music.

Example 17. Overview of the different rhythmic patterns based on semiquavers which occur in *Workers Union*.



The analysis of Maja Trochimczyk, who believes *Workers Union* to have of all things a classical sonata form with an exposition, development and recapitulation,²² seems difficult to defend in a work in which the melodic and harmonic material is undetermined. A sonata form suggests a differentiation of the material, a contrast between the exposition/recapitulation and the development, and in the classical/romantic tradition especially a harmonically conceived evolution, sustained by a process of modulations. A fundamental characteristic of a recapitulation in the traditional sonata form is the aspect 'double return': the simultaneous return of the first theme and the

initial tonality of the exposition. A look at the score of *Workers Union* clearly shows that such a double return is out of the question. In a composition in which the material is formed in a rhythmic and agogic way, but in which the harmonic and thematic aspects are undetermined, it is problematical to look for an analogy with the sonata form to begin with. Even then the score shows that the agogic/melodic design at the beginning of the so-called 'recapitulation' is essentially different from the beginning of the 'exposition', and the 'recapitulation' is by no means identical to the 'exposition' as regards rhythm either. Naturally numerous similarities and relationships can be found throughout the work as a result of the continuity of the basic rhythmic cells. In this way common elements can be found in Trochimczyk's 'exposition' and 'recapitulation'. However, given the reductive slant of this music such a consistency of the material need not be a surprise. Apart from the fact that the analysis provides few valid arguments to support Trochimczyk's hypothesis, the relevance of an attempt to link this music to the sonata form is highly questionable.

The reductive approach to the musical material, with its flux of semiquavers which are presented in an ever changing configuration of a limited number of building blocks, however, does indicate a fundamental connection with minimalism. This is actually confirmed by the importance of repetitiveness: *Workers Union* contains 73 units, which may be repeated at will, that are connected by 35 passages that are not repeated, varying in length from a short transition of 1 measure to a long non-repetitive episode of 28 measures. Instead of the coherence of gradual transformation, the composer prefers a continuous variation, even though this variation is based on limited basic material.

In *De Staat* (1972-76), a composition which is often considered his best-known minimal music-related work and the composition with which he gained his international reputation, Andriessen does pursue the course of increasing musical diversification which was already noticeable in the second part of *De Volharding*. While in *De Volharding* three types of segments could be distinguished which were closely related, *De Staat* contains at least about ten thematic elements which appear in the various segments. In sum, *De Staat* contains different types of material, including a hoquet, ostinatos in arpeggio patterns which form the basis of a slower melody, capricious tutti unisons, canonically inspired counterpoint, rhythmically unstable transitional passages and regularly pulsating passages. Figure 5 shows how eleven different types of material are distributed over the work. However, in *De Staat* a truly additive setting with a comprehensible process of development is an exception: such a construction process only occurs at number 30 (m. 567-579), even though only the texture is gradually expanded and not the material itself – yet this is the only 'purely' minimalist passage that continues the logical process of *De Volharding* (Example 18).

573

Ob. 1,2
C.A. 1,2
Tr. 1,2
Tr. 3,4
Hn. 1
Hn. 2
Hn. 3
Hn. 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tbn. 3
Tbn. 4
Guit. 1
Guit. 2
B.Guit.
Harp 1
Harp 2
Fem. v.
Pno 1
Pno 2
Via 1,2
Via 3,4

4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 6x

f non stacc. *ff*

f non stacc. *ff*

f non stacc. *ff*

f non stacc. *ff*

f non stacc. *ff*

4x last time only 4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 6x

f non stacc. *ff*

f non stacc. *ff*

last time only *f* *ff*

last time only *f* *ff*

4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 4x 6x

f *ff*

via 1: only last time via 2, 3, 4: enter successively *f* *ff*

Figure 5. Types of material in *De Staat*.

	Measures	Length	Material type
1	1-67	67	a
2	68-104	37	a
3	105-164	60	b
4	165-182	18	b
5	183-200	18	b
6	201-263	63	c
7	264-274	11	d
8	275-321	47	e
9	322-336	15	f
10	337-348	23	a
11	349-357	9	g
12	358-402	45	b
13	403-408	6	g
14	409-491	83	b
15	492-498	7	g
16	499-515	17	d
17	516-522	7	f
18	523-533	11	e
19	534-558	25	a/g
20	559-579	74	h
21	580-667	88	i
22	668-724	57	j/i
23	725-790	66	j/i
24	791-822	36	f
25	823-834	12	d
26	835-866	32	i/g
27	867-888	22	d
28	889-922	34	k
29	923-950	28	j/b
30	951-998	48	a

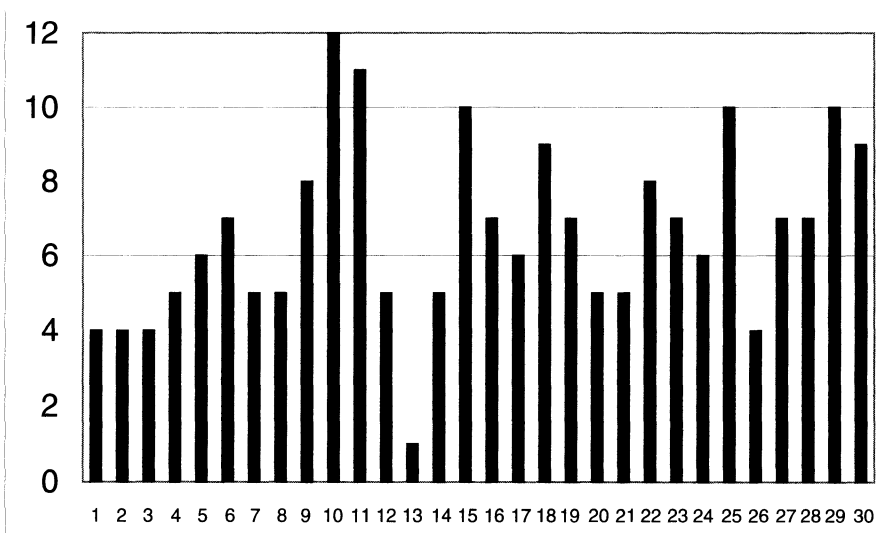
- a Freely evolving counterpoint, at times canonic or quasi-canonic
- b Fast ostinatos with melody in long note values
- c Same as b, but melody in minims and characteristic harmony in parallel seconds
- d Rhythmic unison
- e Unison
- f Two-note ostinato
- g 'Strutting', rhythmically irregular transitional fragment
- h Additive repetitive process

- i Slightly irregular rhythmic pattern; diatonic melody in unison
- j Steady crotchet rhythm with parallel seconds as in c; climactic
- k Similar to i, but as hocket

The at times harsh juxtaposition of segments with a different character in *De Staat* provides a musical model that does take over particular archetypal minimalist compositional elements (for example the static arpeggios with a melody on top refer to Glass, the canonic sound fields at the beginning of the work are audibly related to Riley), but that breaks away from the rule of unity which until then prevailed in minimal music. Unity of the musical material (Reich, Glass and Young), or at least of the texture (Riley) is primordial in minimal music. Andriessen's choice to seek a certain degree of heterogeneity can be associated with his interest in the work of Igor Stravinsky.²³ The juxtaposition of sections does indeed resemble the brusque editing of material in works such as *Le Sacre du Printemps* or *Symphonies d'instruments à vent*. As a matter of fact *De Staat* resembles the latter work in a number of ways: the extensive use of wind instruments, the continuous juxtaposition of a limited number of motives and above all the importance of the chorale. In this respect *De Staat* can be considered a synthesis of post-Stravinsky European modernism and American minimalism. Andriessen's approach to harmony appears to support this thesis.

Like in *De Volharding*, an overview of the use of pitch in *De Staat* shows a great diversity, ranging from sets of four and five notes in traditional diatonic modes, to predominately chromatic and even completely chromatic segments. The complete chromatic range is only reached once in this work, at number 19 where the whole range occurs conform the minimalist principles in a static sound field and not in a

Figure 6. Diagram of the harmonic contents of *De Staat*.



Example 19. Louis Andriessen, *De Staat* (© 1994 Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd.; used by permission).

The image displays a musical score for Example 19, starting at measure 19. The score is organized into three systems. The first system includes parts for Oboe 1 & 2 (Ob. 1.2, Ob. 3.4), Trumpet 1 & 2 (Tr. 1.2, Tr. 3.4), Horn 1 & 2 (Hn. 1.2, Hn. 3.4), Bassoon 1 & 2 (bne 1.2, bne 3.4), Guitar 1 & 2 (Guit. 1, Guit. 2), Bass Guitar (B.Guit.), Harp 1 & 2 (Harp 1, Harp 2), and Violin 1 & 2 (Vla. 1.2, Vla. 3.4). The second system includes parts for PIANO 1 & 2 (Pno 1, Pno 2). The third system includes parts for PIANO 1 & 2 (Pno 1, Pno 2). The score features a variety of musical notations, including dynamics such as *ff stacc.*, *simile*, *piu ff stacc.*, and *martellato*. The time signature is 6/16. The score is marked with measure numbers 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

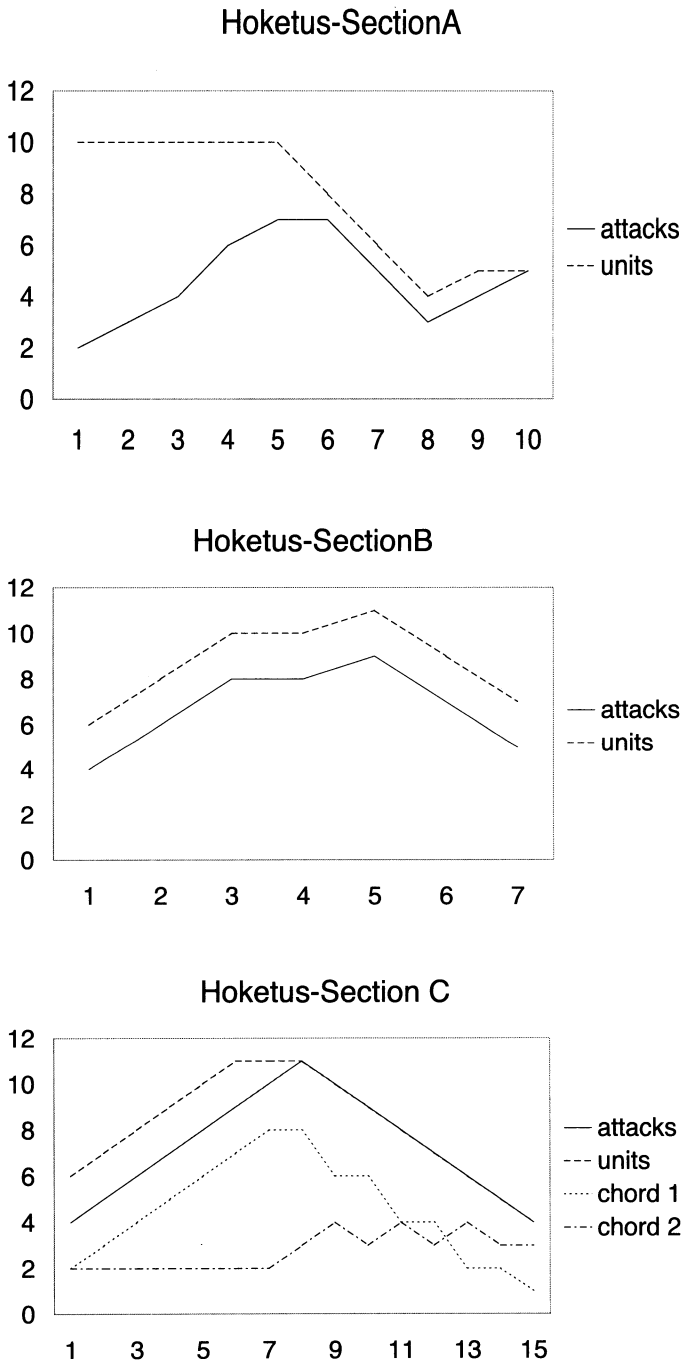
dynamic development (Example 19). Like *De Volharding*, *De Staat* contains a transitional passage in which only one pitch class occurs. The discontinuity of the composition also becomes apparent from the diagram of the harmonic contents (Figure 6).

In *De Volharding* Andriessen showed a clear tendency to evolve from slightly sub-diatonic to highly chromatic. However, the harmonic development of *De Staat* is much more varied. All degrees from very limited note material to complete chromaticism occur and can be clearly distinguished, but they are not ordered in one straightforward, let alone in one linear, progression. Most remarkable is the passage from measures 275–498 (segments 8 to 15), where the pitch content quickly increases from 5 notes, via 8 notes, to 12 notes, and then jumps from 11 to 5 notes, decreases to the transitional passage on one note and then immediately increases again via 5 to 10 pitch classes. This is the first time a chromatic segment can be heard in *De Staat*, which is immediately emphasised by a fast alternation of segments with very heterogeneously constructed pitch material.

Strangely enough a strict application of straightforward transformative processes does occur in *Hoketus* (1978), which was composed some years after *Workers Union* and *De Staat*. *Hoketus* is based on the principle of the medieval hocket in which two instrumental groups (scored as identical ensembles of panpipes, bass guitar, piano, electric piano and congas) continually alternate. The composition is constructed in five parts. In the first four parts the two groups alternate chords, following the pattern: one chord (with melodic variants) for both groups (part A), each group with its own chord (part B), two chords played by both groups (part C) and again one chord played by both groups (part D). Part D is actually a kind of short ostinato in which the chord is presented *fortissimo* in a constant pulsation (although the pulsation is performed as a hocket). This in fact acts as a transitional passage to part E, which contains a unison melody that is performed as a hocket. The design of the composition is very purposeful,²⁴ with the historical hocket (a melodic line which is performed in a fragmented way) right at the end and the other parts building up to this, as becomes apparent from the harmonic acceleration of parts A to C. The development of the tessitura of the composition also indicates that the first four parts were conceived as a progression. Especially the voice-leading of the highest notes suggests a continuous, coherent evolution. Despite the limited pitch material, the harmony of *Hoketus* is chromatic and highly dissonant of character. In this composition the sets of five or six tones have been constructed far more chromatically than those in *De Volharding*, or than the sets with a similar range in *De Staat* that openly refer to Greek modes. In the latter case the relationship with music from Greek antiquity, via Plato, is not as unequivocal as one would expect. Andriessen himself indicated that the mode on which the first choral piece of *De Staat* is based (*D - E - G# - A*), is in actual fact of Indonesian origin: the gamelan mode²⁵ from Yogyakarta on the island Java.²⁶

Apart from the static part D and the, on the whole, melodically conceived part E, all the parts of *Hoketus* have been worked out according to a rigid, systematic process. These processes are either construction/reduction processes, or additive processes, resulting in an overall increase of density. The schematic overviews of parts A to C of *Hoketus* show the density per unit, always giving the length of the unit (expressed

Figure 7. Density in parts A-C of *Hoketus*.



in quavers) and the number of beats per unit on which an aggregate is played (see Figure 7).²⁷ In part A there is a gradual increase in the density while the units have a constant length, then there is a reduction of the units and one expansion in unit 9, following the additive principle. Part A ends with another small-scale construction, so that at the end of the part a maximal saturation is reached.

The different processes that determine the length of the units and the number of attacks per unit in part A, are replaced in part B by a single transparent process of increasing and decreasing the length of the units only. Here the number of attacks is proportionally related – expressed by the parallel lines in the diagram. Part C starts with a process that is similar to that of the previous part. However, in unit 8 the number of attacks is increased, so a point of saturation is reached that lasts until the end of the part, whereas the units themselves become shorter and shorter. The two bottom lines of the diagram show how the two different chords that are played by both ensembles in this part, are distributed over the total number of attacks. The obvious evolution of the density curve is thus somewhat counterbalanced by the more variable development of the number of each of the two chords.

The treatment of density is very straightforward, and therefore also predictable throughout *Hoketus*, especially in part B. Such a straightforward use of construction/reduction processes is very unlike the procedures American minimal music composers use. Indeed, in similar works by Steve Reich, and by Karel Goeyvaerts as well, a much more complex way of dealing with density can be observed.²⁸ As will be discussed later on, Andriessen obviously wanted to highlight other aspects than the almost trivial systematisation of the density process in *Hoketus*.

As regards the influence of American minimal music on Louis Andriessen's work, three stages can be distinguished. The first and most obvious stage is the borrowing of compositional techniques, as we have clearly indicated in the case of *Hoketus* and *De Volharding*. The second stage is the integration of a minimalist-oriented vocabulary as a conceptual means, and not as a goal in itself. The last stage is the post-minimalist phase, in analogy with the evolution the first American minimalists underwent from the 1980s, in which a musical language is created that in style and writing bears traces of minimalism, but that has exchanged the consistency and the radicalism of the original style for a freer, less dogmatic interpretation.

In this respect, the key work in which the step from the first to the second stage becomes evident, is *De Staat*. If the dissonant, obstinate language of *Hoketus* was just as much a criticism on American minimalism as an exponent of it, then this applies even more so to *De Staat*. With its big orchestra and its hammering intensity, this work is a far cry from the subtle sweetness of Riley and Glass.²⁹ Within each section of the work a repetitive character, as well as a distinctly reductive setting are guaranteed. However, over the piece as a whole the discontinuity of *De Staat* goes much further than what was until then the case in works by American composers. The break with the convention of having a high degree of homogeneity in minimal mu-

sic, remains significant. Furthermore, *De Staat* (as opposed to *De Volharding* and *Hocketus*) very explicitly has an extra-musical subject: (musical) criticism on the restrictive treatment of music which Plato propagates in his book with the same title (*Politeia*).

The inclusion of an extra-musical element which is even the point of departure of the work, is in keeping with a principle that already existed. The point of departure of *Volkslied*, for example, is the *Wilhelmus* (the Dutch national anthem), which is transformed note by note into the melody of *The Internationale* (the socialist anthem). On the one hand, this process is closely related to minimal music, especially in the way a process of substitution is gradually carried through note by note. However, the charged associations that accompany this not so innocent modification of the Dutch national anthem, lead to an entirely different interpretation. Above all *Volkslied* is a concept in which the associations with a specific melody (which represents an extra-musical idea) that seamlessly metamorphoses into a melody representing almost the opposite idea, prevail.

In a similar way abstract compositional principles have gradually been replaced by the exploitation of contents. The straightforwardness and conciseness of *De Volharding* and *Hocketus* have been substituted by the contrasting segments of *De Staat*, or by the non-systematic method of *Workers Union*. Together with this shift in compositional technique, the growing importance of an extra-musical content becomes clear. After *De Staat* and *Volkslied*, *Mausoleum* also has a political subject. The monumental compositions *De Tijd* and the opera *De Materie* (Matter) present topics which could be called transcendent: time and eternity and the relation between spirit and matter respectively. These two works are at the same time also the last compositions in which Louis Andriessen stylistically kept to minimal music.

However, this turn to an extra-musical subject was not new. We have mentioned above how Andriessen's ensemble *De Volharding* was founded in the context of a social-political protest movement. We can even say that *Hocketus* – which in many respects is the most unambiguous minimalist work, and the work that is most tributary to the American minimalists – is rather an exploration of the abstract idea of the hocket (with its aspects of space, identical sound complexes and the most schematically represented form of dialogue), than of the minimalist techniques that have been cast into this hocket form. The concept 'hocket' (*hoquetus*) is focussed on in this composition, which offers a possible explanation for the extreme transparency of the musical processes in parts A, B and C. While a composer like Steve Reich had an interest in making his process as transparent as possible (and therefore straightforward, logical, though not really predictable for the listener) in order to realise 'a musical process and a sounding music that are one and the same thing',³⁰ we may conclude that for Louis Andriessen the process was not an objective in itself, but rather a means to shape and structure the hocket. Hence the set-up throughout the five parts, in which harmonic movement between the immobile aggregates is built up at first in a gradually increasing density, which then culminates in a climax: the introduction in part E of real hocket in the music historical sense of the word. Furthermore, this set-

up emphasises the concept 'hocket' – the aspect of unity through diversity (fragmentation of the melody which is perceived as a unity). This is very similar to the concept of *Workers Union*, in which the instruments play an identical rhythm nearly all the time, although it only creates a pseudo-unison because the choice of pitch has not been determined. In these two compositions the abstract concept that refers to notions of collectivity and individuality, has been prominently worked out, in such a way that these aspects have become the essence of the composition. At the same time these works present the marked unison passages in *De Volharding* (not by coincidence towards the end of the piece) and in *De Staat* (in which there is also a hocket in a similar place, just before the end) in a different light: they embody archetypes of human communication and action.

In this respect, Andriessen's minimalism can be considered conceptual. It is true that he extensively borrowed *compositional techniques* from minimal music. However, the fundamental *attitude* that is put forward in minimal music – focussing exclusively on a single point of departure – has had a much more important influence on Andriessen's oeuvre. As Andriessen moved further and further away from a strict use of minimalist techniques (as early as *Workers Union* and *De Staat*), it becomes apparent that conceptual minimalism, the idea of one central musical concept based or not based on an extra-musical subject, predominates. The compositions from subsequent years, such as *De Tijd*, *De Snelheid* (Speed) and *De Materie*, even indicate in their titles which subject is explicitly worked out. Limitation of the material is not an aesthetic goal in itself ('less is more'), but a necessary discipline to achieve a clear realisation of a concept.

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND CONCLUSIONS

In Karel Goeyvaerts and Louis Andriessen the Low Countries have two composers of great reputation, who created a consistent corpus of compositions of a high quality. However, there are significant differences in the effect and the (international) influence of their respective minimalist oeuvres. In order to be able to answer the question that has been put forward in the introduction (to what extent is there a style of 'minimal music of the Low Countries' of which Goeyvaerts and Andriessen could be seen as epitomes?), the context in which both composers worked also needs to be taken into account.

In any case the position as a representative of minimal music of Andriessen in the Netherlands is very different from that of Goeyvaerts in Belgium. However strange it may seem for a composer who was so well-respected internationally and in his own country, Karel Goeyvaerts never in his career really acted as a role model for the younger generation. Even in the period in which he earned his fame – the short period in which his seven serial compositions initiated one of the most important evolutions in music in the twentieth century –, too little attention is usually paid to his

contribution and merit compared to that of the other Darmstadt composers. The fact that Goeysvaerts stopped composing for some time when it turned out that the ideals of serialism could not be realised, no doubt contributed to this. When Goeysvaerts took up composing again after that period of contemplation, he chose to take in a more or less peripheral position: he for one never was a composition teacher at a conservatory. The respect for his know-how and accomplishments which he enjoyed in the Belgian music scene therefore did not result in composition pupils searching for his advice, or in composers imitating him. However, Goeysvaerts *did* introduce the new music in Belgium: since his contribution to the genesis of serial and electronic music it has become natural for Belgian composers to be internationally oriented and to focus on recent developments. When Goeysvaerts started to compose minimal music, he did this in the expectation that his aesthetic ideals (interaction of constructive and metaphysical aims) could be just as well realised through repetitiveness and reduction, as through serial compositional techniques.

Not influenced by Goeysvaerts, but around the same period, the Belgian composer Frans Geysen (1936) also developed a minimalist way of writing. Geysen started to use repetitive settings and additive processes as early as 1967. As he pointed out himself in an article from 1974, he developed this style simultaneously with American minimal music, at first without being aware of its existence: 'When I worked on the text of *In de Spiegel* (In the Mirror) two years ago, I had already heard some vague reports about young American composers, of which the description of their work encouraged me, in the sense that there was a feeling of recognition between their aspirations and what I tried to describe as my goals'.³¹ According to Geysen his minimalism was created in isolation, without any American or other influences. Likewise Geysen's position in Flemish new music also remained rather isolated.

There is nothing that suggests any mutual influence between Goeysvaerts and Geysen, despite the fact that there is a remarkable resemblance in one of the aspects of their minimalist work: the metaphysical dimension that they both on some occasions associated with the paradigm of the litany. For Goeysvaerts the group of works of five *Litanieën* form the core of his minimal music production, while in the article quoted above Geysen explicitly connects the litany, or rather the memory of litanies, processions, rosaries and other Catholic rituals from his youth, with his obsession with repetitiveness in his minimalist works.³²

For Andriessen the inspiration for minimal music can be clearly placed in a social-political context. Merely because of the difference between spirituality (based on introspection) and political engagement (per definition concerned with society), it is understandable that, in contrast to Goeysvaerts, Louis Andriessen would become an active source of inspiration for a younger generation of composers.

The foundation of successively De Volharding and Hoketus was an extra stimulus. Contrary to the ensembles of the American minimalists (Young's Theatre of Eternal Music, Steve Reich and Musicians, Philip Glass Ensemble) these ensembles were closely connected with Andriessen,³³ but they were not solely dedicated to his

music. From the beginning De Volharding chose a varied repertory: the mixture of political protest music, jazz and classical music could hardly result in uniformity. In a text from 1972 Andriessen describes the way De Volharding works: his list of the young ensemble's repertory includes, besides *Volkslied* and *De Volharding*, arrangements of Darius Mihaud's *La création du monde*, Hanns Eisler's *Solidariteitslied* and the hymn of the liberation front of South Vietnam in an arrangement by Misha Mengelberg.³⁴ Since then the ensemble has built up an ever growing repertory of compositions especially written for it, mainly by Dutch composers, but also by composers from abroad (including Julia Wolfe, Steve Martland and Michael Finnissy).

The same applies to Hoketus, that in the beginning not only performed the work by Andriessen after which it was named, but also works by Cornelis de Bondt (*Bint*, 1980) and Diderik Wagenaar (*Tam-Tam*, 1978). Pay-Uun Hiu states: '[...] that Hoketus did not leave behind a large repertory during those ten years, but it was a very individual repertory in which the musical ideas of the group are clearly recognisable'.³⁵ According to Hiu the repertory of the group consists of 27 compositions. Seven of these are arrangements of existing works and four of these were created for a combination of the ensembles De Volharding and Hoketus (under the name Kaal-slag, for which Andriessen wrote *De Stijl*). This means that sixteen works were written specifically for Hoketus.

Besides the fact that some composers who wrote for Hoketus or De Volharding, were pupils of Andriessen (including Martijn Padding, Diderik Wagenaar and Cornelis de Bondt), the influence of Andriessen's style that can be heard in such works, is also inspired by the ensemble for which they were written. De Volharding and Hoketus each have their own sound and their own character, which has to a great extent been determined by Andriessen's compositions after which they were named. The expectations that come with writing for these ensembles, mean that the characteristics which are particularly highlighted in Andriessen's compositions, are further explored by others as well.

As founder of ensembles and mentor of his composition students, Andriessen has had a broad influence on music life and on various generations of composers. This influence not only affected the Netherlands, but it also spread internationally as his composition class in The Hague attracted more and more foreign students, including Graham Fitkin, Steve Martland and Mary Finsterer. Since his appointment as a composition teacher at the Conservatory of The Hague, the identification with Louis Andriessen's style is often referred to as 'The Hague School', a 'school' which, besides Andriessen, would include among others Wagenaar and De Bondt. It cannot be denied that there is a certain aesthetic consistency in the work of these 'The Hague' composers. Foreign examples also make it absolutely clear that Louis Andriessen enjoys a following. In many respects Steve Martland refers to his teacher: the hard, aggressive sonority, the instrumentation in which wind instruments, the electric guitar and the bass guitar often play a prominent role, the use of the hocket technique and the radical political-social views are clear examples of this.

Andriessen's influence can also be found in a younger generation of composers, even in composers who did not study with him. Two examples – one international and one from the Low Countries – illustrate this. None of the three composers who are affiliated with the ensemble Bang on a Can as artistic director (Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe), studied with Andriessen, but they clearly mention his music as a source of inspiration. Especially with Gordon and Lang this connection is very manifest. The tough, yet energetic rhythm in Gordon's *Yo Shakespeare*, played loudly and without compromise, would not have been possible without the sound world of *De Staat* or the combination of energy and abstraction in *Hocketus*. The fact that the latter composition was an example also becomes apparent from David Lang's *Cheating, Lying, Stealing* in which the hocket technique plays a prominent role. Rather than following in the footsteps of the American minimalists, these New York composers have been influenced by Andriessen. Thus the minimal music aesthetics reached them via a detour, this time filtered, coloured and changed by Andriessen. Focussing on Andriessen's music offers them the possibility of combining modernist traits such as chromaticism, dissonance or the importance of rationally designed structures with the vernacular energy of jazz or pop music. The resulting combination is a cross between the academic compositional styles (classified in New York as 'uptown') and the spontaneity of the 'downtown' music scene. Bang on a Can refuses to choose between both (this applies to both the ensemble and the composers) and in this respect Andriessen certainly is a role model. It is no coincidence that the ensemble Bang on a Can has often performed and recorded Andriessen's music.

Another remarkable example of Andriessen's influence can be found in Belgium, where in the 1980s composers of approximately the same age as Gordon and Lang also set to work with techniques related to minimal music. The group Maximalist!, a collective of performers and composers including Eric Sleichim, Walter Hus, Peter Vermeersch and Thierry De Mey, was of course inspired by American composers (especially Steve Reich), but in an eclectic way, and avant-garde and rock influences were incorporated all the same. Strangely enough their work was different from that of Karel Goeyvaerts, who would have been the nearest and most obvious role model. However, there was a connection with Andriessen, especially in their most minimal music-like work: the music for the ballet *Rosas danst Rosas* (Rosas dances Rosas) by Anne-Teresa De Keersmaeker. The four parts of this work (composed by Thierry De Mey and Peter Vermeersch together), contain diverse elements and influences. Some parts are more reminiscent of Reich, but especially the final part, *Habanera*, resembles – once more – *Hocketus* in many ways. This influence of Andriessen on De Mey and Vermeersch is not based on personal contact, let alone that they studied with him. Taking into account the background and interests of the Maximalist! group this can, like with Bang on a Can, be explained by Andriessen's combination of elements from 'light' music and a general framework that is consistent, well-thought-out and formalistically sound.

Whether we look at the members of Maximalist!, the Hague School, Andriessen's foreign pupils, Frans Geysen, Karel Goeyvaerts or Louis Andriessen, it is clear that in the Low Countries the principles of minimal music found a fruitful place to develop without there being one homogeneous style. It is remarkable that the two most prominent composers – Goeyvaerts in Belgium and Andriessen in the Netherlands – arrived at minimal music from a serial background independently from each other. Yet this study has shown that their initial motivation to use repetitive and reductive techniques was different. Also the degree in which their minimalist style influenced others is very different. Last but not least the analyses show that some compositional techniques have been directly influenced by the first generation of American minimal music composers, but that there are great differences in the aesthetic goals and the practical realisation between both composers, as well as in relation to the American examples. To a certain extent 'the Hague School' has a communal style. However, because of the great differences with Goeyvaerts and Geysen it cannot be generalised into a specific minimal music style of the Low Countries.

Finally, the favourable response to minimal music in the Low Countries is not unique in Europe. In Great Britain contemporaries of Andriessen (Gavin Bryars, Michael Nyman and Howard Skempton) and of course Andriessen's students Martland and Fitkin developed their own recognisable assimilation of minimal music. Like the United Kingdom, the Low Countries did not have a very active modernist musical movement in the first half of the twentieth century and the establishment of new music after 1950 was also not as strong as in the German or French language areas, where various different institutions, from music publishers, festivals, broadcasting companies, orchestras and conservatories to research centres and electronic music studios contributed to the perpetuation of the impact of the Darmstadt generation. Without such an elaborate framework it is more difficult to enforce an aesthetic or stylistic expectation on composers. So when from the 1970s new impulses from American minimal music showed up in the Low Countries, composers had less problems joining in, even though they had personally stood at the beginning of serialism, or had studied with Luciano Berio.

Translation Hilary Staples

- * Although the co-authorship applies to the article as a whole, the first versions of the sections on Goeyvaerts and Andriessen were written by Mark Delaere and Maarten Beirens respectively. Diederik Verstraete, Jef Lysens, Elise Simoens and Henri Pousseur participated in the Goeyvaerts project that was financed by the Research Fund of the University of Leuven. The Andriessen project was financed by the National Bank of Belgium. All the works by Goeyvaerts that are quoted, are published by CeBeDeM (Brussels), with exception of *Litanie IV* (Paris, Salabert). They are available on CD on the label Megadisc: MDC 7872/73 (*Litanieën*), 7848 (piano music), 7845 (serial works), 7853 (string quar-

tets), 7829/30 (vocal-instrumental works), 7850/51 (*Aquarius*). Fragments of works by Karel Goeyvaerts are republished here with permission of the Belgian Centre for Music Documentation, Brussels (<http://www.cebedem.be>). No further republication or redistribution is permitted without the written consent of the Belgian Centre for Music Documentation.

The scores by Louis Andriessen are published by Boosey & Hawkes and Donemus. Of most of the compositions that are discussed, recordings on CD are available. *Hoketus* and *Mausoleum* (Composers' Voice CV 20), *De Staat* (Elektra Nonesuch 79251), *Workers Union* (New Albion NA CD 094), *De Volharding* (Composers' Voice KN 3).

- 1 'Paris-Darmstadt 1947-1956. Excerpt from the Autobiographical Portrait', in *RBM* 48 (1994; Goeyvaerts issue), 45.
- 2 'Als Prinzip scheint mir aber nur das gültig zu sein, was mit der Bewegungslosigkeit des Seins übereinstimmt. Nun höre, ich beschwöre Dich, versuche doch bitte, bitte zu begreifen was ich nur sehr schlecht auszudrücken vermag: Mein Prinzip stellt eine Reihe gleichförmiger Klänge vor, nur in Zeit und Raum proportional vergrößert und verkleinert. Dieses ist *als Prinzip* gedacht; die Klänge des Stückes erweitern sich von diesen Basisklängen in dem Masse, wo die zu bildende Struktur es verlangt. Das habe ich Dir mal früher geschrieben: Das Prinzip ist bewegungslos wie der absolute Geist, die Struktur stellt die Bewegung des lebenden Menschen dar. Also, die "gleichförmigen Klänge" sind alle Vergrößerungen und Verkleinerungen in Raum und Zeit einer selben Form (gleiche Zahl von Schwingungen, atmosphärischer Druck und Zeitdauer proportional vergrößert und verkleinert). Diese Vergrößerungen und Verkleinerungen aber bestehen nur in Funktion des "optischen Feldes" von Zeit und Raum. Sie haben keine absolute Existenz. Als absolute Existenz haben wir noch immer das äusserste (in der Natur) undenkbare Einmalige: die Einheit selbst. Die Bewegungslosigkeit des Seins wird nicht von diesen Vergrößerungen und Verkleinerungen entstellt. Das Bedeutungsvolle dieses Prinzips ist, *dass es, ohne eine bestimmte Form zu bilden, eine Einrichtung von Raum und Zeit vorschlägt, die rein statisch ist.*'

The correspondence can be found in the New Music Research Centre K. Goeyvaerts at the University of Leuven (PO box 33, B-3000 Leuven): 76 letters of Stockhausen and 7 letters of Goeyvaerts. Parts of some other letters of Goeyvaerts from this correspondence have recently been published in *Karlheinz Stockhausen bei den Internationalen Ferienkursen für Neue Musik 1951-1996. Dokumente und Briefe*, ed. I. Misch & M. Bandur (Kürten 2001).

- 3 For analytic studies on Goeyvaerts' serial music, see H. Sabbe, 'Goeyvaerts and the Beginnings of "Punctual" Serialism and Electronic Music', and P. Decroupet & E. Ungeheuer, 'Karel Goeyvaerts und die serielle Tonbandmusik', in *RBM* 48 (1994), 55-94 and 95-118 respectively, and M. Delaere, 'Auf der Suche nach serieller Stimmigkeit. Goeyvaerts' Weg zur Komposition Nr. 2 (1951)', in *Die Anfänge der seriellen Musik*, ed. O. Finnendahl (Hofheim 1999), 13-36.
- 4 H. Sabbe, 'Vom Serialismus zum Minimalismus. Der Werdegang eines Manierismus. Der Fall Goeyvaerts, "Minimalist avant la lettre"', in *Neuland. Ansätze zur Musik der Gegenwart, ein Jahrbuch* 3, ed. H. Henck (Köln 1982-83), 203-208.

- 5 The Roman numerals do not indicate scale degrees, but pitches.
- 6 H. Sabbe, 'Vom Serialismus zum Minimalismus'.
- 7 M. Beirens, 'Minimalist Techniques from a European Perspective. An Analysis of *Pour que les fruits mûrissent cet été* by Karel Goeyvaerts', in *RBM* 57 (2003), 129-143.
- 8 K. Goeyvaerts, *Een zelfportret* (Ghent 1988), 65.
- 9 For an analysis of Goeyvaerts' new tonality, see M. Delaere & J. D'hoë, 'Structural Aspects of New Tonality in Goeyvaerts' String Quartet "The Seven Seals"', in *RBM* 48 (1994), 133-150.
- 10 'Auf der Suche nach dem Ritus des Menschen. K. Goeyvaerts im Gespräch über Litanies I- V', in *MusikTexte. Zeitschrift für neue Musik* 6/2 (1984), 19.
- 11 See K. Goeyvaerts, 'Was aus Wörtern wird', in *Melos* 39 (1972), 159-162.
A German publication of all the theoretical texts, including the self-portrait, excerpts from the correspondence and programme notes is presently being prepared by Mark Delaere (autumn 2004, publisher MusikTexte).
- 12 Later Goeyvaerts would apply this technique in the finale of *Aquarius* (1993), and also in the satellite works he wrote in preparation of this final scene (*De Heilige Stad*, 1986; *De Zeven Zegels*, 1986; ... *want de Tijd is nabij*, 1989).
- 13 For a full analysis of the compositional technique and performance practice of this work, see C. Wauters, M. Delaere & J. Lysens, 'Karel Goeyvaerts' *Litanie V* for Harpsichord and Tape or Several Harpsichords', in *Contemporary Music Review* 19/4 (2000), 115-127.
- 14 In the published score the titles of the movements are translated as follows: I, The Squaring of the Circle, II, Flushing Orbit and III, Polygon with Circle Trend.
- 15 See footnote no. 2.
- 16 L. Andriessen, *Gestolen Tijd*, ed. M. Zegers (Amsterdam 2002), 110-114.
- 17 See J. Vogelaar, 'Correspondentie', in *De Slag van Andriessen*, ed. F. van der Waa (Amsterdam 1993), 111-130.
- 18 Interview in: M. Trochimczyk, *The Music of Louis Andriessen* (New York-London 2002), 20.
- 19 The exemplary work that was considered a breakthrough as well as an orientation point in early minimal music.
- 20 P.-U. Hiu, 'De Haagse Hik', in *De Slag van Andriessen*, 72-87.
- 21 Both Glass' *Two Pages* (1968) and Reich's *Piano Phase* (1967) are completely built up out of a collection of only five pitches.
- 22 Trochimczyk, *The Music of Louis Andriessen*, 95-98. According to her the exposition is from letter A to M, the development from N to Z and the recapitulation from A' to H'.
- 23 Andriessen wrote a book on Stravinsky with Elmer Schönberger. L. Andriessen & E. Schönberger, *Het Apollinisch uurwerk. Over Stravinsky* (Amsterdam 1983).
- 24 How stringently the construction process of *Hoketus* was carried out, becomes apparent from Herman Sabbe's analysis of the work, in which he is even able to find a mistake when the process of construction in part C varies slightly from the mathematical consistency. (H. Sabbe, 'Pulsierende gegen geronnene Zeit. Stenogramm einer Analyse von Andriessens "Hoketus"', in *MusikTexte* 2/9 (April 1985), 22-24.

- 25 It is supposedly part of the pelog scale.
- 26 Trochimczyk, *The Music of Louis Andriessen*, 102.
- 27 Each aggregate lasts one quaver, which is the only note value in the entire piece, with the exception of mm. 114–115 in part E.
- 28 M. Beirens, 'De Banaliteit voorbij. Enkele bedenkingen bij analytische strategieën voor minimal music', in *Tijdschrift voor Muziektheorie/Dutch Journal for Music Theory* 8/3 (2003), 227–238.
- 29 Steve Reich's work from the 1980s, as well as John Adams' music from that period, do have links with Andriessen's approach, however. It must be said though that the influence may well be the other way round.
- 30 S. Reich, *Writings on Music 1965-2000*, ed. P. Hillier (Oxford-New York 2002), 34–36.
- 31 F. Geysen, 'Eigen compositorische bevindingen in vergelijking met het werk van de jonge Amerikaanse school', in *Adem* 10/1 (1974), 24–30.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 28.
- 33 As a pianist Andriessen was at first a member of De Volharding.
- 34 L. Andriessen, 'Beknopte geschiedenis van De Volharding', in *Gestolen tijd*, 124–132.
- 35 Hiu, 'De Haagse Hik', 82.