

Stasis Kollektiv (2011/2026)
for 23 soloists in several spaces

Stasis Kollektiv is an extended and larger version of the original collage *Stasis* (2011) and was written especially for the special instrumental ensemble Ensemble Kollektiv for first performance at the Akademie der Künste at Pariserplatz in Berlin.

Stasis Kollektiv is the largest work in a series of compositions which explore both the specialisation of several musicians, and the formal juxtaposition and collage of separate chamber pieces.

The 23 musicians are divided into chamber groups, of varying constellations, placed vertically and horizontally within, and at times outside, the performance space.

Each separately composed module explores a specific and tightly controlled timbral palette. Several musical threads are formally juxtaposed, creating a complex polyphonic fabric of sound surfaces, a sonic sculpture or mobile, projected into the performance space.

This is conceived as a form of abstract music theatre, whereby the musicians are protagonists co-existing in a shared musical environment or sonic landscape.

Stasis explores the framing of sound with silence, of „stillness“ imagined - silence being an endless potential, waiting to be revealed and made audible. The act of composing being to unveil, make visible. Pulling gently on the fragile thread of sound, drawing out from the depths of imagined silence; or alternatively, sound erupting from the stasis of relative silence. The absence of silence manifest in the spacial collage structure is all too acute. All in all, an extreme awareness of the absence of pure *stillness*, indeed, sketching in sound and time it's very opposite; presence confirming absence.

Stasis explores two starkly contrasting conditions of being in a fragile state of equilibrium.

This state is unchanging, ongoing, with an exhausting insistence, always, in essence, the same.

Fragments, each time slightly varied, gradually create a single image. Imprints reiterated and projected into time and space. Like a giant mobile seen from many perspectives, that in itself remains untouched. And light changes, the focus, and the position from which perceived, is altered, as is nearness and distance to the object - a manifest complex protraction of the one single thing.

A Beckett short story entitled *Still* ends with the following:

„As if even in the dark eyes closed not enough and perhaps even more than ever necessary against that no such thing the further shelter of the hand...“

Leave it so all quite still or try listening to the sounds all quite still head in hand listening for a sound.“
Samuel Beckett, *Still*, Calder Publications 1974.

Beckett's *Still* sketches a single situation: turning the head towards the setting sun, the unknown protagonist watches night fall, darkness gathering; then head placed slowly and carefully in hands, waiting, as darkness unfolds, for a sound. Metaphors of dark and light, silence and sound, motion and stillness pervade the fragile fabric of his language. As if in eternity, a timeless melancholy, distinctly curt and brutally honest, yet imbued with a humaness, a softness. A stasis; the human body waiting, trembling.

RS