

Karlheinz Essl

## 7x7

for 4 electric guitars (2009)

The four electric guitars are positioned in the four corner points of a virtual square around the audience. The score is organized in a sort of chess board with 7x7 fields. Each field contains a musical phrase which duration is left to the discretion of the player. After finishing a phrase, the player makes a pause of an undefined length. Then he proceeds to the next motive and so on.

Each musician begins in one of the four corner fields of the grid. The entrance of the players is staggered. Player 1 starts with his phrase. When the maximum of the crescendo is reached, the second player enters, then the third and finally the fourth. Each player takes an individual path through the grid following the directions of the respective arrows. Each path describes a spiral that finally ends in the center field.

Here, the players improvise with the supplied pitches using structures that have already been played before. Never fall into the habit of empty virtuosity. Instead, floating colors and textures that sum up into collective sound are feasible.

At a sign of the first player, the improvisation ends. Each player follows a diagonal that leads to the corner field opposed to the one on which he started. There the piece ends.

The image shows three vertically stacked panels of handwritten musical notation for electric guitar. The top panel is marked with a circled '1' and a downward-pointing arrow. It features a five-line staff with a single note on the second line, labeled 'E-Bow' above it. Below the staff are two pairs of diagonal lines representing bowing directions. The middle panel shows a five-line staff with a note on the second line, a slur over it, and a dynamic marking '< sf' below. The bottom panel is labeled 'E-Bow' above a five-line staff with a note on the second line and a slur over it, with two pairs of diagonal lines below representing bowing directions.