



media release

29 April 2009

Free concert series to cast new light on controversial composer

Karlheinz Stockhausen, the controversial German composer who wrote a string quartet for four helicopters, claimed to be descended from astral beings and earned a spot on the cover of the *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album, will be the focus of a free music and light event at Sydney Conservatorium of Music on **Saturday 6 June**.

Licht, an orchestral and light art interpretation of Stockhausen's most ambitious work, is part of **Smart Light Sydney**, a new free festival celebrating innovation through light art, music and ideas.

Smart Light Sydney is a major component of **Vivid Sydney**, a unique new public festival that will transform the city into a spectacular living canvas of music and light.

Audiences will be treated to a series of concerts from 1pm till late into the night, featuring the long-awaited Australian premiere of extracts from *Licht*, a sprawling cycle of seven operas that took the recently deceased composer 26 years to complete.

From the foyers to the recital halls to the music cafe, Sydney Conservatorium of Music will be enveloped in music and light, as specialist musicians from Australia and overseas join players from the Conservatorium and leading vocal ensemble The Song Company to bring Stockhausen's masterwork to life.

"*Licht* is almost a summation of Stockhausen's thoughts on music, religion and creation and because it was only finished in 2003, just three years before his death, practically nothing of the piece has been seen or heard live in Australia," said Roland Peelman, Artistic Director for *Licht*.

Famed for his pioneering work on electronic music, Stockhausen is one of the few avant-garde composers to have succeeded in penetrating the popular consciousness, with diverse musicians such as Miles Davis, Pink Floyd and Bjork openly acknowledging his influence.

The Beatles were such fans of the composer that they added his photograph to the famous collage cover of the *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album, and he is believed to be the influence behind the electronica of songs like 'Strawberry Fields Forever'.

"Stockhausen is one of a small number of composers who literally transformed the world of twentieth century music and with *Licht*, we aim to both celebrate his contribution and present his music in an exciting light for a new generation of audiences to enjoy," said Peelman.

Presenting Partner



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With pre-concert talks by Stockhausen scholar Richard Toop, electronic sound and lighting displays and an interactive bar, **Licht** will provide free entertainment late into the night.

The event is a collaboration between **Smart Light Sydney** and Sydney Conservatorium of Music, with support from the New Music Network, ABC Classic FM, Goethe Institut and Stockhausen Stiftung.

Smart Light Sydney is a major component of **Vivid Sydney**, one of five anchor events in the first ever NSW Master Events Calendar created by Events NSW on behalf of the NSW Government.

Licht

When: 6 June 2009, 1PM - late

Where: Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Free: Get there early! Tickets limited

For more information on Smart Light Sydney visit www.smartlightsydney.com or for the full Vivid Sydney program visit www.vividsydney.com

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Presenting Partner



Partners



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