

Concertspiel (1982)

Paul Kont

The world premiere of *Concertspiel* was on February 7, 1983 at Grand Valley State College, Allendale, Michigan.

Paul Kont (1920–2000) was born in Vienna, Austria and studied at the Vienna Conservatory from 1936–1940. After being engaged in military service (intelligence) from 1940–1945, he resumed study at the Vienna Music Academy where his teachers included Hans Swarowsky, Josef Krips, and Josef Lechthaler. He also took lessons in analysis with Josef Polnauer. In 1951, he took part in the Darmstadt Summer Course and attended courses under Wolfgang Fortner. The following year, he had additional study in Paris with Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, and Olivier Messiaen.

Christian Heindl writes of Kont: “Progressive pioneer who had startled a musically insecure post-war Austria, or a traditionalist who is sometimes labelled a ‘conservative?’ Hardly any other composer in Austria’s music scene of late has been given such contrasting opinion than Paul Kont. The notion of his being of the avant-garde already became manifest in the early post-war year when Kont—unlike many of his contemporaries—did not so much follow tendencies originating in Hindemith (and, to a lesser degree, in Webern and Schoenberg), but developed a polytonal style derived from piano improvisation—resulting in the so-called phase of ‘captured improvisation.’” (Christian Heindl translated by Nicolas Radulescu from Doblinger Publishers website.)

From 1980 to 1986 Kont was a professor at the Vienna Academy of Music and Performing Arts. His musical output included stage works (operas and ballets), vocal and orchestral works, and chamber music as well as TV and movie scores. He died in Vienna.