

TO THE EARTH

For Jan Williams

Frederic Rzewski (1985)
Text: Homeric hymn

for speaking percussionist

♩ 96-100 (To be played with knitting needles or light sticks on four clay flower-pots. Other pitches may be used if these are hard to obtain or have a poor sound. Words are spoken more or less together with the music.)

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in 4/4 time, marked with a tempo of 96-100. The music is written for a speaking percussionist using knitting needles or light sticks on four clay flower-pots. The lyrics are presented in three languages: Greek, German, and English. The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics describe the Earth as the mother of all, the oldest, and the one who nourishes all life.

Staff 1: *p*

Staff 2: Γαῖαν, παμητέρα, αἰέ σομαι, ἦ-
To the Earth, Mother of all, I will sing: the
Für die Erde, Mutter von allem, ist mein Lied, die

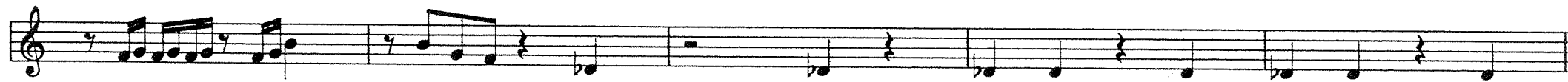
Staff 3: ὑ- θεμεθλον, πρεσβίστην,
well-established, the oldest,
fest gegründete, die älteste,

Staff 4: ἡ φέρβει, ἐ- πι χθονὶ, πάνθ ὅ- ποσ' ἐστίν.
who nourishes on her surface every thing that lives:
Nährerin von allen was auf ihr lebt.

Staff 5: ἡ- μὲν ὅ- σα χθόνα διὰν ἐπέρ- χεται, ἦδ'
those things that walk upon the holy ground and those that die
Jene Wesen, die auf dem geweihten Boden gehn, und jene, die

Staff 6: ὅ- σα πόντον, ἦδ' ὅ- σα trem
swim in the sea and those that fly;
schwimmen in dem Meer, und jene, die fliegen:

Staff 7: πτωῶνται, τά- δε φέρβεται, ἐκ σε- θεν ὄλβου.
all these are nourished by your abundance.
all diese nähren sich von Deinem Ueberfluss.



Ἐκ σοῦ
It is thanks to
Wir verdanken es

δ'εὐ- παιδές τε καὶ εὐ- καρποὶ τε- λέ- θουσι,
you if we humans have healthy children and rich harvests.
Dir, daß wir Menschen gesunde Kinder haben und reiche Ernten.

πότ- νι- α, σεῦ δ'ε- χε-ται δοῦναι βί- ον ἡδ' ἄ-
Great Earth, you have the power to give life to and to
Grosse Erde, Du hast die Macht, all jenen Leben zu geben

φελε- εἶσθαι
take it away
und zu nehmen,
θνη- τοῖς ἀνθρώ- ποιαιν.
from die creatures that must die.
die sterblich sind.

ὁ δ'ὄλ- βι- ος, ὅν- κε σὺ (tap on table)
Happy are the ones whom you honor
Glücklich sind jene, welche Du beschenkst

θυμῷ πρόφρων τιμῆς· τῷ τ' ἄφθο- να πάν- τα πάρεσι.
 with your kindness and gifts; what they have built will not vanish.
 mit Deiner Güte. Bereitete ist ihnen un- end- licher Wohlstand.

Βρίθει μὲν σφιν ἄρουρα φερέσβιος,
 Their fields (tap on table) are fertile,
 Ihre Felder sind fruchtbar,

ἡδὲ κατ' ἀγροῦς κτήνεσιν εὐθηνεῖ,
 their herds prosper,
 ihr Vieh vermehrt sich.

οἶκος δ' ἐμ-πίπλα-ται ἐσ-θλῶν.
 and their houses are full of good things. *crescendo*
 Und ihre Häuser sind voll trefflicher Güter.

Ἀὐ-τοῖς δ' εὐ-νο-μί-
 Their cities are governed with
 In ihren Städten herrschen

ησι πόλιν κάτα καλλιγύναικα
 just laws; *p* their women
 gerechte Gesetze. Ihre Frauen

κοιρανέουσι, ὄλβος τε πολὺς καὶ πλοῦτος ὀπηδεῖ.
 are beautiful; good fortune and wealth
 sind schön. Reichtum und Glück

follow them.
 begleiten sie.

crescendo

(same tempo, i.e. 96-100 to the dotted quarter)

mf

παῖδες
Their children
Ihre Kinder

δ' ευφροσύνη
are radiant
strahlen

νεοθηλεί
with the joy
vor Freude

κυδιόωσι,
of youth.
und Jugend.

diminuendo

παρθε- και, παρτηνικαί τε παρθε- νικαί τε χοροῖς φερεαν- θέσιν εὐφρονι θυμῷ

p The young women... the young women play... the young women play in the flowery meadows,
Und die Mädchen die Mädchen spielen die Mädchen spielen in den blumigen Wiesen,

παίζουσαι σκαίρουσι κατ' άνθη μαλθακά

und dancing and skipping with happiness
tanzen mit Herzen voller

crescendo

ποιης,

f in their hearts.
Glückseligkeit.

(let stick bounce)

οὐς κε σὺ

τιμήσις,

Holy Earth,
Heilige Erde,

Undying Spirit,
unsterbliche Göttin,

σεμνή θεά,

ἄφθονε

so it is
so ergeht es

with those
jenen,

δαίμον.

whom you honor.
die Dich ehren.

pp

poco a poco crescendo

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of eighth-note chords across the staff.

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of eighth-note chords. The final measure has an accent mark (>) and the dynamic marking *ff*.

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of quarter notes with triplet markings (3) over the notes.

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of quarter notes with triplet markings (3) over the notes.

χαίρε,

Hail to you,
Gelobt seist Du,

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of quarter notes.

θεῶν

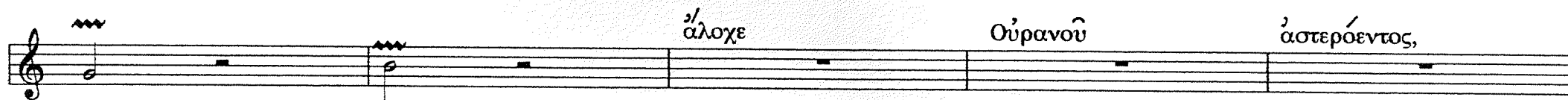
μήτηρ,

(Stir inside pot with stick, as though the pot contained some liquid)

Mother
Mutter

of Life,
des Lebens,

Musical staff with treble clef, showing a series of quarter notes with wavy lines (trills) below the notes.



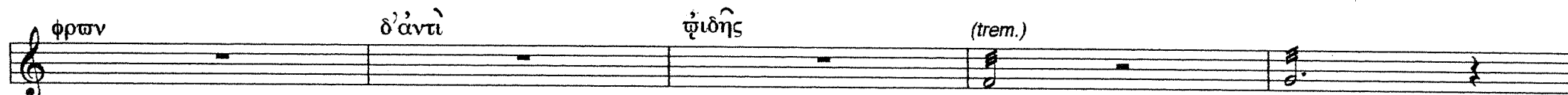
You who are loved
Geliebte

by the stars
des sternenreichen

sky,
Himmels.



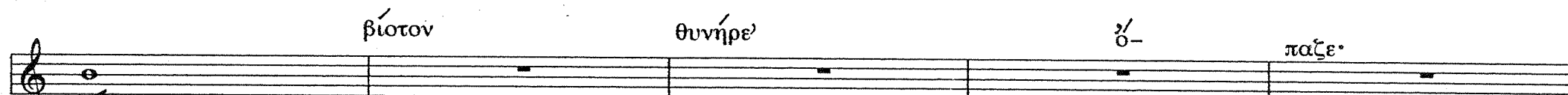
Be generous
Sei grosszügig



and give me
und spende mir

a happy
ein glückliches

life
Leben



in
als

return
Lohn

for
für

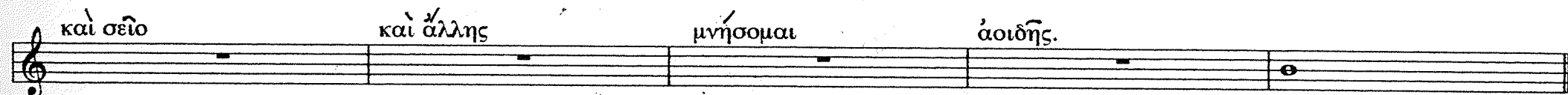
my
mein



song
Lied,

so that
auf dass

I can
ich Dich



continue
immerfort

to praise you
preisen kann

with my
mit meiner

music.
Musik.