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## Part 2

Before discussing *Chiffre VI* it is important to give some consideration to *Bild*, written in 1984 but related to the *Chiffre* series, since this work carries a significant extra-musical association which has some bearing on the later composition. As mentioned earlier, *Bild* is, according to Rihm's hand-written note on the score, 'a self-standing composition in the orbit of the *Chiffre*-cycle'<sup>44</sup>. Rihm conceived the work such that it might be played live with Luis Buñuel's film *The Andalusian Hound* (*Un chien andalou*, 1929), although it is not to be synchronized with the film. The idea of writing a work which had a relationship with the film may have been in Rihm's mind for some time, but composition only began in January 1984. The work now called *Bild* was first named *Tonspur*, for which two fragments survive. An important difference between these and the works of the *Chiffre* series is that neither *Bild* nor *Tonspur* included piano. Rihm's original idea, noted on the sketches for *Schattenstück*, seems to have been to write *eine Chiffre für Andal[usischen] Hund* which was translated at first into *Tonspur [Eine Chiffre]* before developing new life as *Bild*.

Since *Bild* was written as music which can be played with a film with which it has no specific connections, which film does not tell a story, and neither does the music, this is association by disassociation – *the double meaning* in the quotation below (in the German translation) from Pascal found on Rihm's sketches for *Chiffre VI* and which he subsequently used in the programme note for all the works of the *Chiffre* series finished by 1985:

*A type conveys absence and presence,  
pleasure and dis-pleasure.  
A 'chiffre' has a double meaning,  
one clear, and one in which it is said  
that the meaning is hidden.*<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, vol. II, 335

<sup>45</sup> Blaise Pascal, *Gedanken über Gott und den Menschen*, trans. Wolfgang Rüttenauer, (Wiesbaden: Dietrichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1947), 208, quoted in Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, Vol. II, 345.

Ein Bild enthält Abwesenheit und Gegenwart,  
Gefallen und Mißfallen.  
Eine Chiffre hat einen doppelten Sinn:  
einen klaren, und einen von dem gesagt  
ist, daß ein anderer Sinn darin verborgen sei

[www.gutenberg.org/files/18269/18369-h/18269-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18269/18369-h/18269-h.htm) (accessed 17 July 2007).

It is important to understand that the usual translation of the French into English renders the second word as *Type* but in the German translation from which Rihm was working *Bild* has other connotations: like *Chiffre* later, it has double/multiple meanings and that is how Rihm perceived it. In particular he certainly considered this to give a connection with the visual arts. Some of Rihm's reactions to Art are to be found in his article (with an introduction by Ulrich Mosch), *Vor Bildern*, in, *Intermedialität: Studien zur Wechselwirkung zwischen den Künsten*, ed. Günter Schnitzler and Edelgard Spaude (Freiburg im Bresigau: Rombach Verlag 2004). Finally, in English translation from French the word which is opposite to 'pleasure' is often given as 'pain', but in the German *Mißfallen* is, literally, displeasure.

One could interpret 'Bild' here to represent the source of Rihm's title for the work of that name, which, allied to the use of the word 'Chiffre' suggests that this quotation can be used as a key to understanding the role of *Chiffre VI* in relation to the rest of the cycle, as will be discussed subsequently.

## *Chiffre VI* Overview

*Chiffre VI* and *Chiffre III*, following Rihm's markings, are the shortest works in the cycle with notional durations of six minutes each; the available non-commercial recordings held at the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basle, show that *Chiffre VI* is the shortest. It was written for a concert given by Ensemble 13 in Karlsruhe (12 Apr. 1985).

*Chiffre VI* can be divided into four sections with short *codetta*: 1–30 (general pause); 31–44/5 (long held chord); 45–67 (climax approach ~12-pitch chord, pause); 68 (climax)-79 (G.P.); 80–83 (*codetta*). As in *Chiffre II* (Table 2), the musical elements are reposed from section to section. Throughout the work up to the climax point the dyad *F,E* has an important unifying function, analogous to, but not the same as, the dyad *B,A#* in *Chiffre [I]* (Ex. 1b).

## Soundspace

### *Motifs and Chords*

Although the work seems to divide naturally into the four sections detailed above, these divisions do not correspond to a formal structure any more than did the sections delineated in *Chiffre [I]* and *II*. Rather, they serve as a framework for the articulation of a collection of short motifs whose relationship with each other is constantly reconfigured throughout the piece, and which are recognisable in many cases not so much by pitch content as by rhythmic outline, as is demonstrated by the following simple example:

Ex. 8a: Reposed idea in *Chiffre VI*

The image displays two musical excerpts, (a) and (b), on a single staff. Excerpt (a) is labeled 'Section 1 bar 2' and includes the performance instruction 'Vc. martellato ord.' and the dynamic marking 'fff subito'. It shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents and slurs, with pitch classes 1, 6, and 11 indicated below. Excerpt (b) is labeled 'reposed in Section 2 bar 33' and includes 'Vc.' and 'fff' markings. It shows a similar rhythmic pattern with accents and slurs, with pitch classes T7, 1, 6, and 11 indicated below. Both excerpts are annotated with 'chromatic expansion' and a '3' indicating a triplet.

The motifs used in *Chiffre VI* are identified by the letters a) to d) (see Ex. 8b) with connections and variants indicated. In this work the motifs are not invariant but change shape, length, and configuration on each repetition. Knowledge of the exact nature of these alterations is not necessary for the purposes of this discussion.

Ex. 8b: *Chiffre VI* – principal motivic elements a), b), c) and d)

The image displays four musical motifs labeled a) through d).  
 Motif a) is a bass line in 4/4 time, starting with a 'martellato' marking. It consists of a sequence of eighth notes with various accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats).  
 Motif b) is a bass line labeled 'ex Chiffre IV?' and features a similar rhythmic pattern to motif a) but with different pitch content.  
 Motif c) is a bass line labeled 'ex Chiffre [I] [bar 3] martellato', showing a more regular eighth-note pattern.  
 Motif d) is a treble line labeled 'bar 9 str. ^ ^ >' with 'sffz' dynamics, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern with accents and a crescendo.

Table 3 presents a motivic, chordal and focus pitch summary of the whole work. Chords are indicated in Table 3 by the shorthand 'Ch', and although the *Lenz* chord (Ch1) is prominent at the outset, most of the work is based on derivations of the third discrete chord heard: F#, G, G#, A/D, C#, E,F. Ex. 9a summarizes its progress through the work and gives an indication of how variant versions link to each other. From this it will be evident that the focus pitches *F* and *E* have an essential role to play in the chord generation process and therefore are the pitches around which the subsequent chords are reposed. These pitches are taken from the closing horn motif of *Chiffre V*,  $bb, f^1, e^2$  a linear version of the *Lenz* chord. With respect to the detail of the chordal components, these are presented in Ex. 9a for the principal chord complex of the work, chord 3 (Ch3) only, and, in Ex. 9b, for the progression of chords across the work. The first chord (Ch1) is simply the pervasive *Lenz* chord, while Chord 2 (Ch2) is a chromatic trichord (familiar from the piano writing in *Chiffre [I]*), with its extension into a chromatic tetrachord [Ch2(+)].

Ex. 9a: 'chord progression' in *Chiffre VI* – voice leading

The image displays a musical score for 'chord progression' in *Chiffre VI*, focusing on voice leading. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The score is annotated with various elements:

- Chord Symbols:** Located below the bass staff, they include bar 15 (Chord 3<sub>1</sub>), bar 16 (3<sub>2</sub>), bar 16 (3<sub>3</sub>), bar 23 (3<sub>4</sub>), bar 24 (3<sub>5</sub>), bar 34 (3<sub>6</sub>), bar 34 (3<sub>6/1</sub>), bar 39 (3<sub>7</sub>), bar 50 (3<sub>8</sub>), bar 67 (3<sub>9</sub>), and bar 67 (3<sub>10</sub>).
- Annotations:** The word 'Lenz' is written in several places, often with brackets indicating specific intervals or voice leading paths. The notation '8vb' (an octave below) is used to indicate the relationship between notes in different registers.
- Voice Leading:** Colored lines (red, orange, green, blue, purple) connect notes between the two staves, illustrating the movement of individual voices. Dashed lines also indicate specific intervals or relationships.
- Staff Content:** The treble staff contains chords and some individual notes, while the bass staff contains chords and notes. Some notes are marked with accidentals (sharps and flats).

Ex.9b: chord progression in *Chiffre VI* for chords other than (Ch3)

Bar 1 6      15 16 24 34 41-4 51 58 61-2      67 68 81  
 Chord 1 2      31 32 35 36 4 5 6 7      39 8 9

Table 3: Motif, chordal and focuspitch analysis of *Chiffre VI*

BAR		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Section 1	FocusPitch															
	Chordal	Ch1 LENZ Detached				Ch1 inv. T8	Ch2	Ch1 inv. T11 T5- T9	-----		Ch2(+)	---	Ch2(+)			Ch3 <sup>1</sup>
	Motif	(motif derived)		ab ac	-	----			b, a	d, b,a	c	c	c	c, b	c	c

Section 1		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Focus Pitch			1 8				Bb---	-----	-----	F#	E	Ch3 <sup>5</sup>
	Chordal	Ch3 <sup>2</sup>				Ch2(+) on Bb + F#	-	Ch3 <sup>3</sup>	Ch3 <sup>4</sup>	Ch3 <sup>3</sup> /Ch1			
	Motif			a	c, b		b			c		c	
	Pedal				PEDAL	C -	-			PEDAL	C -	--	

Section 1		28	29	30
	Focus Pitch	Bb		
	Chordal	Ch3 <sup>5</sup>		
	Motif		a,c	c
	Pedal			

Section 2		31	32	33	34	35	36	37
	Focus Pitch					Ab----- --	-----	D
	Chordal				Ch3 <sup>6</sup>			Ch2(+)
	Motif	d	-----	a, b	c, b			

Section 2		38	39	40	41	42	43
	Focus Pitch			(Strings new?)		F#----- (c.f. b. 25)	-----
	Chordal	Ch1   Ch2 LENZ T5+T9	Ch3 <sup>7</sup>	Ch2(+)	--Ch1 T9	Ch4 ----- (10 note)	-----
	Motif		b				
Pedal	C PEDAL----	-----	C#, G --	PEDAL	-----	-----	

Section 3		44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55
	Focus Pitch	F#---	---	---		F#---						F/E	
	Chordal	Ch4 -Ch1 (c.f. b.1)	----		Ch3 <sup>5</sup> (c.f. b. 24)	(c.f. b. 25)	Ch3 <sup>5</sup>	Ch3 <sup>8</sup>	Ch4		Ch 2	(c.f. bb. 13/39)	
	Motif		c-	c-									a, b
Pedal	--					PEDAL C	----	----	----	--	----		

Section 3		56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67
	Focus Pitch			(c.f. b.18)	-----	(c.f. bb.28/9)	-- EXT-	ENDE D	(c.f. b. 30 inv.)	(c.f. b. 28)			F/E 12-note 
	Chordal			Ch6	Ch1/Ch1		Ch7	-----					Ch3 <sup>9</sup> , Ch3 <sup>10</sup>
	Motif	c,b	a, (b)	a,b,c	-----				(b), c				c
Pedal		PEDA L	C----		PEDAL C	--		PEDAL	C	PEDAL	C	-----	

Section 4		68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
	Focus Pitch	Eb----	-----		Eb/A	E/A	(Bb)	Tritones C,F#, D,Ab	
	Chordal	Ch8	Ch2	Ch3 <sup>5</sup> Ch2	-----		Ch3 <sup>9</sup>		
Motif				c			b	b, a (b)	

Section 4		76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83
	Focus Pitch			G#---	[GP]		E-----	-----	
	Chordal	Ch2(+)	Ch2(+)			Ch2(+)	Ch9		
Motif		c varied				c varied	c varied		

## Motivic content

There are the five principal elements which serve to bind the work together. The first and most obvious element is the recurrent demisemi-quaver motivic figure with its three forms (a, b and c of Section 1). An alteration of motivic element c) to include the dyad *F, E* at bar 13 is the catalyst for the change to the semitonally-derived chord (chord 3) at b. 15 which then becomes the basis for almost all the chords heard thereafter (Ex. 9a). In particular, it connects bb. 24, 47, 49, 67 and 73 together. However, neither the demisemi-quaver passages nor the chords are completely new material. The pitch sequences *Db, G, A* (bb. 20–1) and *B, Eb, C* (bb. 58–9), for example, are components of arabesque sequences found at bb. 35–6 in *Chiffre V*, which has clearly acted as the generative pole (Ex. 10):

Ex; 10: Comparison of pitch sequences between *Chiffre V* bars 35-6 and *Chiffre VI* bars 20-1, 58-9

The image shows a musical score with three staves. The top staff is for Trp. (Trumpet) in 4/4 time, starting at bar 35. It features a demisemi-quaver triplet figure with a dynamic marking of *ff*. Below the staff are two pitch sequences: (6, 2, 11, 6) and (4, 9). The middle staff is for B.Cl. (Bass Clarinet) in 4/4 time, starting at bar 20. It features a demisemi-quaver triplet figure with a dynamic marking of *fff*. Below the staff are two pitch sequences: (6, 2) and (4, 9). The bottom staff is for Vln I (Violin I) in 4/4 time, starting at bar 58. It features a demisemi-quaver triplet figure with a dynamic marking of *sffz*. Below the staff are two pitch sequences: (10, 11, 6, 11) and (4, 9). Arrows connect the pitch sequences between the staves, showing their relationship. The Trp. staff has a dynamic marking of *ff* and a triplet figure. The B.Cl. staff has a dynamic marking of *fff* and a triplet figure. The Vln I staff has a dynamic marking of *sffz* and a triplet figure. The B.Cl. staff also has a dynamic marking of *sffz pp* and a triplet figure. The Vln I staff has a dynamic marking of *sffz* and a triplet figure. The B.Cl. staff has a dynamic marking of *fff* and a triplet figure. The Vln I staff has a dynamic marking of *sffz* and a triplet figure.

Likewise the repeated pitch element of c) and the oscillating tritone dyad of b) are found in various places through the cycle, including, for example, b. 43 in *Chiffre IV* (see Ex. 5). The chord at b. 68 in *Chiffre VI* which underpins the first bar of the climax (chord 8 in Table 3) is not specifically related to the other chords in the work, but it too has a precursor – the components are recognisable by their dyadic distribution in the chord seven bars before the end of *Chiffre V*.



Ex. 11: *Chiffre V* chord precursor of climax chord in *Chiffre VI* bar 68)

The two marked dyads in the lowest hexachord are the basis of significant chords throughout the earlier works and have their origin in *Chiffre [I]* [see Ex.1b, chord (e)].

### Generating trichord

The second principal element of this work derives from manipulation of the generating trichord from the end of *Chiffre V*, itself a transposition of bb. 30–1 in *Chiffre [I]*.

Ex 12: final linear trichord of *Chiffre V* compared to bb. 30-1 of *Chiffre [I]*

The trichord not only contains the *F, E* dyad which has such an important role in providing a unifying factor for the pitch structures in *Chiffre VI*, but it also essentially provides the focal pitches for the horn part. The most significant horn phrase occurs at 59-62 and is associated with the only *rit.* (and therefore change of *tempo*) in the work:

Ex 13: *Chiffre VI* horn in bb 59-62

This phrase has significance for the musical discourse on a number of levels: it is an extension of the trichord motif  $bb, f^1, e^2$  which ended *Chiffre V*; it is an elaboration and repoling of the main motivic focus of *Chiffre VI* and in particular of bb. 27–30; and it points forward to the final bar of the work where the strings have a rising chromatic scale<sup>46</sup> in tetrachord clusters.

As suggested earlier, aural links between works in the cycle are made through the use of instrumental timbre. Thus the *Eb* clarinet in its highest register connects *Chiffre VI* with *Chiffre II* and *Chiffre V*, the two other works in the cycle which use the instrument. Such aural links between the works which transcend the actual pitches may constitute one of the *chiffre* Rihm had in mind, and they can certainly be interpreted as *signs (Zeichen)*. It is likely that the penultimate bar of *Chiffre VI*, which combines the contrabassoon's  $Bb^3$  for the last time with the *Eb* clarinet's '*slow painful [upward] glissando*' ('*langsames qualvolles Glissando*'), is probably referential and may have some sort of (unknown) programmatic reference.

## Instrumentation

The third principal unifying element is the connection between the deep instruments and the low dense chordal writing typical of the piano parts in the earlier *Chiffre* works. Some brief sketches show Rihm's original plan for this work was to have clarinet, bassoon and horn with five strings, but Rudolf Frisius<sup>47</sup> implies that Rihm chose to retain the instrumentation of the Schubert octet, with two important changes: from bassoon to contra-bassoon and from clarinet to the extreme registers of bass clarinet and *Eb* clarinet. The two instrumental quartets, for most of the work, are therefore string quartet on the one hand and a bass quartet of bass clarinet, contra bassoon, horn and double bass on the other. This latter group is not only expressive of Rihm's love of deep low sounds but in this work functions as a substitute, in its absence, for the bottom register of the piano.

The climax of the work is reached when the bass clarinet switches to *Eb* and is immediately directed to play '*only highest and ugliest tones*' ('*nur höchste und hasslichste Töne*') in bar 68. The strings *tremolando* which supports the build up to this climax is to be played '*strongest stress notwithstanding frenetic tremolo, when possible; always over three strings*' ('*stärkster Druck, trotzdem frenetisches Tremolo, wenn möglich; immer über drei Saiten*').

Specific pitch connections with previous works in the cycle are articulated through instrumental disposition. The  $E^2, B^3$  dyad in double bass at b. 16, was first heard in b. 43 of *Chiffre [I]* and it underpins the repeat of that part of *Chiffre [I]* which follows letter B in *Chiffre II*. When it is heard in double bass at b. 69 at the climax of *Chiffre VI* it is overlaid with the chromatic trichord  $c^1, c\#^1, d^1$  *tremolando* just as it

<sup>46</sup> The associated triplet semiquaver rhythm therefore also becomes an important unifying feature for the work (with the quaver triplets in the final bar as an augmentation).

<sup>47</sup> Frisius, *Werk und Werkzyklus, op. cit.*, 1985, 19.

was at letter B in *Chiffre II*. The deep chromatic trichord  $Bb^3, B^3, C^2$ , with the  $Bb$  on contra-bassoon, heard in *Chiffre VI* at bb. 6 and 12, is again from *Chiffre II* at letter M<sup>+5</sup> (see Table 2). This latter is a good example of hidden unity that can be gained from repoling since it is probably not particularly audible as a new version of the *Chiffre II* material, although there can be no question that it is as a study of the score reveals.

### Focus pitches

The fourth principal element which underpins the whole work, and again is a typical feature of Rihm's writing, is the use of focus pitches. Often these pitches are isolated in unison or in octaves as discrete entities, and while they represent a point of harmonic and thematic stasis in the music they will normally have a dynamic envelope which ensures that the sound itself is not static.<sup>48</sup> Although  $E$  and  $F$  are important as generating pitches, the most significant of the focus pitches in *Chiffre VI* is the  $F\#$  which at b. 25 functions as a point of stasis (and is marked 'like a breath' / 'wie ein Hauch') on bass clarinet doubled by double bass harmonic. Subsequently this pitch (at the same level) reappears at bb. 42–9 where it links sections 2 and 3. The pitch  $Eb$  performs a similar function between sections 3 and 4 on the horn but this is tied into the repoling of the horn's pitches  $eb^2, e^2, f$  from bar 61. Finally, the low cello  $C^1$  functions in the manner of a pedal note, most obviously perhaps in section 1 (at bb. 10 to 13 and 19 to 21) but it is significantly present across bb.60–2 and at the climax from 65–9.

### Chord Density

The fifth element is the gradual increase in density of the chords towards the 10-note chord at bb. 41–4, structurally the mid-point of the work, and a point of harmonic *stasis*. I have delineated this as a sectional change since the third section of the work contains quite frequent repoled moments from Section 1 while at the same time building the chordal texture towards the 12-note climactic point at bb. 67–8. As Ex. 4 demonstrated this is the culmination of a gradual build-up of density from *Chiffre III*.

### Tempo and Metre

As in *Chiffre II* tempo and metre have a largely static function. The default metre is, as usual, four crotchets to the bar, except at the climax where two bars of 5/8 metre are inserted to emphasize the clarinet articulation. The default tempo is crotchet = 60 with only one *rit.* at b. 61 associated with the high rising

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<sup>48</sup> Thus in *Chiffre I* the G at bar 27 (see Ex. 1b final pitch) is one such.

chromatic phrase on horn. As discussed in part 1 of this article, the tempo and metre almost always function in *Chiffre VI* as relatively fixed and stable elements round which the other elements change.

## Soundsign

### Articulation, rhythm, and dynamics

As is typical for Rihm, virtually every pitch in *Chiffre VI* has one or more performance direction, and every chord and arabesque has a dynamic marking. However the dynamics demonstrate a strongly circumscribed usage. With very few exceptions the markings are either *ff* or *fff* against *pp* or *ppp* with rapid *crescendi* (or *vice versa*) between these two states. Articulation is dominated by *sffz* and *sfffz* markings. It is not, however, unusual in Rihm's work to have such dynamic extremes occurring in rapid succession, as comparison with near contemporary works such as the fourth string quartet (1981) or *Monodram* (1983) will show. What is unusual is the virtual absence of middle ground dynamics in the *Chiffre* cycle, but particularly in *Chiffre VI*. This may have something to do with the missing piano in that, whereas registral extremes were a key textural feature of *Chiffre [I]* and *II*, so dynamics in *Chiffre VI* are performing an analogous function in the absence of the piano: in *Chiffre VI* the dynamic polarities are substitutes for the registral polarities of the piano.

### 'A sound transforms ...'

One of the difficulties in presenting Rihm's work analytically is the fact that many of his musical ideas can be related together either thematically or harmonically, or both, but Rihm's writings suggest that there is an absence of intention in the compositional process. This implies that analysis concerned with process will only find 'accidental' relationships. And yet, visually (on the score) and aurally (in performance) we are conscious of repetition, of the repoling of material, even though the actual detail may be quite different from previous occurrences. In *Chiffre VI* demisemiquaver arabesques clearly relate b. 3 with, among others, b. 58 despite there being only a few direct pitch connections (e.g. *C, F#, B*). Likewise the chord at b. 15 links with b. 24 not just through dyadic overlap, but in the disposition of those dyads within the chord.

The problem then is whether this process can be effectively articulated in words. Since there is an element of chance in the writing, in the sense that an exact development is not intended, is it really instructive to try to define the differences which emerge? Since Rihm believes that '*a sound transforms its*

*predecessor*;<sup>49</sup> there will be some kind of a relationship between the original sound and its transformer. There exists therefore an essential contradiction between that position and the concept of 'spontaneous composition' with its inherent lack of intent.

In *Chiffre VI*, while the pitch content of chord 3 changes as the piece progresses, its essential outline does not. It dominates the second half of the first section, and at b. 24, the version of the chord attained at that point (Ch3<sup>5</sup> on Table 3), is placed in opposition to Chord 1 (the *Lenz* chord) whose role it takes over both in terms of repoling/generating new versions of itself towards the climax, but also as a static entity punctuating the texture as at bb. 27, 28, 47, 49, and finally 70, where it is re-juxtaposed with Chord 1, the *Lenz* chord, for the second time in the work, so creating a repoled moment which recalls bar 24. Chord 3 therefore functions throughout this work as a means of changing our perception of the musical content and consequently as it recurs throughout the piece it effectively transforms its predecessors even if we as listeners are not particularly conscious of this process taking place.

## SoundScript

As discussed earlier, Rihm's programme notes for this cycle are symbolic and always say something about the compositional imperatives of the particular work. There are two programme notes for *Chiffre VI*, both printed in the volumes of Rihm's collected writings. The first speaks only of the process of writing ideas onto paper, while the second is very short and terse: '*Dark sign. Grid. Blackened (repainted) Octet. Density Hunger. In its way, burst.*'<sup>50</sup> The image of a blackened, repainted octet and the dark sign suggest that *Chiffre VI* should be viewed not as a climax to the cycle but as its antithetical opposite (and possibly also of the Schubert octet, the other work performed in the concert). The climax reached in this work must be heard as dark and unresolved: a hollow victory over the missing piano? '*Density hunger*' seems to be Rihm's way of describing the progress towards thicker, denser and deeper chords culminating in the climax of b. 67 et seq. This is borne out by the programme note for the next work in the cycle – *Chiffre VII* – which speaks of '*(dis)integrated [or (dis)solved] and bright(er) signs, more open, in the direction of (lit: 'perspectively') melody*'<sup>51</sup> that is, a counterbalance to *Chiffre VI*.

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<sup>49</sup> 'Ein Klang, der einem anderen Klang zeitlich folgt, formt seinen Vorgänger wirklich um' ('A sound, which temporally follows another sound, really transforms its predecessor') from *Mutation (Exkurse)*, in, Rihm *Ausgesprochen*, Vol. I, p. 159.

<sup>50</sup> Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, Vol. II, p. 344 ('*Dunkles Zeichen. Gitter. Eingeschwärztes (übermaltes) Oktett. Dichtehunger. Auf seine Art geborsten*'). The epigrammatic last sentence is particularly difficult to capture in English and I have chosen to leave it in a literal translation. Rihm probably means that the music *bursts out* of Schubert's original configuration.

<sup>51</sup> '*(Auf)gelöste und helle(re) Zeichen, mehr ins Offene, perspektivische Melodik* [brackets *sic* in original], Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, Vol. II, p. 344. Rihm here suggests a certain type of melody whose property is to have 'perspective' – the allusion is undoubtedly to painting.

And what of the double sign/double meaning (*doppelten Sinn*)?<sup>52</sup> Is this just an affectation, a literary conceit useful because relating the work to an established tradition or an intellectual background gives the cycle a sense of depth and authority? It is certainly possible to view the use of the Pascal reference in this way, but Rihm says that these works were an attempt to find a *new* language. Indeed in the first of the *Chiffre VI* programme notes<sup>53</sup> he articulates his search for '*the step aside*' from the '*binding Tradition in which one finds oneself*' ('*aus einer durchaus bündigen Tradition in der man sich befindet, den Schritt daneben zu tun*'). It seems unlikely that he should wish to ally himself with part of that intellectual tradition whilst simultaneously trying to break out of it.

## Envoi

The results of Rihm's search for '*a new means of expression*' in the *Chiffre* works can perhaps best be summarised by considering the ways in which these works exemplify sound being *etched* onto the *Klangraum* and how this relates to the concepts of generative pole and repoling.

Although the *Chiffre* works are aphoristic in character, the elements of his musical vocabulary are not substantially changed from earlier work. The piano figurations of *Chiffre [I]* and *Chiffre II*, for example, are closely linked to those of *Klavierstück 6* (1977–8) but recontextualised as moments of sound which can be juxtaposed with, and opposed to, other musical ideas. The gestures of earlier works – even one as close in date to *Chiffre [I]* as the fifth quartet *Ohne Titel* (1981–3) – tend to be more continuous in nature. The discontinuity of sounds in the *Chiffre* works is counterbalanced by the increasing use of earlier material as generative poles round which new material is shaped. Continuity is achieved by the very act of using repoled material such as demonstrated in the development of chordal density from *Chiffre III* to *Chiffre VI* (Ex. 4).

The idea of a generative pole, rather than a thematic idea for example, allows Rihm to revisit material in different ways, and explains the role of *Chiffre [I]* inside *Chiffre II*. It could be said that the earlier work writes itself into the *Klangraum* of the later work and it is a realisation of the 'potential' of the *Klangraum* that then opens up a new series of possibilities for the composer to explore. In Rihm's *Klangraum* every sound has meaning and although this might certainly be part of his 12-note heritage returning in retranslated form, his increasing attention to the characteristics of every tone – duration, juxtaposition and above all dynamics and articulation – are integral to his view of the relationship of sounds in the 'space' they occupy.

The *Chiffre* cycle was not just a related series of works, it became an evolution, a path traced through a *Klangraum* – a series of *signs* and *symbols* constantly recontextualised. A *Chiffre* is essentially a

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<sup>52</sup> See footnote 45.

<sup>53</sup> Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, Vol. II, p. 342.

sign and if there is a hidden meaning within the *Chiffre* cycle perhaps it is nothing more, nor less, than the search for that personal and unique musical identity. This may explain why the final work in the cycle, though started in 1985, was not completed until 1988. *Chiffre VIII* is a long slow *coda* to the rest of the cycle, a signing off at the end of a process of discovery. It is difficult, however, to hear/see all but the most general connections between *Chiffre VIII* and the rest of the cycle. The reason for this may be quite simple. When Rihm began the *Chiffre* cycle he was certainly in search of a 'new means of expression' and while there were many works written at the same time, it is the *Chiffre* works which are acknowledged as the place where that search took place.<sup>54</sup> One can interpret the unfolding of the cycle as a gradual progress towards abstraction and detachment, which is never actually achieved, since a cycle by its very nature implies some semblance of continuity. There is an essential unity underlying the works in this cycle but it is a unity borne of recontextualisation rather than repetition. *Chiffre VIII* may be nothing more than a musical 'full stop' to the process in this particular cycle.

Rihm's interpretation of the nature of the cycle may be somewhat idiosyncratic but that was the purpose of the exercise after all: a reinterpretation of the concept as a means to an end. The works are all *Chiffre* because they have meanings which transcend the music, and those meanings *can* be interpreted by translation of the composer's use of *Klang*- words, as I have suggested. These can therefore be used as a vocabulary for dealing with the further developments which took place in Rihm's work after the completion of the *Chiffre* cycle.

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<sup>54</sup> Rihm, *Ausgesprochen*, vol. II, p. 343.

## APPENDIX

Comparative data for the works of the *Chiffre* cycle

Title	Instrumentation	Duration	Completed
<i>Chiffre I</i>	0,0,1(+ B.Cl.),1, 0,1,1,0, Pno, 0,0,0,1+1,1 [total = 8]	c8 min. [CD 0012072KAI = 8 min. 51 sec.]	8.I.83
<i>Chiffre II</i> <i>Silence to be</i> <i>Beaten</i>	1(+Picc.),1(+C.A.),1(+Eb + B.Cl.),1(+ C.Bas), 1,1(+D Trp.),1,0, 2 Perc., Pno, 1,1,1,1,1 [15]	c14 min [CD 0012072KAI = 12 min. 50 sec.]	10.IX.83
<i>Chiffre III</i>	0,C.A.,B.Cl.,1(+C.Bas), 1,B.Trp,1,0, 2 Perc, Pno, 0,0,0,2,1 [12]	c6 min [6min. 56 sec.]	3.XI.83
<i>Chiffre IV</i>	B.Cl., Vc, Pno [3]	c9min [CD 0012092KAI = 10 min. 20 sec.]	30.XII.83
<i>Bild</i>	0,0,0,0, 0,1 (+high Trp.),1,1, 2 Perc, Pno, 0,0,1,1,1 [9]	c9 min [7 min. 20 sec.]	4.III.84
<i>Chiffre V</i>	1 (+ Picc.),1,1 (+Eb.Cl.),1, 1,1, Bass Trp, 1,0, 2 Perc, Pno, 1,1,1,1+1,1 [17]	c11 min [?13 min]	15.X.84
<i>Chiffre VI</i>	B.Cl.(+Eb Cl.), C.Bas., Hn, 1,1,1+1,1,1 [9]	c6 min. [5 min 48 sec or 4 min 53sec]	30.I.85
<i>Chiffre VII</i>	1 (+Picc.),1 (+C.A.),1,1 (+C.Bas), 1,1,B.Trp.,1,0, 2 Perc.,Pno, 1,1,1,1+1,1 [17]	c11 min. [10 min 30 sec]	30.VII.85
<i>Chiffre VIII</i>	B.Cl.,C.Bas.,Hrn,Trp., Pno, 0,0,0, 1+1,1 [8]	C9 min.	1985/26.III.88

In the duration column the first duration is that which is indicated on the score and the second an actual duration for a performance. Where no CD is indicated the duration is taken from a recording of a broadcast held at the Sacher Foundation.

Note added pre-publication: a recent (2006) CD [cpo 777 169-2], *Wolfgang Rihm, Chiffre-Zyklus*, performed by musikFabrik, conducted by Stefan Asbury, has some rather different timings as follows:

[I]	9 min 31 sec
[II]	13 min 10 sec
[III]	9 min 10 sec
[IV]	8 min 46 sec
[V]	9 min 40 sec



<i>Bild (eine Chiffre)</i>	7 min 56 sec
[VI]	4 min 43 sec
[VII]	9 min 38 sec
[VIII]	4 min 17 sec
<i>Nach-Schrift (eine Chiffre)</i>	9 min 15 sec

## **Current location of sketch material:**

The box numbers refer to the location, as at October 2006, of the sketches at Sacher Institute at Basle, while the page numbers refer to the draft index prepared by the author for each box. The sketch material is currently in process of being re-assigned to the individual folders for each work.

*Chiffre [I]* p5 BOX

*Chiffre (II)* p34, p41, p42 BOX

*Chiffre III* p41 BOX

*Chiffre IV* p42 BOX

*Bild* None yet found

*Chiffre V* p56, sketchbook 1982–89 BOX

*Chiffre VI* p55, (p56) sketchbook 1984–86 BOX

*Chiffre VII* p82, sketchbook 1982–89 BOX

*Chiffre VIII* p43 BOX

*Tonspur* p13, p77 SMALLBOX 1, p56 BOX

*Chiffre* related but not used p14, p81, p58/9 LARGE BOX4

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