

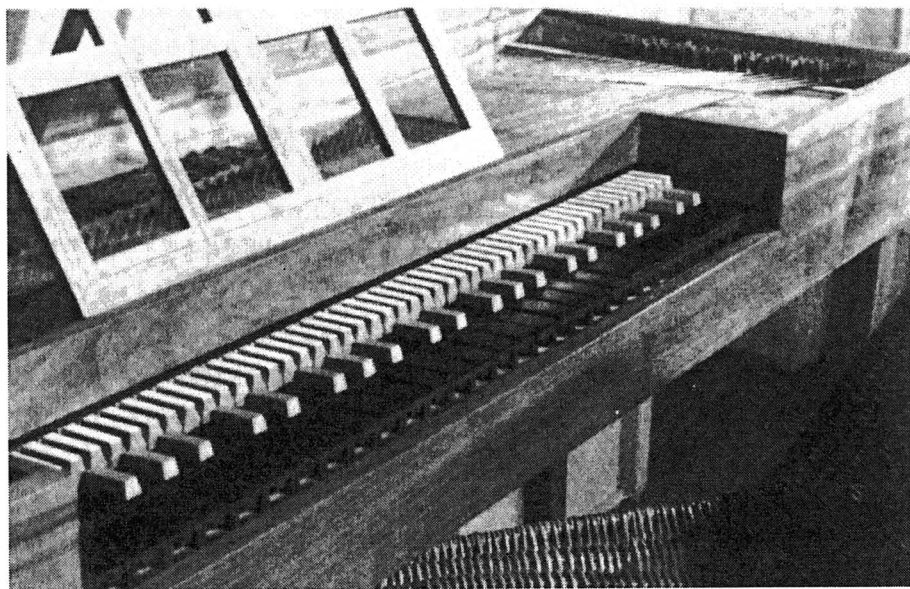
## CLAVICHORD MUSIC WITH EXTENDED TONALITY

A report from Switzerland

*Sally Fortino, Basle*

This year's annual meeting of the Swiss Clavichord Society was held on Sunday, 4 March, at the Collection of Musical Instruments in the town of Willisau in central Switzerland. The business meeting was framed by a two-part recital given by the clavichord duo Johann Sonnleitner and Stefan Müller, whose primary musical interest lies in the use of clavichords with 24 keys to the octave, and music that was specially written for the possibilities of extended tonality.

The programme began with several *contrapuncti* from Bach's *Art of Fugue*, some performed as solos, while others were arranged as duos, the



*Photo: Stefan Müller*

Clavichord with twelve additional keys in each octave, to provide for Heiner Ruland's extended tonality

four voices being divided between the two players. The resulting clear polyphony emphasized the dialogue between the two clavichords.<sup>1</sup>

Two of the three clavichords on stage were 24-keyed instruments. They can be played as normal clavichords, or can be used to perform music which includes intervals not usually associated with Western music. In addition to the standard keyboard, there is a row of twelve keys placed between the normal keys. These additional keys with their tangents operate on the existing strings; the clavichords are therefore fretted instruments. The 24 keys in this tempered system allow for unusual interval combinations such as the 'alp horn F' and the 'natural seventh' which occur in the overtone sequence, and whose frequencies are in simple whole-number ratios. Heiner Ruland (b. 1934), the pioneer in the field of 'extended tonality', worked with these intervals, appending the natural tones to our system of twelve tone centres. The use of these 'new' sounds integrated into our traditional tonality creates an experience in which our understanding of the relationship between consonance and dissonance is extended.<sup>2</sup>

Appropriately enough, several pieces by Ruland were performed in order to demonstrate the quarter-tone clavichords and to illuminate the sounds of extended tonality. After the business meeting and concluding refreshments, the audience was treated to Stefan Müller's performance of one of his own compositions, *Zirkelspiel*, written in the style of Ruland but containing expanded modulations.

The clavichords were built by Michael Scheer (fretted with six octaves, after the instrument by José Grabalos in the Barcelona museum), Rudolf Käppeli (24-keyed) and Florian Sonnleitner (24-keyed).

## Notes

1. The same performers' duo recording of *The Art of Fugue* is reviewed on pp. 23–4 of this Newsletter.
2. More information about music in the extended tonal system can be found at [www.erweiterte-tonalitaet.ch](http://www.erweiterte-tonalitaet.ch).