

PETER MICHAEL HAMEL belongs to a new generation of German composers who have adamantly rejected the intensely scientific approach of their own teachers. While not entirely abandoning the discoveries of the serialists, they are attempting to restore a sense of humanism to their art.

Hamel has shown a genuine interest in Oriental tradition and has explored the more meditative use of music. Much of his music is preoccupied with creating a state of balance that is at once both outwardly quiescent and inwardly compelling. He uses a stable pulse and a “modular” arrangement of musical structure organized according to a subtly unfolding spiral of pitches. But unlike the American minimalists, Hamel does not confine himself to simple, often redundant modes. Instead, he employs the full chromatic scale with all potential for expression and color.

The happy union of consonance and dissonance, of regularity and surprise, produces a music of considerable grace and beauty that points to a new significant direction for repetitive music.

– John Adams, Conductor and composer, San Francisco