

New Notes for Slowest Song!

The longest song in the world finally plays a new chord!



Organist Julian Lembke adds the second pipe to the organ.

When you hear a song on the radio, it lasts for a couple of minutes. But in Germany's St. Burchardi church, an organ has been playing a tune for *19 years*. This song just changed its sound — for the first time in seven years!

The organ has been playing the same five notes since 2013. To change the sound, two new pipes were put in. This added the notes G sharp and E. On Saturday, people gathered at the church in the town of Halberstadt. They couldn't wait to hear the new chord! (See Video.)

The organ sounds are part of a song called "As Slow as Possible." The composition is the slowest in the world. Musician John Cage wrote the piece. He gave the instruction to play it as slow as possible. Cage died in 1992. But a group took his instruction and gave it new life nearly 10 years later.

Rainer Neugebauer is a volunteer for the John Cage Organ Project. He said Cage composed the song in 1985 for the piano. Organs can hold notes longer than pianos though. So the piece was reworked for an organ. The group decided to play it very slowly. So the instrument started playing in 2001. And the song won't end until 2640!

Neugebauer explained how the group chose the length of the song. He said the world's first modern organ was built in 1361. That was 639 years before the year 2000. The group decided that "As Slow as Possible" should last for that same amount of time!

The next chord change will happen on February 5, 2022. Music fans of today won't be around to hear the end of the song. But for now, they can keep enjoying the strange and *sl-o-o-w* tune.

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By Teresa Johnson

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