

## LUIGI NONO (1924–1990)

Como una ola de fuerza y luz  
for soprano, piano, orchestra and tape (1971–1972)

- |   |   |       |
|---|---|-------|
| 1 | Invocation and lamentation of Luciano                         | 06:32 |
| 2 | Luciano's presence in his absence                             | 09:02 |
| 3 | The Long March  | 09:59 |
| 4 | Collective explosion in the certainty<br>of Luciano's absence | 04:45 |

Claudia Barainsky *soprano*  
Jan Michiels *piano*  
André Richard *sound projection*  
SWR Experimentalstudio *electronics*  
Reinhold Braig *sound director assistant*  
WDR Sinfonieorchester  
Peter Rundel *conductor*

- |   |  |       |
|---|--|-------|
| 5 | .....sofferte onde serene...<br>for piano and tape (1975–1977) | 13:55 |
|---|--|-------|

Jan Michiels *piano*  
Paulo de Assis *sound projection*

## PAULO DE ASSIS (\*1969)

- |   |  |       |
|---|--|-------|
| 6 | unfolding waves... con luigi nono<br>for orchestra and three instrumental groups (2012)<br>commissioned by WDR | 14:08 |
|---|--|-------|

WDR Sinfonieorchester  
Peter Rundel, Léo Warinsky *conductors*

TT 58:47

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5 Funkhaus Wallrafplatz, Cologne

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5 9 Dec 2016

Sound directors: 1 2 3 4 André Richard, SWR Experimentalstudio  
5 Paulo de Assis, Orpheus Institute

Sound directors assistant: 1 2 3 4 Reinhold Braig

Sound engineers: 1 2 3 4 6 Christoph Gronarz  
5 Thomas Sehringer

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Executive producer: Harry Vogt

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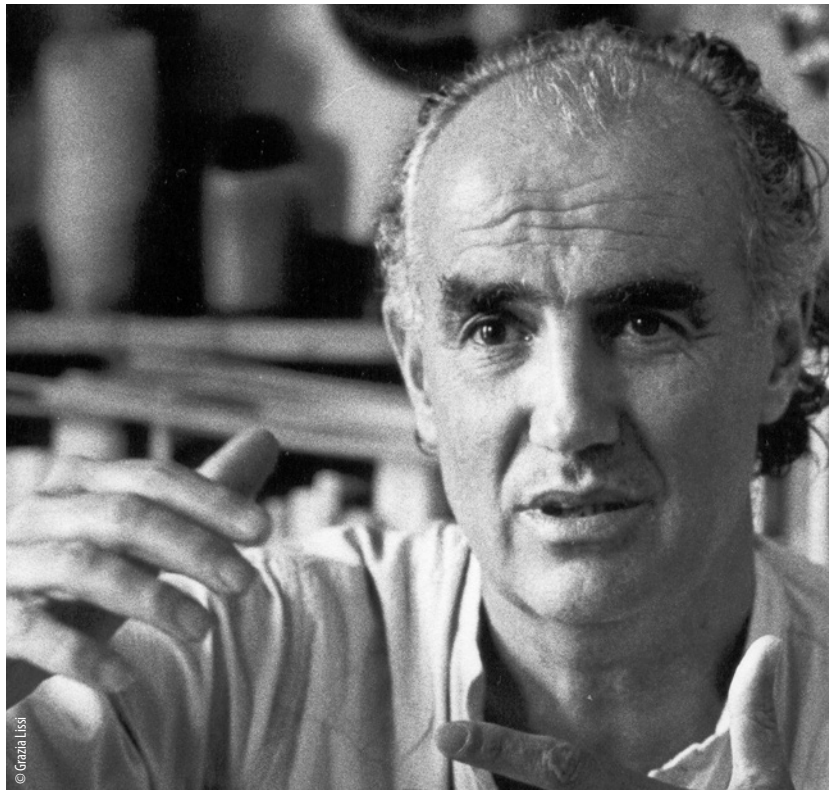
## Waves of Grief and Sorrow

*Como una ola de fuerza y luz* and .....*sofferte onde serene*... are Luigi Nono's only two pieces specifically conceived "for" piano. Though they exhibit many compositional and aesthetic differences, both pieces share some important features. Both were composed for Nono's friend and pianist Maurizio Pollini, who provided the basic sonic materials for their tapes and who premiered, recorded, and often played them in concert. Both works include electronic tapes whose acoustic materials consist of piano sounds recorded by Pollini (in *Como una ola de fuerza y luz* also by the soprano Slavka Taskova), leading to an auditory (con)fusion between the recorded sounds and those played live. The titles of both pieces allude to "waves": waves of strength and light, or waves of suffering and serenity. Finally, both pieces are memorial works; they are profoundly expressive of death, grief, and sorrow, communicating a deep feeling of suffering and despair, of struggle and defeat, but also of hope, serenity, and light.

In 1975 a "bitter wind of death" – as Nono labelled it – blew over his own and Pollini's families, leading to a change of title from the originally intended *Notturmi-Albe* to the highly poetic .....*sofferte onde serene*..., a delicate reflection on life and death. In a rather contemplative mode, a static temporality allows for a serene gaze on death, out of which new shapes and energies might emerge. Four years before, in *Como una ola de fuerza y luz*, it was the unexpected death of Luciano Cruz that dramatically changed Nono's original plan, which shifted from a

piece for piano and orchestra to a monumental cantata for soprano, piano, large orchestra and tape. Compared to the contemplative waves of .....*sofferte onde serene*..., this older waves "of strength and light" conveys a completely different approach to death and its consequences for the living. It is a powerful and engaged protest against the unexpected death of a young revolutionary, a condemnation of social and political forms of oppression, and a plea for a revolutionary élan ("the long march") that, however, is condemned to capitulation as the last, resigned waves from the end of the tape, unmistakably communicate.

Devised after a period of total immersion in Nono's sketches and study of his compositional techniques, *unfolding waves*... *con luigi nono* was originally intended as a transcription of .....*sofferte onde serene*... for two orchestras. However, it became an autonomous work, expanding and transcoding some main features of Nono's piece, while totally suppressing both piano and tape: the original piano score is extrapolated into a full orchestra placed on stage, while the sonorities of the tape are sonically "photographed" as realistically as possible, and played by acoustic instruments distributed in three groups around the audience. Beyond grief and sorrow, *unfolding waves*... *con luigi nono* is a reflection on music and on listening through the exploration of multiple temporalities and of indiscernible sounds, changing sonorities that were originally electronic into instrumental sounds.



## LUIGI NONO (1924–1990)

*Como una ola de fuerza y luz* (1971–1972)  
for soprano, piano, orchestra and tape, ALN 38

Between April and June 1971, after the democratic election of Salvador Allende's government, Luigi Nono visited Chile for three months, meeting several artists, composers and politicians, among whom was Luciano Cruz Aguayo, one of the leaders of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR, Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria). Back in Italy, Nono started working on his next musical composition, which was meant to be a piece for piano and orchestra, for Maurizio Pollini and Claudio Abbado. In August 1971, Nono and Pollini started making studio recordings for the new piece at the Studio di Fonologia della RAI in Milano, exploring diverse piano sonorities and their possibilities for electronic treatment in view of the realization of a tape. Shortly after that, the news of the accidental death of Luciano Cruz Aguayo arrived, leading to a fundamental change of Nono's compositional plans. Luciano's "presence in the absence" became the motto of the new composition, and a memorial poem by Julio Huasi provided a text to be sung, the title of the composition, and an explicit dramaturgical program. Thus, *Como una ola de fuerza y luz* became a kind of secular requiem, musically presenting the arrival of the news of Luciano's death (Prelude), a sustained lament of Luciano in three parts (Invocation, Lamentation, Remembrance), a depiction of Luciano's struggle with the state apparatus (Struggle), an appeal to activism ("The Long March"), and a concluding Coda (Collective explo-

sion). The particular way in which this program is set to music implies a certain degree of "personification" of the instruments: the piano can be associated with the figure of Luciano; the soprano with a female figure that appears in diverse roles – as the mother, the lover, and the political companion of the hero; the orchestra (in the sketches sometimes labeled as "spiriti infernali") appears as the monster of the state apparatus; and the tape as a commentator, enhancing the character and atmosphere of every single passage. This program divides the piece in two main parts, with two sections each. The first part symbolically portrays the events of Luciano's struggling life, his death, and the sorrow for his departure, while the second part addresses our response to those events, our capacity to react, to mobilize forces and energies in order to transform Luciano's death into a trigger for future action.

### Part I (They)

1. Invocation and lamentation of Luciano [0:00–6:32]
2. Luciano's presence in the absence [6:34–15:35]

### Part II (Us)

3. The Long March [15:35–25:35]
4. Collective explosion in the certainty of  
Luciano's absence [25:35–30:19]

*Como una ola de fuerza y luz*,  
basic formal structure

Nono makes use of highly complex and elaborate post-serial compositional techniques that are employed within very tight clusters of quarters of tone. Structurally, and with a few exceptions, every pas-

sage is contained within an interval of triton or octave, an aspect that strongly contributes to the overall feeling of extreme musical tension. The soprano sings sequences of intervals that remotely relate to certain pentatonic scales used in Bulgarian folk music from the Rhodope Mountains. Both piano and orchestra are in a very tight register and play complex arrangements of rhythms that are derived from twelve "basic-rhythms", which are used in sequence, permutation, mirroring, counter-movement, superposition, etc. The "wave" from the title can be symbolically associated with several musical features of the score, such as the micro-fluctuations of pitches, rhythms, and timbres in the Prelude, the antiphonic play between piano and orchestra in the second section (*Luciano's presence in the absence*), the expanded wave of the *Long March* from the low to the high register in a slow, ten minute long progression, or the opening and concluding sonic melismas of the tape. *Como una ola de fuerza y luz* is the last instrumental work of Nono's second creative phase, a period that stretches from *Omaggio a Vedova* (1960) to the scenic action *Al gran sole carico d'amore* (1972–1974). Until then, it is his longest orchestral piece, and the one requiring the biggest number of musicians, anticipating some of the qualities and some of the problems of *Al gran sole carico d'amore*.

*Como una ola de fuerza y luz*

Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 En los  
 vientos  
 azarosos  
 de esta tierra  
 seguiras  
 flameando  
 joven como la revolución  
 en cada carga de tu pueblo  
 siempre vivo  
 y cercano  
 como el dolor de tu partida  
 Como una  
 ola  
 de fuerza  
 y  
 luz  
 voces de niños  
 doblen  
 campanas dulces  
 por  
 tu juventud

*Wie eine Woge von Kraft und Licht*

Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 in den  
 gewagten  
 stürmen  
 dieser erde  
 wirst du  
 weiter licht strahlen  
 jung wie die revolution  
 in jedem kampf deines volkes  
 stets lebendig  
 und nah  
 wie der schmerz deines todes  
 wie eine  
 woge  
 von kraft  
 und  
 wirst du weiter licht strahlen  
 licht  
 fürs leben  
 kinderstimmen  
 begleiten  
 sanfte glocken  
 für  
 deine jugend

*Like a wave of strength and light*

Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 Luciano!  
 In the  
 hazardous  
 winds  
 of this country  
 you will keep on  
 glowing  
 young as the revolution  
 in every one of your people's struggles  
 forever alive  
 and as close by  
 as the grief for your death  
 Like  
 a wave  
 of strength  
 and  
 light  
 for living  
 voices of children  
 accompany  
 gentle bells  
 for  
 your youth

Text by Luigi Nono after  
 Julio Huasi's poem  
*Luciano* (1971)

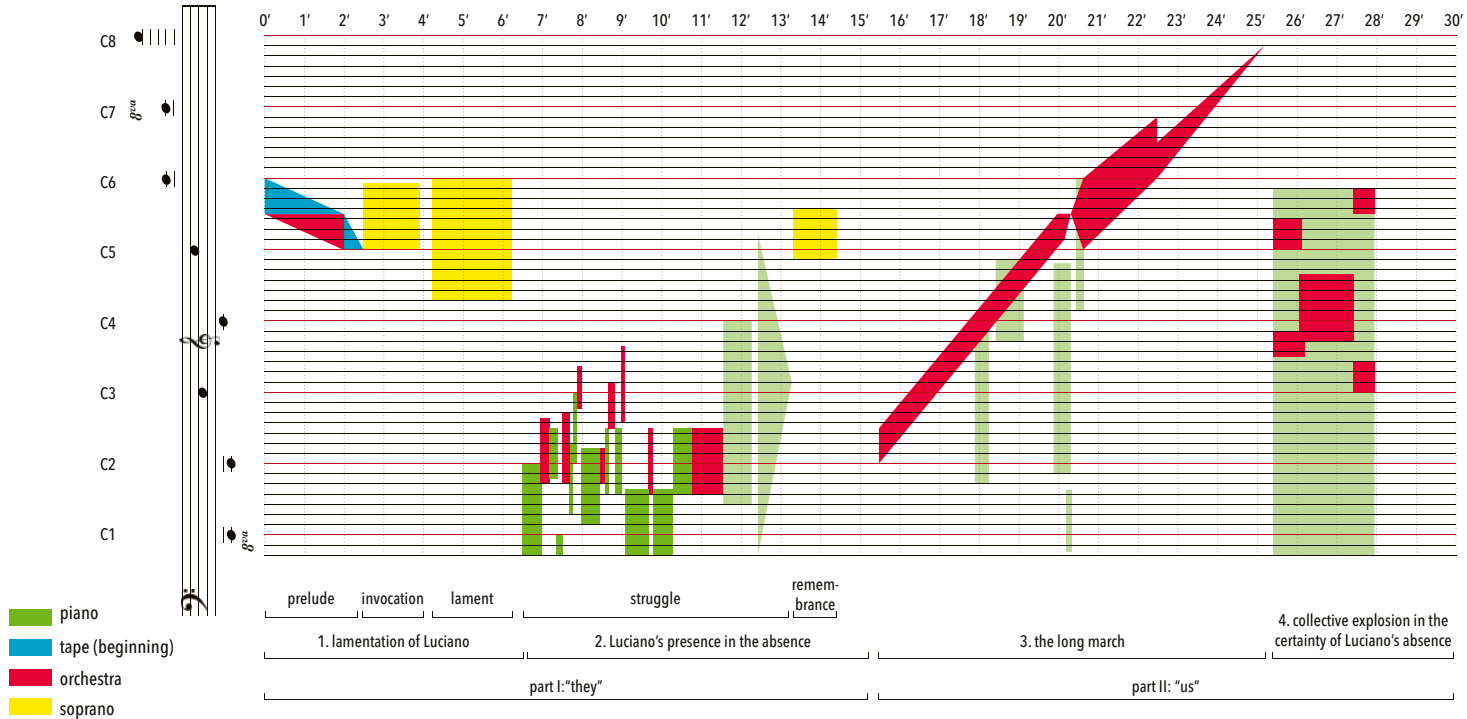


Figure 1.  
 Luigi Nono, *Como una ola de fuerza y luz*, form and overall shape. (© Paulo de Assis)

.....*sofferte onde serene*... (1975–1977)  
for piano and tape, ALN 42

Immediately after the premiere of *Al gran sole carico d'amore*, in June 1975, Luigi Nono started a profound reflection and self-criticism of his musical language and compositional techniques, a process that would lead him to a renewed way of composing. Nono's so-called "late style" doesn't start – as usually deemed – with the string quartet *Fragmente–Stille, an Diotima* (1979), but with .....*sofferte onde serene*..., the work that in more than one respect marks the beginning of his late creative period. Contrary to most of Nono's previous works .....*sofferte onde serene*... has no direct political message or contents. Its main foci are the study of Maurizio Pollini's piano sonority and playing modes, as well as the study of diverse compositional techniques and strategies. To a certain extent the piece is a renewed exploration of some constructive principles that Nono had learned in the late 1940s and early 1950s from his teachers Hermann Scherchen and Bruno Maderna, exploring variation and "canon procedures", simple formations of vertical sound aggregates, and formal plans of transparent simplicity. A simple aural comparison of .....*sofferte onde serene*... with the works that immediately precede it, such as *Como una ola de fuerza y luz* or *Al gran sole carico d'amore*, makes the shift from his "second style" (1960–75) to his "late style" all the more obvious. Nono himself stated that:

Immediately after *Al gran sole carico d'amore* there was silence, an unutterable silence [...] I felt an urgent need to study – not only regarding my musical language but also my mental

categories, and I restarted composing again with .....*sofferte onde serene*..., a piece that demanded a lot of work.

This aesthetic and ideological shift does not mean that Nono became apolitical or somehow indifferent to political issues of the day. On the contrary, in 1975 he became a member of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party. What Nono more and more realized was that his previous works, with all their explicit political engagement, had been easily misunderstood as bare 'pamphlet art', their political contents shadowing their intrinsic musical features, so that the latter were not properly perceived by the listener. Starting with .....*sofferte onde serene*... Nono's late works bring the inner musical structures and features to the foreground, focusing on small instrumental forces (for solo instrument or chamber music formations), on subtle harmonic fields with clearly differentiable vertical sound-aggregates, on extremely soft dynamics and fine articulation markings, on fragmented successions of sections, and on a highly elaborated dialogue with old historical forms. The act of listening to these works is a highly demanding process, confronting the listener with his or her capacity or difficulty of listening to the music, to him/herself, to the other.

The content of .....*sofferte onde serene*... was conceived experimentally, especially the tape component, and its concert rendering involves various degrees of uncertainty and unpredictability in the sonic results and their combinations. Nono achieves this, in the first instance, by using "shadow" sounds: similar sonorities that come sometimes from the piano,

sometimes from the tape, and that thereby generate a perceptual (con)fusion for the listener. This (con)fusion is enhanced by the relative freedom in the time-relations between the tape and the live piano, allowing the two performers (one on the piano, the other controlling the sound-projection) to create a great variety of sonic affinities. Structurally, the piece comprises five sections; each has its own specific sound material, and all use different compositional techniques. These sections and their basic shapes are schematically represented in Figure 2, which also serves as an auditory guide (see page 14–15).

#### The reconstructed stereo tape

An important feature of the recording presented in this CD is that it uses a newly produced reconstruction of the original stereo tape. The original tape was stereophonic, as can be heard in the working tapes preserved at the Archivio Luigi Nono and in several passages of the first recording of the piece, made by Deutsche Grammophon in 1977. Unfortunately, the original stereophonic tape is lost and all performances and recordings of this work made in the last forty years used a monophonic tape. In 2000, I coordinated the professional digitization of the complete working tapes related to this piece, a work done at the SWR Experimental Studio Freiburg with the support of Andre Richard and technical assistance of Michael Acker. In 2013, at the Orpheus Institute (Ghent, BE), I prepared the reconstruction of the original stereophonic tape with technical assistance of João Rafael (Freiburg). This reconstruction was made on the basis of the digitized working tapes (Archivio Luigi Nono

Tapes 71, 72, 73A, 73B, and 153), which contain the complete original materials of the final tape. The reconstructed stereo tape coincides precisely with what we can hear in the Deutsche Grammophon recording, bringing back to life the carefully composed interplay between monophonic and stereophonic sections. A striking example of Nono's work on the stereophonic dimension of the tape can be heard in the passage [9:46–9:55], where the pitch g#6 quickly moves back and forth, from left to right; this passage can be heard, with the same effect, in the Deutsche Grammophon recording, proving that the original tape was stereophonic.

Section 1

Piano

1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-22 23-25

Section 2

Tone clusters (selection)

26 27 30 32 33-35 36 39 40 41 43 48 49

Section 3

Sound aggregates (Ravenscroft)

58-59 66-73 74-85 86-88 89-101

Section 4

102-112 112-120 121-125 125-129 130-137

Section 5

138-144 145-148 149-151 152-155

Tape

0'00'' 1'55''-1'57'' 2'35''

2'45'' 3'00''

3'40'' 3'40''-3'50'' 4'15'' 4'25'' 4'50'' 7'40'' 8'17''

9'18'' 11'49''

11'50'' 13'15'' 13'17'' 13'40''

Figure 2.  
Luigi Nono, ..... *sofferte onde serene...*, form and overall shape.  
(© Paulo de Assis)





## PAULO DE ASSIS (\*1969)

*unfolding waves... con luigi nono* (2012)  
for orchestra and three instrumental groups

Starting with .....*sofferte onde serene*... Luigi Nono's renewed style of composition can probably be better understood as a pluralism of styles. Pieces like *Con Luigi Dallapiccola* (1979), *Fragmente–Stille, an Diotima* (1980), *Das atmende Klarsein* (1981), or *Quando stanno morendo – Diario polacco nr. 2* (1982) reveal substantially diverse approaches to music, making use of different compositional tools and techniques. They can all be seen as individual attempts within a wider research for new modes of expression. Crucially, as a result of Nono's conscious decision of avoiding any form of schematic thought or any kind of stratified compositional formulae, these pieces achieved some specific results that are not to be found again in any of his subsequent works. Nono was not interested anymore in repeating gestures, attitudes, or compositional strategies. Every new piece should have its own renewed musical features. In the particular case of .....*sofferte onde serene*... there are several unique and highly interesting possibilities for music composition that can be further investigated and creatively explored: simultaneous multiple temporalities, suspensions of time, meta-rhythms (where the written rhythm doesn't coincide with the sounding rhythm), variation techniques referring to virtual (non-sounding) constellations of pitches, dense canonical techniques generating sonic textures of kaleidoscopic nature, and use of electronic sounds as if produced by acoustic instruments. *unfolding waves... con luigi*

*nono* is an attempt to transcode these possibilities into a large orchestra, divided into four instrumental groups spread around the audience. Originally intended as a transcription of .....*sofferte onde serene*... for two orchestras, it became an autonomous work, expanding its features and suggesting yet another "style" of composition. The piano score is extrapolated and expanded into a full orchestra placed on stage, while the sonorities of the tape are sonically "photographed", being played by acoustic instruments distributed in three groups around the audience. This hyper spatialization of the instrumental groups resonates with Nono's later works such as *No hay caminos, hay que caminar...* *Andrej Tarkowskij* (1987) and *Caminantes...* *Ayacucho* (1987), but two other references have been important to this work: Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Gruppen* (1955–1957) and Helmut Lachenmann's *Mouvement (– vor der Erstarung)* (1982/84). *unfolding waves... con luigi nono* is dedicated to Giovanni Morelli.

*Paulo de Assis*

$\text{♩} = 54 \text{ ca. rtt.} \dots \text{♩} = 44 \text{ ca.}$   
**Riferimento 1**  
 $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ ca. rtt.} \dots \text{♩} = 54 \text{ ca.}$   
**ATTACCA 3° ca. DOPO RE. 4**  
**Riferimento 1**  
 $\text{♩} = 54 \text{ ca. rtt.} \dots \text{♩} = 44 \text{ ca.}$   
**Riferimento 1**  
 $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ ca.}$   
**ATTACCA 3° ca. DOPO RE. 4**  
 $\text{♩} = 54 \text{ ca.}$

Paulo de Assis, *unfolding waves...*  
 con luigi nono, Orchestra A,  
 bars 8–11

**Riferimento 6**  
**ATTENZIONE ORCH.**  
**FRONT GROUP**  
**TACET until bar 160**  
**RIGHT GROUP**

Paulo de Assis, *unfolding waves...*  
 con luigi nono, Orchestra B,  
 bars 112b–116



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## SWR Experimentalstudio

The SWR Experimentalstudio in Freiburg (Germany) searches for syntheses in terms of acoustic arts and advanced technology through the medium of live-electronic sound-extension. This supplements the tones generated by musicians through different effect-devices to their modulation, which are put into motion in space by specific steering systems and loudspeakers. The SWR Experimentalstudio considers itself as gateway between compositional idea and technical realisation. Therefore, several composers and musicians are invited every year for a work-scholarship for being able to realise their works in a creative discourse with the specialized equipment as well as the team of the SWR Experimentalstudio, e.g. music information scientists, sound designers, sound-engineers and sound-directors.

Apart from creating new works together with the composers, the SWR Experimentalstudio also performs as an ensemble and is regularly invited worldwide. After 40 years of presence in the international new music business it has established itself as leading ensemble for performing ambitious compositions with live-electronics and gives concerts regularly at almost all important festivals (like Berliner Festwochen, Wiener Festwochen, Salzburger Festspiele, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Biennale di Venezia) as well as many well-known music theatres (like Teatro alla Scala Milan, Carnegie Hall New York, Théâtre de la Monnaie Brussels, Teatro Real Madrid) to name but a few.

Outstanding compositions in music history that were created at the SWR Experimentalstudio were creat-

ed there by well-known composers such as Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Cristobal Halffter, Vinko Globokar, Emmanuel Nunes and Luigi Nono, whereas Nono produced almost all works of his late period in close relationship with the studio and its team there. Since its first performance, his "tragedia dell'ascolto" *Prometeo* has been realized through the SWR Experimentalstudio and his former artistic director André Richard more than 50 times, and can be called as a milestone in music history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that points the way forward.

The younger generation of composers is represented by such names as Mark Andre, Chaya Czernowin, José María Sánchez-Verdú and Georg Friedrich Haas. They can be considered as the ones who have written very successfully forward-looking pieces in co-production with the SWR Experimentalstudio.

Outstanding music figures who can look back on a long term relationship with the SWR Experimentalstudio are Maurizio Pollini, Claudio Abbado, Gidon Kremer, Jörg Widmann, Irvine Arditti and Roberto Fabbriciani.

The SWR Experimentalstudio was awarded several international prizes for his exemplarily work, recently with the Jahrespreis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik for the CD-production of works by Luigi Nono.

Since October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, Detlef Heusinger is appointed the new artistic director of the SWR Experimentalstudio.

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