

8 August 2007

Luigi Nono: Fragments of Venice

1 – 31 October 2007 & 9 – 10 May 2008

Nono Festival Culminates in UK Premiere of Masterpiece *Prometeo*

Southbank Centre, Italian Cultural Institute, Royal Academy of Music, St John's Smith Square, Westminster Cathedral

Festival Patron: His Excellency Giancarlo Aragona, Ambassador of Italy

Running from October 2007 through to May 2008, **Luigi Nono – Fragments of Venice** is a celebration of one of the most pioneering and influential composers of the 20th century, Luigi Nono (1924 – 1990). The festival, which takes place at Southbank Centre and other venues around London, is designed as a journey for the audience, giving the chance to explore music written across the centuries for the buildings and spaces of Venice. From one of Venice's first great spatially-inspired compositions – Monteverdi's *Vespers* of 1610 – to the culmination of the festival with the long awaited **UK premiere** of Nono's masterpiece *Prometeo*, the festival looks at this rarely-performed composer from many different aspects. In addition to the music of Nono, the festival covers other Italian composers including Monteverdi, Vivaldi and Dallapiccola.

The festival is a collaboration with the **Royal Academy of Music** and includes Southbank Centre Artists in Residence the **London Sinfonietta**, **The Sixteen**, and the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** as well as **Maurizio Pollini**, the **Arditti Quartet**, **André Richard** and the **Freiburg Sound Studio**, **New London Consort** and **Westminster Cathedral Choir**. There are also opportunities to delve further into the music with a series of **talks**, **research forums** and **films**. The project has been planned in consultation with **Nuria Schoenberg-Nono**, the composer's widow, and daughter of composer Arnold Schoenberg. There will also be an on-site installation during March and April 2008.

Luigi Nono is a major figure of 20th-century modernism. His cult status and enormous reputation has grown since his death in 1990, yet his music is rarely performed in this country. A contemporary of Boulez, Stockhausen and Berio, Nono's work is enjoyed by audiences today because of his theatrical approach to space and his pioneering electronic work.

The festival opens on 1 October with an all-Nono concert in the Queen Elizabeth Hall by Resident Ensemble the London Sinfonietta conducted by Diego Masson. The concert traces the composer's musical life from the politically-charged idealism of his early work to the delicately introspective, but still subversive music of his twilight years. Works include

Variatione Canoniche (1949) which shows strong roots in Schoenberg's music, and was an explicit anti-fascist statement from the young composer who had been a member of the Italian Resistance during the Second World War.

For the second concert on 3 October, focus moves to the Italian Cultural Institute in a concert by young Italian artists, the violinist Riccardo Minasi and harpsichordist Luca Guglielmi. The programme explores the musical traditions of the first Venetian school ('Stilo Novo') which was formed by composers such as Marini, Fontana and Castello. Together they form a group dedicated to the same sense of radical experimentation as their later fellow Venetian, Luigi Nono.

On 5 October there is the opportunity to hear one of the first great 'spatial pieces' written – Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* – in Westminster Cathedral performed by the Cathedral Choir and the New London Concert under Martin Baker. The *Vespers* was first printed in Venice when the composer was working at the ducal court in Mantua. The historical record does not indicate whether Monteverdi actually performed the *Vespers* either in Mantua or Venice but it is believed that the work may have been written as an audition piece for a post at Venice (Monteverdi became maestro di cappella at St. Mark's basilica in Venice in 1613). Ways of presenting the *Vespers* vary, but it is known that festal performances in St. Mark's, Venice were spectacular and made full use of the effects that could be obtained by distributing the performers around the building.

The following three events on 16 and 17 October are at the Royal Academy of Music. In a lunchtime event on the 16th violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved explores the political developments of the 1960s in the context of Nono's work. The following day the Manson Ensemble present works by Nono, Boulez and Kurtág (Nono's great contemporaries to whom his own works are addressed). In a pre-concert performance, RAM students and GCSE and A level musicians from London schools present pieces which employ electronic music concepts pioneered by Nono. This project has been led by composers Patrick Nunn and Milton Mermikides.

There is a return to Westminster Cathedral on 18 October when Southbank Centre Resident's, The Sixteen, perform alongside the Cathedral Choir, the Symphony of Harmony and Invention and the RAM Brass Soloists in a programme celebrating the great music performed in St Mark's, Venice during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. The concert includes music by Monteverdi and Gabrieli with processional plainsong linking to renaissance polyphony, and brass resounding from the galleries.

The Royal Academy of Music hosts a Nono research day with talks, roundtable discussions and a workshop on 19 October. The illustrious participants include Nono's widow, Nuria Schoenberg-Nono, Irvine Arditti, Simon Bainbridge and Neil Heyde. Nono was referred to as 'Master of sound and silence' and later that evening Diego Masson conducts the RAM Manson Ensemble and baritone George Humphreys in a programme which includes the composer's early *Polifonica – monodia – ritmica*, a work which shows that the spaces between the notes are as important as the notes themselves.

Composers Varèse and Maderna influenced Nono's development in the early part of his career, and on 22 October the Royal Academy of Music students take the stage in a concert which presents Nono's violin duo together with solo and duo works by the two composers. Others who inspired Nono were Schoenberg and his students Webern and Berg, and in a concert by the Arditti Quartet and Claron McFadden on 23 October there is an opportunity to hear all three of these composers. The programme includes one of Nono's earliest works for string quartet, *Fragmente-Stille*.

A concert on 25 October looks back at Nono's musical predecessors and in particular the way Venetian music has a special affinity with space. Southbank Centre Resident, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, joins the ensemble Schola Pietatis Antonio Vivaldi in a programme of works written for Santa Maria de la Pietà, where Vivaldi taught. During Vivaldi's lifetime the foundling girls of the Pietà were celebrated as one of Europe's finest collection of musicians and this concert at St John's Smith Square is the ideal London location in which to create the musical space of the old Pietà and the performances of Vivaldi's talented young female performers. Prior to the concert, modern instrument makers discuss and demonstrate replica instruments in the Beckett Collection of instruments.

Focussing back on Nono, on 26 October the Royal Academy of Music hosts a research forum with Milton Mermikedes (composer, producer, music researcher and audio expert). For this, Mermikedes discusses Nono's electronic music and its realisation for this festival.

The autumn concerts for *Luigi Nono: Fragments of Venice* conclude on 31 October with two concerts in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. The first of these is by long-time champion of the music of Luigi Nono, pianist Maurizio Pollini. For this concert he is joined by other musicians including the Freiburg Sound Studio and Cologne Percussion Quartet. The performances will include some of Nono's finest piano and chamber works including the work for piano and electronic tape written specially for Pollini ...*sofferte onde serene*.... A late night concert follows by Irvine Arditti and sound designer André Richard with a performance of Nono's *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura*.

Luigi Nono: Fragments of Venice continues in the concert halls from 4 May 2008 as Southbank Centre prepares audiences for the UK premiere of *Prometeo*. A study day on Nono's work and life is presented on 4 May entitled *Understanding Nono*. Nono's work provokes many questions: How should we listen to music? What is the meaning of a piece such as *Prometeo*? What can we learn from his genius? During this day these and many other questions will be investigated with leading colleagues and commentators on Nono such as André Richard, Stefan Litwin and Nuria Schoenberg-Nono. As well as addressing these questions, the day is designed as a preparation for audiences intending to attend *Prometeo* the following weekend.

Towards the end of his life, Nono wrote and premiered in his home city of Venice a remarkable spatially-inspired composition which is recognised as the summation of his creative output. This colossal work *Prometeo* for multiple orchestras, voices, narrators and synthesised sound redefined the very act of public listening and will receive its UK premiere on 9 and 10 May. The work has sometimes been referred to as an 'anti-opera'. Entitled *Prometheus, the Tragedy of Listening*, the libretto is by one of Venice's most famous

Mayors, the philosopher Massimo Cacciari, including texts by Hesiod, Aeschylus, Holderlin and Benjamin. The piece is an immense undertaking for producers, performers and audiences alike. This premiere in the Royal Festival Hall brings together conductors Diego Masson and Patrick Bailey directing the London Sinfonietta, RAM Manson Ensemble, Freiburg Sound Studio and sound designer André Richard.

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LUIGI NONO: FRAGMENTS OF VENICE

Monday 1 October, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

London Sinfonietta

Diego Masson *conductor*

Nono: *Incontri*; 'No hay caminos hay que caminar...Andrej Tarkowsij'; *Variazione canoniche sulla serie dell'op.41 di Arnold Schoenberg*

Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No.1

Tickets: £8-£22

6.15pm: Pre-concert talk. Admission free.

Nuria Schoenberg Nono talks to Christopher Cook about her husband's life and music.

Wednesday 3 October, 7pm, Italian Cultural Institute

Riccardo Minasi *violin*

Luca Guglielmi *harpsichord*

The First Venetian School

Palestrina: *Vestiva I colli* (arr. Francesco Rognoni)

Giovanni Battista Fontana: Sonata No.2 for violin and bass

Dario Castello: Sonata No.2

Marco Uccellini: *La lucimonia contenta*

Monteverdi: *Quel sguardo sdegnosetto*

Biagio Marini: *Capriccio 'in moda di Lira'* (from Op.8)

Giovanni Picchi: *Toccata* for keyboard

Giovanni Buonaventura Viviani: *Symphonia* No.1

Isabella Leonarda: Sonata, Op.16, No.12

Tickets: £5 unreserved, free to members of the Italian Cultural Institute

Monday 15 October, 7.30pm, Westminster Cathedral

Westminster Cathedral Choir

New London Consort

Martin Baker *conductor*

Monteverdi: *Vespro della Beata Vergine, 1610*

Tickets: £13-£40

6pm: Pre-concert talk. Lord John Julius Norwich discusses Venice in the Day of Monteverdi. Admission free.

Tuesday 16 October, 12.30pm – 2pm, Strings Gallery, Royal Academy of Music

Soundbox

Violinist **Peter Sheppard Skærved** explores the political developments of the 1960s in the context of Nono's work.

Free admission, no ticket required

Wednesday 17 October, 6pm, Duke's Hall, Royal Academy of Music

Electro-exchange

This pre-concert performance is the culmination of a collaboration between students from the Royal Academy of Music and GCSE and A level musicians from London schools. Led by composers **Patrick Nunn** and **Milton Mermikides**, the students have created new electro-acoustic compositions inspired by the electronic works of Luigi Nono. These pieces will employ electronic music concepts pioneered by Nono including spatialization, timbral modulation and live interaction.

Free admission no ticket required

Wednesday 17 October, 7.30pm, Royal Academy of Music

Royal Academy of Music Manson Ensemble

Christopher Austin *conductor*

Nono: *A Pierre (Dell'azzurro silenzio, inquietum)*

Boulez: *Dérive I* (1984)

Alexander Campkin, RAM student composer: New work

Kurtág: *Requiem for the Beloved*, Op.26

Nono: *Omaggio a György Kurtág*

Tickets: £4-£6

Thursday 18 October, 7.30pm, Westminster Cathedral

Westminster Cathedral Choir

The Sixteen

Martin Baker *conductor*

Harry Christophers *conductor*

Royal Academy of Music Brass Soloists

Robert Farley *director*

Programme to include:

Monteverdi: *Beatus vir* à 6; *Gloria*; *Magnificat primo* à 8

Gabrieli: *Exultet iam angelica* à 14

Tickets: £13-£40

Friday 19 October, 12.30pm – 6pm, Concert Room, Royal Academy of Music

Research Forum

A research day on the music of Nono, with talks, roundtable discussion, and a workshop on *Hay que caminar* soñada for two violins. Participants include **Irvine Arditti**, **Simon**

Bainbridge, **Neil Heyde** and **Nuria Schoenberg-Nono**.

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday 19 October, 7.30pm, Royal Academy of Music

Royal Academy of Music Manson Ensemble

Diego Masson *conductor*

George Humphreys *baritone*

Dallapiccola: *Piccola Musica Notturna*

Maderna: *Serenata per un satellite* (1959)

Nono: *Polifonica – monodia – ritmica*

Robert Szymanek, RAM student composer – New work

Schoenberg: *Serenade Op.24*

Tickets: £4-£6

Monday 22 October, 6pm, David Josefowitz Recital Hall, Royal Academy of Music

Royal Academy of Music Students

Maderna: *Dialodia for two instruments*

Varèse: *Density 21.5*

Paul Evernden, RAM student composer: New work

Nono: *Hay que caminar' soñando*

Admission free, no ticket required

Tuesday 23 October, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

International Chamber Music Season

Arditti String Quartet

Claron McFadden *soprano*

Webern: *Six Bagatelles, Op.9*

Nono: *Fragmente-Stille* for string quartet

Schoenberg: *String Quartet No.2, Op.10*

Tickets: £9-£30

Thursday 25 October, 7.30pm, St John's, Smith Square

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Pavlo Beznosiuk *director/violin*

Joanne Lunn *soprano*

Kati Debretzeni *violin*

Scuola Pietatis Antonio Vivaldi

Vivaldi: *Lauda Jerusalem*, RV.609; *Salve Regina*, RV.617; *Concerto for Violin in D*, RV.212;

Concerto for 2 violins and 2 organs, RV.584; *Gloria*, RV.589

Tickets: £6-£35

6.15pm: Modern instruments makers discuss and play instruments from the Becket Collection of instruments, introduced by OAE viola player Martin Kelly. Admission free.

Friday 26 October, 12.30pm – 2pm, Piano Gallery, Royal Academy of Music

Research Forum

A discussion on Nono's electronic music, and its realisation for this festival with Milton Mermikedes.

Free admission

Wednesday 31 October, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Maurizio Pollini *piano*

Alain Damiens *clarinet*

Sara Ercoli *voice*

Margot Nies *voice*

Terence Roe *voice*

Cologne Percussion Quartet

Freiburg Sound Studio

André Richard *sound design*

Schoenberg: *Three Pieces* for piano, Op.11; *Six Little Pieces* for piano, Op.19

Berg: *Four Pieces* for clarinet and piano, Op.5

Nono: *...sofferte onde serene...*; *Djamila Boupacha* for solo voice; *A Floresta è jovem e cheia de vida*

Tickets: £9-£30

Wednesday 31 October, 10pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Irvine Arditti *violin*

André Richard *sound design*

Nono: *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura*

Tickets: £5

Sunday 4 May, 11am – 5pm, Purcell Room

Understanding Nono

Study day on Luigi Nono's work and life. Participants include Nuria Schoenberg-Nono, André Richard, Stefan Litwin, Christopher Cook and Marshall Marcus.

Tickets: £12

Friday 9 and Saturday 10 May, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Diego Masson *conductor*

Patrick Bailey *conductor*

London Sinfonietta

Royal Academy of Music Manson Ensemble

Freiburg Sound Studio

André Richard *sound design*

Nono: *Prometeo* (UK premiere)

Tickets: £25 unreserved

Ticket Office: 08703 800 400

Online booking: www.southbankcentre.co.uk