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Audiogrammi of a Collective Intelligence: The Composers-Researchers of S2FM, SMET, N.P.S. and other Mavericks

Laura Zattra

Introduction

In 1955, composers Luciano Berio and Bruno Maderna's diplomatic and forward-looking capacities led to the foundation of Italy's first electronic music studio: the Studio di Fonologia della RAI in Milan, a studio developed in the state broadcasting company and dependent from it (De Benedictis 2009; Novati & Dack 2012). The Studio marks the first era of the Italian electronic music production, and has always been considered a centralized experience (Giomi 2002; Mayr 2003). The studio was in Milan, the nation's economic capital and second largest city after Rome.

All festivals, theatres, concert seasons, musicians, directors, musicologists and music critics gravitated around Rome and Milan, till the first half of the 1960s. There had been very few exceptions, such as the *Teatro delle Novità* in Bergamo, an important scene where new music operas by young composers were premiered every year, from 1931 to 1973. Moreover, beyond doubt, in Italy the largest part of live performances consisted in classical music concerts and operas (melodramas), both in the capital cities and in the provinces.

Ten years after the Studio di Fonologia della RAI in Milan, as other electronic music centres started to open their doors, an entirely different style of approaching and creating electric sound-based music emerged. This article deals with these parallel, often outcast experiences that helped introduce new forms of sound-based art in Italy. The chapter runs through a series of events that saw the birth of three electronic music centres: the S2FM (Studio di Fonologia Musicale) in Florence, 1963; the SMET (Studio di Musica Elettronica) in Turin, 1964; and the Gruppo N.P.S. (Nuove Proposte Sonore) in Padova, 1965. I will also consider other musical and artistic experiences, such as the live electronics ensembles Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza (1964), the MEV – Musica Electronica Viva

group (1966), and the radical open-air exhibition/performance *Parole sui muri* (*Words on walls*) near Modena (1967-1968).

The historical experiences of the 1960s-early 1970s presented and discussed herein epitomize the determination to reform the traditional, institutionalized and centralized Italian music scene, especially introducing new artistic practices such as collaborative creation, anonymity, “multimedia” or “cross-media” events; in a nutshell, a novel radical approach to music. Protagonists, whom I will discuss in the next pages, did not use the term Sound Art *per se*, but they introduced a whole new series of experiments that eventually match with the definition. Hence, their approach to sound places them as precursors of this art movement.

My definition of the term “Sound Art” builds on Alan Licht’s (2007) classification, and includes other properties. To me, sound Art is a non-time based, non programmatic sound experience, “not about a stage show” (Licht 2007, 13), «is defined by the space (and/or acoustic space) rather than time» (ivi, 16), and is a “trip” (ivi). Additionally, I also do believe (my definition) that Sound Art is:

- (1) any total sound-based experience that calls into questions traditional “time” and “space” categories. Of course, spatial experimentations – the possibility to position sound sources scattered around the space – are not new in the history of music, particularly Italian music. Suffice it to think to medieval and renaissance antiphonal choirs, written by *maestri di cappella* and composers Adrian Willaert in the 1540s, or Giovanni Gabrieli in the late XVI century for the St. Mark basilica in Venice, a technique soon imitated in other Italian churches. Or the “offstage” instruments or choirs since the XIX century: the offstage trumpet in *Leonore/Fidelio* ouverture n. 3 (1806), the oboe in the third movement of Hector Berlioz’ *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830). Among the first experiments with technology, the first multimedia works/installations were undoubtedly Edgar Varèse’s *Poème électronique* (1958), the *pupitre de relief* build for the spatialization of the *Symphonie pour un homme*

seul by Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry (1949) and *HPSCHD* by John Cage (1969) that lasted for several hours (Licht 2009).

- (2) Sound Art is an art-form that challenges traditional ideas of musical notation and score (the “neutral level” in semiotics).
- (3) Sound Art is not based in the Romantic musical production chain (“composer-score-orchestra/performers-concert-listeners”); quite the contrary, it is most of the time shaped by a collaborative activity (Becker 1974; 1972), and at the highest level, is the result of a “collective intelligence” (Pierre Lévy 1997).
- (4) Finally, Sound Art involves the use of machines, technology, instruments or *dispositifs* in general, in search of forward-looking *experimentation* to generate original musical ideas (I use the word ‘original’ here deliberately).

This latter point deserves more attentive consideration. It is true that no artistic practice can ever be experimental in itself, or from beginning to end (During et al. 2009, 15). According to Adrian Martin, «experimentation has a local usage, it cannot hold a maximal opening to experimental. It could be recovered from the concept of *dispositif* (devise, system, framework) where there is a ‘game’ at stake» (Martin 2014). I believe in the concept of *dispositif*, that is «a game with rules, where the execution of the game’s moves – the following of the rules – generates outcomes, results and sometimes surprises» (ibidem).

If we consider Sound Art and Electroacoustic Music (the whole genre from its historical debuts up until the present experimentations) it would be difficult not to agree with the idea that the most interesting and ground-breaking works (and musical researches) are the ones which have an interesting *dispositif* at their core. A *dispositif* is basically «the arrangement of diverse elements in such a way as to trigger, guide and organise a set of actions» (Martin 2014). My idea is that Sound Art and Electroacoustic Music are – and should always be – research towards experimentation. Crucial preconditions to generate an interesting, experimental, original artworks are the interest for knowledge, transmission

and representation of this knowledge, a deep awareness of the state of the art, and a re-opening to questions instead of answers at the end of the process [Dombois 2009].

The historical experiences of the 1960s-early 1970s outlined in the next pages are innovative in the sense that they promoted new practices of composing, thinking and performing music, and therefore may be seen as pioneering achievements of Sound Art works. The article is both a sociological analysis and a history of sound based art in Italy over the period under consideration.

S2FM, SMET, N.P.S. and other Mavericks

I will begin with a brief historical introduction of the Italian experiences of the 1960s-early 1970s. The S2FM (Studio di Fonologia Musicale) was created by cellist/composer Pietro Grossi in Florence in 1963; the SMET (Studio di Musica Elettronica) in Turin by Enore Zaffiri in 1964. The Gruppo N.P.S. (Nuove Proposte Sonore) was initiated in Padova by pianist/composer Teresa Rampazzi and kinetic artist Ennio Chiggio in 1965. The four were friends and colleagues. They collaborated whilst avoiding being competitors, they had many ambitions in common, they aimed not only at supporting teamwork between composers, musicians and technicians; they fully opened to national and international collaborations, a network of exchanges that this article considers, along with the profound interest and connexion with the realm of visual arts and new ideas on composing.

The radical approach to sound-based music was similarly embraced by live electronics ensembles who made group improvisation with acoustic and electronic instruments: the Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza founded by Franco Evangelisti in 1964 (Bertolani 2014) that included Mario Bertoncini, Aldo Clementi, Roland Kayn, Ivan Vandor (from Europe) and Larry Austin and John Eaton from America. And the MEV - Musica Elettronica Viva Group, a live acoustic/electronic improvisational group formed in Rome in 1966, and consisting of expatriate American composers (Alvin Curran, Allan Bryant, Frederic Rzewski, Jon Phetteplace, and Richard Teitelbaum).

Along with other revolutionary initiatives, such as the open-air exhibition/performance *Parole sui muri* (*Words on walls*) in Fiumalbo (near Modena) in August 1967-1968, these institutions, groups, studios, ensembles and events were the sign of a musical reform which was social as well as political. In Italy, young composers, musicians and artists stood in open or partially open dissociation from an 'old' school of music making. They disdained the serialist and post-war post-serialist music, they had faith in collective creation, they abandoned the idea of the composer *deus ex machina* in favour of collaboration, they believed in the concepts of composer-researcher (Decroupet 2002: 42), composer-artist and composer-executor (Franco Evangelisti – who at the Studio WDR in Cologne has composed the serialist electronic piece *Incontri di fasce sonore* in 1957, and had worked in Scherchen's studio – stopped composing altogether, founded the Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza and began a new activity of composer-executor). Sound-based music became an expression of their involvement, their *engagement*, in social themes and in musical praxis.

The alternative electroacoustic music scene of the 1960s

In the 1950s and early 1960s, electronic music was “an elitist affair” (Mayr 2003: 5). Professional or semi-professional studio equipment was very expensive, and could only be afforded by institutions as were broadcasting corporations. Even the access to those places was difficult. They had the money to afford machines (or they already had machines inside a radio company) and connections, as it is the case of the National Radio RAI and the Studio di Fonologia, which could produce and diffuse the music on the same radio (the model was similar to the GRM in Paris, part of the Radio Télévision Française, or the Cologne studio, part of the German Westdeutscher Rundfunk) (Novati & Dack 2012).

The “second-generation Italian studios” (the definition of first and second generation of Italian Studios is borrowed from Giomi 2002: 73-91), on the other hand, in the wake of the Western Zeitgeist of the second half of the 1960s, were receptive to mutual involvement, transfer of expertise, anonymous/collective creation of artworks, reciprocal

hospitality. For example, the triangulation between the S2FM, the SMET and the N.P.S. is reflected, on a larger scale, in the regular contacts they held with other European and international studios: the Ipem in Ghent, the Electronic Music Studio at Brandeis University, the Urbana University, the Studio für Elektronische Musik in Munich, the Museum Sztuki Wlodzi in Łódź, the Utrecht Studio.

The second generation also shared other traits. Many of them started as analogue studios, and afterwards turned their interest into computer music. Furthermore, they were not based in major cities. If Milan and Rome were two metropolises and capitals of electronic music during the 1950s / early 1960s, the second half of the 1960s saw the opening of three electronic music studios in Florence, Padua, and Turin, certainly three smaller provincial cities. Albert Mayr, who worked with Pietro Grossi at the Studio in Florence and is one of the second-generation composers, recalls:

As should be remembered, in the early sixties [first generation] electronic music was a very elitist affair. Professional and even semi-professional studio equipment was very expensive, not easy to find and could only be afforded by institutions such as universities or broadcasting corporations. Access to those hieratic places (beyond the occasional short visit) was rather difficult if you did not belong to one of the contemporary music 'Churches' that were influential at the time. This led several composers [of the second generation] – who were not among the chosen Few – to do 'their own thing', i.e. assemble a private studio. In doing so they usually replaced financial resources with the ability of rummaging through surplus stores of electronic equipment and the co-operation of adventurous and sympathetic technicians (Mayr 2003: 5).

Second generation studios, as emphasized by Mayr, were opposed to those 'churches' (he refers not only to radios but also university studios) in Italy and abroad, that were recognized and subsidised by the government. Composers who felt left out from those

circuits also felt compelled to initiate activities on their own. Ennio Chiggio, co-founder of the Gruppo N.P.S. in Padova, recalls that

We felt left out, we were outcast among the academic circles, and the conservatoires of music, and we often were self-taught in electronic music. Our groups clearly were funded for this reason, in contrast to that. People with the same affinities would congregate around an idea, around the desire to subvert the institutional conducts of music making, indeed electronic music making as well (Ennio Chiggio, personal communication, March 14, 2012).

Second generation studios were in fact private studios (Valle – Bassanese 2014; Zattra 2003; 2014; Zavagna 2007). They were all born at some musicians' home. This is the case of Pietro Grossi, a cello player and teacher at the conservatory of music, who decided to fund an electronic studio at his home (Figure 1). Only later he donated his instruments to the conservatory of Florence, and started an electronic music course in 1965, the very first official electronic music course in an Italian conservatory of music, called *Corso Straordinario di Musica Elettronica*.



Figure 1. Florence, Pietro Grossi's living room. The handwritten text placed at the bottom of the picture explains this is the studio «S2FM AT HOME - 1963» (courtesy of Pietro Grossi collection, by Pietro Grossi Association).

The same happened with Teresa Rampazzi, a pianist who fell in love with electronic music after attending the Darmstadt summer courses (Zattra 2003). N.P.S. group was based at Rampazzi's home (figure 2); only later she introduced an electronic music course in Padova conservatory of music, after donating her instruments.

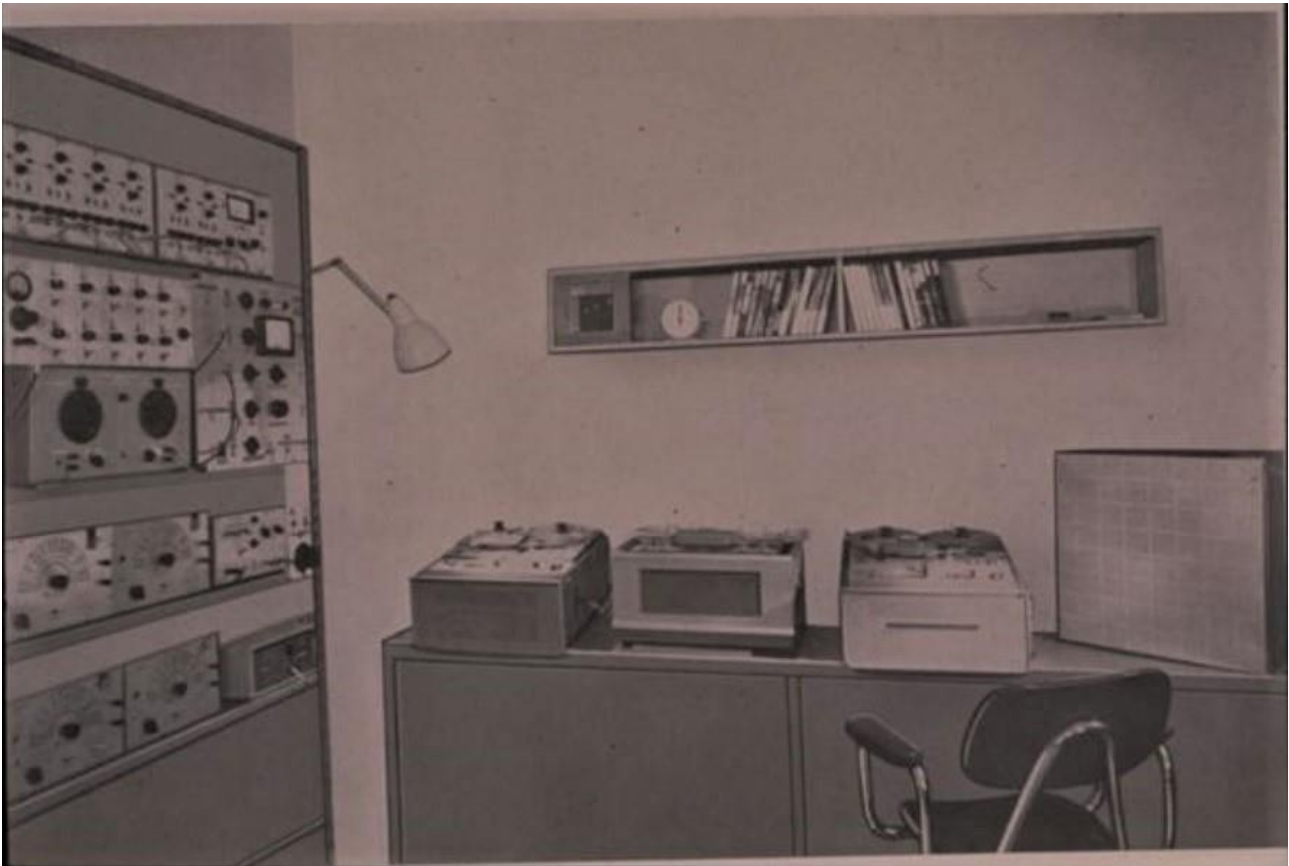


Figure 2. The N.P.S. group in 1965-1968, at Teresa Rampazzi's apartment in Padova (courtesy Ennio Chiggio's private collection). This picture is taken from the official presentation brochure of the studio realized in 1968. It has been retouched by Chiggio to hide the electric cables.

And finally Enore Zaffiri, a piano and music theory teacher at the conservatory of Turin, started giving private electronic music lessons, and then donated his electronic instruments to the conservatory and started teaching the new electronic sound-based art.

The advantage of this 'private' dimension was political and aesthetical freedom. Thus it would be preferable to call it 'privatised', according to Massimo Mila and Angelo Paccagnini's definition in 1971. During the VI episode of the *Musica d'oggi tra suono e rumore* (*Today's music, between sound and noise*) radio programme aired on 20 November 1971, Paccagnini and Mila (who, one may not forget, worked for and belonged to the institutional Studio di Fonologia in Milan) said:

There is no shortage of past examples of electronic music studios of privatised dimension, such the one music director Hermann Scherchen's founded in his home

in Gravesano in the Canton of Ticino, or another in Rome where worked musicians as Gino Marinuzzi jr., Franco Evangelisti and Domenico Guaccero, or the Phonology Studio in Florence, originated from the passionate initiative of Pietro Grossi and addressed to cybernetics, and the Electronic Music Studio in Turin, founded by Enore Zaffiri (Mila & Paccagnini 1972, now in Donati & Pacetti 2002, 160) my translation).

Although from an 'elitarian' pulpit, Mila and Paccagnini are acknowledging here that other studios were arising at the beginning of the 1970s, and they were 'privatised', for the reason this condition was a lot more than a simple belonging to or for the use of one particular person or group of people only (a private dimension that means being alone, undisturbed, and often dealing with matters that are not to be disclosed to others). It was more exactly a deliberate transfer from public to private ownership and control: indeed, privatised. This echoes Lefebvre's "conceptual triad", in which in contrast to capitalist logics he encourages alternative spatializations, and clandestine spatial practices (Lefebvre 1973, 33). I borrow these concepts, and their relations with sound art, from professor Gascia Ouzounian (Ouzounian 2008). According to Ouzounian, «when Max Neuhaus proposed the concept of "sound installation art" in the late 1960s, it was as a kind of art that could intersect seamlessly with peoples' everyday lives, and that could transform everyday spaces». She interprets Neuhaus' works from a Lefebvre-ian viewpoint, as «spatial interventions with sound [that] can be considered to be transformative, acting as sites of resistance with respect to dominant spatial logics» (Ivi, 103-108: 108). Before the term "sound installation art" was invented by Neuhaus, the *Dream House* (1962) by La Monte Thornton Young was certainly another example of this spatial perspective (Ivi, 100).

The Italian Studios are similar sites of resistance. As mentioned above, Ennio Chiggio felt «left out, we were outcast among the academic circles. [We] would congregate around an idea, around the desire to subvert the institutional conducts of music making, indeed electronic music making as well» (Chiggio's personal communication, March 14,

2012). Privatisation and collaboration became key to the process of renovation and multidisciplinary process of music making. As a side note, it is interesting to notice that these years also correspond with a change of the board of directors at the Studio di Fonologia della RAI. After the glorious first period of the Studio, Berio resigned as director in 1959, was replaced by Renzo Dall'Oglio, and then in 1966 by a new board of three directors (Emilio Castellani, Angelo Paccagnini and Luigi Rognoni), to which a single director (Angelo Paccagnini) followed (Zattra 2018).

Although for long this second generation electronic studios was musically considered of minor impact – Armando Gentilucci, in the first Italian book completely dedicated to electronic music (1972), believed that Pietro Grossi, Enore Zaffiri and Vittorio Gelmetti's works (he does not mention Teresa Rampazzi, neither Mila and Paccagnini did) were «generally very immature applications» (Gentilucci 1972: 99-100) – this alleged inferiority was only inferred from local, provincial standpoints. Contrariwise, though, the important *Répertoire Internationale des Musiques Electroacoustiques* compiled by Hugh Davies in 1967 (the first book that studied the presence of electronic music studios globally) include Grossi, Zaffiri, Rampazzi and the others' works (pp. 100-101 for Grossi, p. 111 for Zaffiri, pp. 104-105 for Rampazzi respectively), and considered them the equal the Studio di Fonologia experiences (Davies 1967). The presence of the three studios means that they were active internationally, and that their network was global. They knew Davies and Davies knew them, given the fact that he contacted them to include them in the book. 39 countries were represented in Davies' catalogue, each studio recorded under 4 categories: private or official, permanent, improvised; under 5000 compositions, and references; 2935 composers have works listed (Mooney 2014; 2013).

Among the lengthy overlooked experiences of the 1960s, I also mention the improvisation groups in Rome, that represent a whole new trend in Italy: live electronic music. MEV (Musica Elettronica Viva)'s activity, in particular (whose translation could be “Live Electronic Music”), began in the spring of 1966 when some American composers living in Rome presented a concert of experimental music in the crypt of St. Paul's

American Church. During the 1960s, the city of Rome was, as Frederic Rzewski observed, «unlike any other place on earth» (Bernstein 2010). Its artistic community included The Living Theater and Giacinto Scelsi; Federico Fellini and Michelangelo Antonioni; Don Cherry, Gato Barbieri, Ornette Coleman, Steve Lacy, Trisha Brown, La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, Terry Riley. The nucleus of the Group was Frederic Rzewski (composer and virtuoso pianist), Alvin Curran (who has investigated the entire spectrum of avant-garde music) and Richard Teitlebaum (electronic researcher and pioneer of brainwave generated music). They emphasized live electronic music rather than music recorded on magnetic tape, using “homemade” electronics, found objects, contact microphones, and a variety of acoustic instruments.

The MEV experience is relevant not only because it shows the presence of an international group of composers and musicians in Italy, and their active role in the European and American music scene (a concert at the SpaceCraft, Akademie der Künste in Berlin, on October 5, 1967, is worth to mention). It is also, once again, the sign of this precise historical period, the late 1960s, during the rise of the counterculture, the New Left, urban riots, and student activism. This *Zeitgeist* also led MEV group to abandon written scores and leadership, replaced «with improvisation and critical listening» (Alvin Curran, presentation text from the *Musica Elettronica Viva - MEV40* collection, New world records, 2008).

Three young Americans with masters degrees in music composition from Yale and Princeton meet by chance on the banks of the Tiber River in Rome in 1965. Within a year they found a musical group whose goal was to turn the clock of music history back to zero, *Tabula Rasa*, aiming to walk on air by making music without scores or preordained structures, without conductors or any kind of authority except the human need for unity (Petrey 2016).

The sound world of the MEV group is tinted of socio-political attentions, particularly against the USA government and the Vietnam war. Titles of works like *Stop the war* (1972), an improvised interplay between piano, acoustic and electronic instruments (the Moog synthesizer) are significant, coming from a group of musicians and composers who left the United States with a strong conscientious objection. Collectivity and free improvisation are symbols of new ways of creating new sounds and of «the fragile bond of human trust that linked us all in every moment [and] remained unbroken» (Alvin Curran, presentation text from the *Musica Elettronica Viva - MEV40* collection, New world records, 2008).

It is as a result of the aforementioned activities, affinities and shared experiences that *Musica/Realtà* was founded later in 1973. *Music/Reality*, originally an association to organize concerts and seminars, later a music journal, was founded in Reggio Emilia by Armando Gentilucci, Luigi Pestalozza, Luigi Nono, Claudio Abbado, Maurizio Pollini, Giacomo Manzoni, Piero Santi, Vittorio Fellegara, Enrico Fubini and the mayor of Reggio Emilia Renzo Bonazzi. They were a group of intellectuals with a strong political, cultural left-wing engagement. *Musica/Realtà* main concern was to open to every kind of sound-based art, from avant-garde to popular to jazz, and to bring it to alternative places such libraries, schools, gyms, factory cafeterias, political places (Mussini 2004). Every concert was followed or opened, or both, by debates with the audience to stimulate cultural, intellectual and political discussion over new forms of music. The official presentation text is meaningful to cite: *Musica/Realtà* is born «from an idea of a group of democratic music operators who, in reaction to the uneasiness due to the influence provoked by our society upon the role of the musician and the musical functions, try to find new pathways of radical change of our national cultural policy, with a direct confrontation with the base» (Pestalozza 1980, cited in Scudieri 2007).

This culture of renovation fits into a wider pattern, visible in the crucial year 1968 alone, not only for political and social reasons, but also for artistic and institutional debates. Cultural institutions such the Milan Triennale and the Venice Biennale were severely contested as part of the bourgeois systems and politics. We may cite the highly

questioned XIV Triennale di Milano (1968). Students demonstrated against, and journalists and critics wrote about the 'system' that had to be revolutionised, against institutions and authorities headed by an old generation of 60-70-year-old men with centralized power. Carla Lonzi writes that they contested the «recognition of the architects as a category of which the Triennale is the expression, [which had] a far too indulgent role of mediation with political, economic and industrial powers (Lonzi 1968, 144-146, cited in Hwang 2017). It was a 'system' that sometimes could be overthrown with difficulty. The same year, fierce protests against the Venice Biennale (urged on by Emilio Vedova and Luigi Nono, both Venetian and influential left-wing intellectuals) were

an over-simplified even anachronistic – request that nobody can seriously satisfy! Moreover, the occupation of [Milan] Triennale isn't a real political act, and could be tolerated, because Triennale doesn't represent an economic center nor a structure for power. One could see the difference with [Venice] Biennale, which on the contrary does! This institution which represents, apart from its renown, big business for Venice and a powerful instrument for politics in the international art world has simply been a taboo (Trini 1968, cited in Hwang 2017, 181).

Cooperation, total performance, anonymity and co-signing

«Without conductors or any kind of authority except the human need for unity» (Petrey 2016). These words portray the inner nature of the MEV (Musica Elettronica Viva) group. The deliberate lack of authorship, and collaboration based on mutual creation, are at the core of this improvisation group which supported egalitarianism. We find the same qualities – cooperation, anonymity and/or co-signing – in the bond that brought many musicians and composers together during the second half of the 1960s. Pietro Grossi, Enore Zaffiri, Teresa Rampazzi and their collaborators, and the artists participating at the open-air exhibition/performance *Parole sui muri* (*Words on walls*) in Fiumalbo in August 1967, were guided more by an intense common exploratory spirit, rather than an artistic attitude *tout court*. They believed in cooperation as a new necessity in music and artistic

research, particularly when using new technologies. They were typically composers-researchers, as defined by Decroupet (2002: 42), or artists-researchers.

Grossi, Zaffiri and Rampazzi, in particular, are examples of the so-called collective intelligence, a term coined by Pierre Lévy (1997). Pierre Lévy's theory is appropriate here because it engages synergies involving the use of technology (which is the case of the Italian Studios), different persons with different skills, mutual learning and mutual enrichment. Grossi, Zaffiri and Rampazzi were among the first pioneers to clearly assert and demonstrate that the new sound-based technology needed collaboration at many levels (which was also manual when using analogue instruments). «We even reached an empathetic communication, over-gestual» (Ennio Chiggio, personal communication). Chiggio continues:

«Although we were all sons of structuralistic conceptualizations, we unconsciously overcame them (or maybe consciously) with proto-cognitivism. All parties contribute to the whole. At the N.P.S., the dialogue we developed could not be done sitting in the living room, we had to go to the laboratory [two adjacent rooms at Teresa Rampazzi's house!]. We had to test, record, listen. There was a constant feedback between our ideology, which we wrote in our manifesto [written in 1964], and the form that our thoughts took in musical object. The laboratory was essential» (ibidem).

Other collaborations were made in Florence or Turin. Visual artist Maurizio Châtel was an important teammate in Enore Zaffiri's works of the 1970s. The eclectic sound poet Arrigo Lora Totino (one of the participants in the *Parole sui muri* total performance in 1967), worked very often with Zaffiri (Stefanatto 2014). The latter also worked with composer Vittorio Gelmetti in 1975 for producing improvised music with synthesizers for the RAI broadcasting company. Some years later, in the footsteps of groups such Nuova Consonanza and MEV, Giovanni De Poli and Alvis Vidolin, members of the N.P.S., initiated a new semi-improvisation group with Michele Sambin and Teresa Rampazzi (who

left shortly after, since the improvisation approach did not fit her ideals) called P4 and then Arke Sinth (Rizzardi 2016). In one of the pieces, from a perspective that recalls culture jamming techniques, recycling and music borrowing, they used «a tape with Pietro Grossi's materials» (Alvise Vidolin personal communication, cited in Zattra 2000, 19). Friendship and collaboration mirror in an endless camaraderie (phone calls and letters) that characterized this enlarge group of Italian pioneers of the 1960s – early 1970s.

The same exploratory spirit and cooperation typifies the total performance *Words on walls* (8-18 August 1976), a subversion of artists' intents comparable to the Potemkin affair (Zattra 2019a). Julien Blaine wrote in that occasion: «Fiumalbo c'est Potemkine». (Blaine 1968: 26). It was an 'open-work' performance (the book by Umberto Eco had been published only a few years earlier) with poets (visual, concrete, dynamic and mechanic poets), sound poets, sound sculptures, musicians, actors, visual artists, and above all the public in interaction with them. It was a chance to enjoy a 10-days (and nights) performance (the spirit was that of the Fluxus, Op and Pop Art avant-garde), in time and space (the little village of Fiumalbo) (figure 3). It was an open-air space/laboratory, where the village became the «body of an art work» (Gazzola 2003: 13). Organisers were Mario Molinari, Claudio Parmiggiani, Corrado Costa, Adriano Spatola, Henri Chopin (who sent a letter to invites many artists) and the newly elected major Mario Molinari. Among the artists were also Timm Ulrichs, William Serra, John Furnival, Ketty La Rocca, Maurizio Spatola, Arrigo Lora-Totino, Gruppo '70, Gianni Emilio Simonetti, Ladislav Novak, Lamberto Pignotti, Carlo Belloli, Arias-Misson, Ugo Carrega, Mimmo Rotella, Paul de Vree, Gianni Bertini, Kitasono Katue, Sarenco, Bernard Aubertin, Mario Diaconno, Dick Higgins, Gianfranco Baruchello, Jiri Kolar, Mondo Beat, George Maciunas, George Brecht, Magdalo Mussio, Franz Mon, Emilio Isgrò, Pino Masnata, Achille Bonito Oliva and many others.

Parole sui muri represents another important occasion for some Italian intellectuals and artists to try to freshen up the old institutionalized, "high-minded" and elitist caste. Alberto Tessore published an article right after the event in the *International Times*, an alternative journal devoted to culture and captured the spirit:

«It was a first experiment and the organisers hope to be able to repeat it next year. And that's really to be hoped for because it could bring a small change in the Italian atmosphere and in their avant garde, which up to now has been very intellectualistic, refusing to take part in any action and dedicating itself to purely theoretical discussion (most literary and artistic), which actually remains very remote from the people» (Tessore 1967, 18).



Figure 3. Parole sui muri (Words on walls), the 10-days open-air voice and sound-based total performance in Fiumalbo (near Modena), August 1967 (source: <https://www.comune.modena.it/salastampa/> accessed 10 September 2018).

The invitation of so many different artists to Fiumalbo epitomized the need of contamination of genres and arts, under the common denominator of sound and voice. Among the artists who participated were Ketti La Rocca, an Italian leading exponent of body art and visual poetry movements who had studied electronic music with Pietro

Grossi. There participated Gianni Sassi, producer, photographer and founder in 1971 of the avant-garde record label Cramps. Later on, Cramps records issued records by Juan Hidalgo, Walter Marchetti, Cornelius Cardew, Steve Lacy, John Cage and Demetrio Stratos (the Greek singer, famous for his vocal experiments, and leader of the cross-over group Alea) (Ceolin et al. 2011).

Salvatore Sciarrino was among the people who were invited to participate to the second edition of *Parole sui muri* in 1968. In July 18th 1968, Sciarrino wrote back that he was excited by the presence of the Old Bridge Jazz Band from Florence involved in the festival (letter held in the Archive of the city hall of Fiumalbo). He asked if there was an organ and someone willing to play it, and other people playing 'any type of instruments', and suggested a series of proposals, among which an intriguing experiment with three steel plates (he described their dimensions). In item number 2 of his letter, Sciarrino wrote that «all these ideas could be realized separately but also simultaneously».

As a side, more musicological note, it is important to emphasize that we will find the use of steel plates in Sciarrino's more recent works *Cantare con silenzio* (1999), or the two acts opera *Ti vedo, ti sento, mi perdo (In attesa di Stradella)* (2017), as if this idea was recovered from this first experiment. It is also worthwhile noting that Sciarrino's propositions for *Parole sui muri* are not mentioned in the composer's catalogue (Rai Trade, Roma/Milano, version 2008). Sciarrino's catalogue starts with *Minifuga con alcune licenze (a 3)* (1965), *Sonata per due pianoforti* (1966), and *II Quartetto per Archi* (1967) dedicated to Franco Evangelisti and premiered at the Festival di Nuova Consonanza in Rome on June 17th, 1968. Sciarrino's website starts with the *II Quartetto* (1967). As he himself has mentioned several times, Sciarrino «considers what he wrote before 1966 as immature works of apprenticeship».

Among the originalities of the events narrated here, there is also the big question of anonymity. Pietro Grossi's S2FM group in Florence, N.P.S. Group in Padova, and Zaffiri's SMET Group in Turin believed, at least at the beginning of their story, in anonymity. «We

all agreed to work anonymously under the name NPS (Nuove Proposte Sonore)» wrote Rampazzi in (Rampazzi 1979). The choice of the name (New Sound Proposals) shows a firm decision to eliminate any artistic aspiration: this was pure research and each result, named 'oggetto sonoro' (*sound object*), would have been anonymous. These 'oggetti sonori' were reminiscent of the Schaefferian masterpiece *Traité des objets musicaux* (Rampazzi was at the GRM in Paris and she had a copy of the *Traité* autographed by the author), but they were intended to be its evolution (Zattra 2003). The idea of sound object indicates the scientific attention to every phenomenon: it is a research based purely on the timbre and the density of events. The sound objects are events perceived «in an acoustic way, in which a “consistent” number of simple and homogeneous tracks, either linear or not, are structured and placed in a mutual relationship according to their pitch, rhythm and time, and in which the audience, the second term of the communication relationship, is able to “understand” the structure» (VV.AA. 1977: 44-48). Even during concerts, the NPS Group claimed not to propose single pieces but, more precisely, sound objects. Since this approach was about pure research, the Group put a great attention to titles, which were numbered and named according to themes: every year, one or two “dimensions” were investigated, and lately numbered as 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. until the investigation was believed to be exhausted. Sometimes a number is missing (e.g. Function 2) in the documents, because, if the piece was considered to be a failure, it was removed. Since 1970, the sound objects bear individual titles: they are no longer part of research series. This is explained by the change in approach that occurred since 1968, with the transition from the first period of the group to the second one. In 1968 Ennio Chiggio moved away from the group because «on one hand, collective control was claimed, on the other hand, this was felt to be demeaning for personal freedom and individual creativity, and everybody was reacting more or less “romantically” to the harsh discipline of the rational postulates of the group» (Chiggio 2002: 1).

Although after a few years N.P.S. members started to sign their works (the same happened for S2FM and SMET), at the beginning they trusted in the idea of common art,

which reflected in the spirit of the time, as it had been within the Musica Elettronica Viva Improvisation Group: the idea of collaborative creation that mirrored in their workflows and international collaborations. «No one is teacher; no one is pupil; at least in the hierarchical meaning it still has in many schools. Even if only one single person does a work, it is always and only the abbreviation N.P.S. that appears. The private property of a work of music in such condition has no more right to exist or be maintained. [...] It is by no means a question of modesty. It is a question of accomplishing our little part in a work that goes beyond our personal limits» (Rampazzi 1970, 215).

The micro and macro dimensions of Sound: Notation and scores

Contrary to the improvisation groups, a common topic among the three studios N.P.S., SMET and S2SF was the attempt to create scores, in order to meticulously study electronic sounds to their deeper components. Scores were schematics with amplitudes, frequencies and blocks of sounds, similar to Stockhausen's scores made in the Cologne Studio. In Padova, scores were called *Audiogrammi (Audiograms)*. They were used as operational schemes, but also as graphic and listening scores (Figure 4). They were so precise that Ennio Chiggio has recently been able to re-synthesize them with modern software.

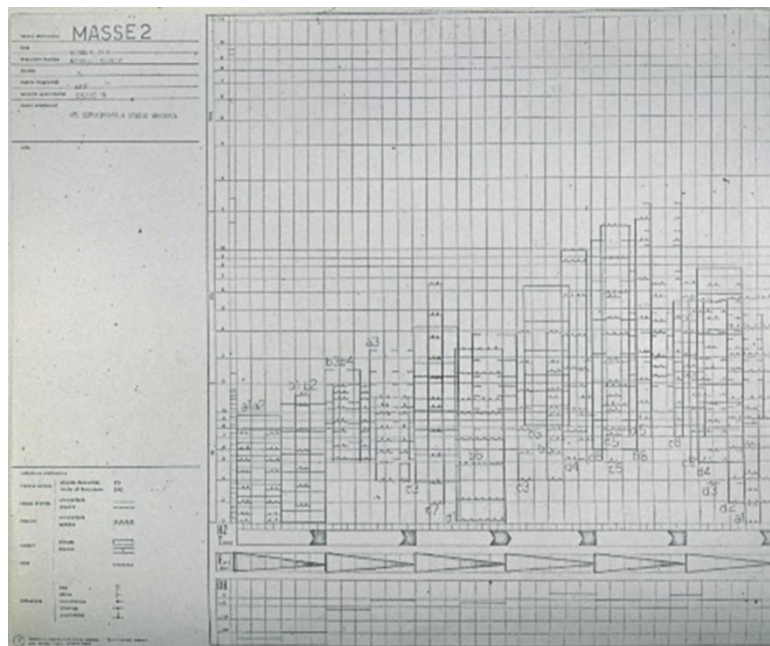


Figura 4. Audiogramma di Masse 2 (N.P.S.).

Enore Zaffiri commenced to use 'Tablatures' from 1970, for his works realized with the computer, CVS3 and Synthi A synthesizers. In 1967 Zaffiri explains that «the figure is not a full score but rather an organisational schema, that is to say, a graphic element with a purely structural function. When we speak of 'reading' a figure, we mean the process of extracting a nexus of relationships from it. Its very structure determines the outcome of events. It is a tool in the operator's hands and not an absolute determinism: it can suggest infinite development possibilities» (Zaffiri 1967: 384). It is interesting to note that they recuperate the traditional scope of the score, which permit to recreate a musical piece in the long term.

Sound and Visual: a perfect marriage

The tight bond with visual arts is a common issue for every experience I have cited so far. Members of S2FM, SMET and N.P.S., for example, were more inclined to present the new music in art galleries, rather than in concert halls (Mayr 2007: 94). It can be said, perhaps more significantly, that the intuition of these 'alternative' realities was specifically to bring together music research and visual research in one unique purpose. Notation and scores go hand in hand with geometrical, algorithmic, and numeric thinking, which is also the ideal field to visualization for conceptual and compositional study. Moreover, such scores become beautiful objects that can be featured in an exhibition.

More specifically, when Ennio Chiggio met Teresa Rampazzi in 1963 he was a member of the *Gruppo Enne*, a collective founded in 1959 by Chiggio with Alberto Biasi, Toni Costa, Manfredo Massironi and Edoardo Landi, plus other architecture students. The group was devoted to visual-kinetic research, developed as collective work in a shared laboratory, and whose results were unsigned. And then again come scores and notation: «I remember an exhibition called *Musica scritta (Written Music)* in Padova, organized by us of the Gruppo Enne at the Teatro Verdi. The exhibition features indeterminate, open, graphic scores by Earle Brown, Sylvano Bussotti, La Monte Young, Cornelius Cardew and others. Bussotti's scores hit me like lightning!» Chiggio recalls (personal communication; the exhibition is also mentioned in VV.AA. 1977). «This exhibition was a cold shower for a control freak like me, because it showed me the potentialities of the association between visual research and sound research» (idem). Structural painter, graphic artist and sketcher Antonio Calderara attended the exhibition, who was friend of Eno Zaffiri's and, according to Chiggio, «brought Zaffiri to Padova» (idem).

After the foundation of the N.P.S. group, the deep liaison between visual art and music similarly characterizes the subsequent events. The first experimental work of the group is a sound collage which would have functioned as musical background for an exposition by the *Gruppo Enne* at the 1964 XXXII Venice Biennale (using Teresa Rampazzi's semi-professional Telefunken). It was a 30-minutes tape, played very slowly (4.75 cm/s) to make even longer! They did not call it Sound Installation, nor Sound Art, but they willingly create an art work that was not meant to be a traditional (electronic and frontal) music piece. It was at the 1964 Venice Biennale that they decided to summarize their theories in a manifesto.

«The (traditional) instrument has exhausted its possibilities, it has been raped, destroyed, it is no longer an object of communication – the performer is no longer the bearer of the unique message. Tape – and the possibility of endlessly repeated listening that it offers – demystifies the act of listening – the acquisition of new

parameters requires experimentation and subsequent organization of the sound material – the new sound proposals exclude any use of the electronic sound related to the tonal system – the new proposals reaffirm the need for control and predetermination of the composition process – the new electronic systems extend the audible space by increasing its size» (VV.AA. 1977).

Ennio Chiggio recalls that «we wrote it on Teresa Rampazzi's dining room table at her house» (personal communication).

Pietro Grossi's studio S 2F M in Florence were the meeting point of artists from the *Arte Programmata* movement (the Italian Kinetic art from the 1960s). Among them we find Auro Lecci, Maurizio Nannucci, Paolo Masi, and art critic Lara Vinca Masini. In Turin, Arrigo Lora Totino (the iconic performer of the international Concrete Poetry movement) and Enore Zaffiri collaboration at the SMET, with visual artist Sandro De Alexandris, led to the parallel creation of the Studio d'Informazione Estetica (1964), to make research on the interrelations among poetry, sound and visual arts. And in 1968 Enore Zaffiri realized the interdisciplinary work Q/81, made in collaboration with painter Antonio Calderara.

The marriage between sound-based research and visual investigation led to the organization of several collective expositions. From 5 December 1964 to 5 January 1965 there was an itinerant exhibition: *Proposte strutturali plastiche e sonore (Structural plastic and sound Proposals)* organized by Galleria la Polena from Genova, whose curators were Germano Celant and Lara Vinca Masini. The exhibition was hosted, among other places, in Florence at the Galleria Proposte, and in Torino at the Galleria Il Punto. During the exhibitions, music by the electronic music pioneers were played (Vittorio Gelmetti and Pietro Grossi among others). According to curator Vinca Masini, author of the exhibition catalogue, this exhibition's purpose was «the verification of a new 'interaction' between schemes of structural plastic (visual) organization, and structural auditory schemes of organizations, in terms not so much of a hypothetical integration between arts, but of an interrelation of *researches* [my italics] in diverse sectors of the artistic intellectual working»

(quoted in De Mezzo 2006: 544). Composers-researchers and artists-researchers were at the core of this operation, as of many others in those years (often made by the same people cited so far).

Another collective and itinerant exposition throughout the 'boot of Italy was organized in 1967 (*Ipotesi linguistiche intersoggettive*); inside the section "musica programmata" (programmed music) they presented music by Grossi, Zaffiri, and N.P.S. (unsigned and anonymous, to emphasize the collective approach) (Mayr 2007: 94).

From 22-27 May 1965, La Chiocciola Gallery in Padova hosted a concert/exhibition that was the first public audition of the Gruppo N.P.S. And there again it was not just a question of offering a concert (an audition of electronic music), but reproducing music by using the spatial qualities of the gallery (music by Zaffiri: *Tr/e 54 I e Tr/e 54 II e III*; Gelmetti: *Modulazioni per Michelangelo e Treni d'onda*; Grossi: *Progetto II, Progetto III, 4*; Rampazzi, *Ricerca 2*; Aldo Clementi: *Collage 2*; and Niccolò Castiglioni: *Divertimento*). Zaffiri gave a speech during the inauguration evening. He declared that Anton Weber was «the mandatory starting point to rediscover the dimension of isolated sounds, fragments, surrounded by silence» (quoted in Stefanatto 2014: 14).

Our first revelation to the public was also our first experiment of installation. La Chiocciola Gallery was located in a basement in Santa Lucia Street [in Padova] and the ceiling was a vault. So we studied the place in order to have a different spatialization and we put one loudspeakers pointing upwards, so that it could produce unexpected sound disappearance, and the second was in the forward position in front of the audience, to avoid any possible reference to stereophonic listening. We made a lot of drawings of possible reflection using also sound reflectors, but this solution was too hard, and we could not make holes in the ceiling (Ennio Chiggio's written remembrance: www.grupponps.it/04Audizione1.html)

During the exposition week, a local newspaper published an article. Its author stressed the strong connection between the sound dimension and the visual-graphical dimension

of the music proposed to the public (Veronese 1965). It also showed the performance score of a work by Enore Zaffiri (*Tr/e 54*) (Figure 5), to reveal that this music could be seen / listened to, a concept that demonstrate exactly these innovators' intentions: a musical form, a musical rhythm that can be seen. «We aimed at the purity of signs – Ennio Chiggio says – because we wanted to end the era of the musical pentagramme. A musical note is very much close to the concept of straight line» (personal communication).

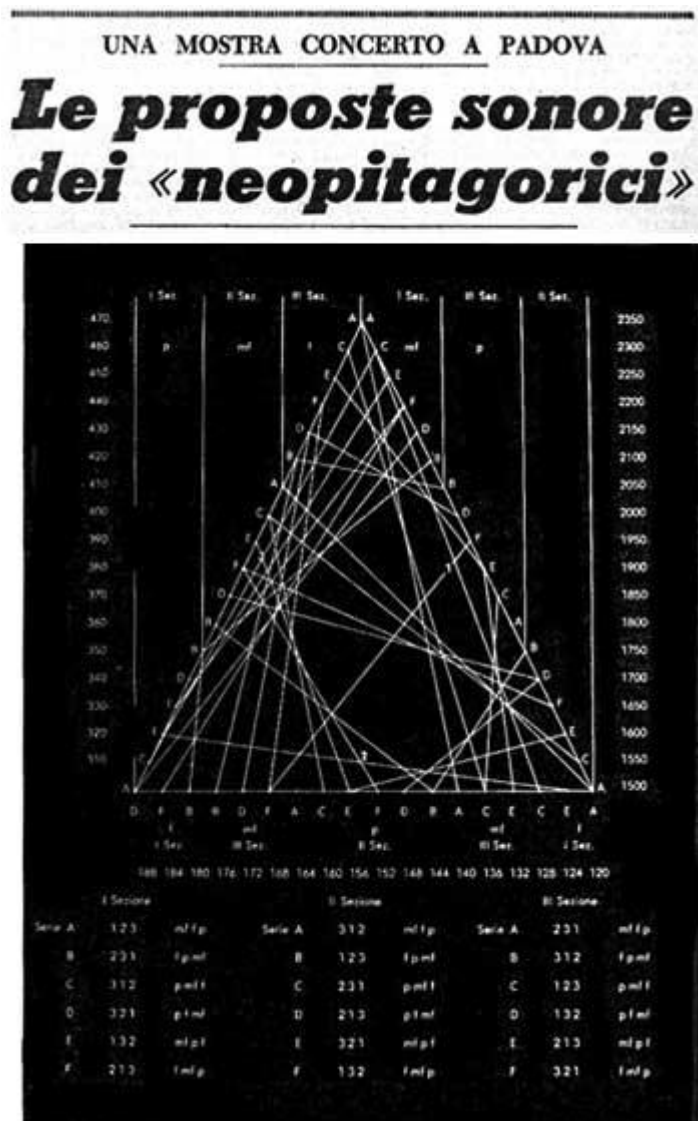


Figura 5. Performance score of *Tr/e 54* by Enore Zaffiri (published in Paolo Veronese, “Le proposte sonore dei ‘neopitagorici”, *Il Gazzettino*, 27 May 1965).

Enore Zaffiri realized another ground-breaking work in 1968, the project *Musica per un Anno* (*Music for One Year*, 1968). The work, realised on tape produced with algorithmic

processes, is based on a cycle of 360 days, and conceived as a possible sound track for different sites. In it, sound events change subtly but continuously according to months, days, hours and minutes (its “score” is also astonishingly beautiful) (Valle 2014). This work has the same drone quality of LaMonte Young’s *Dream House*, although Zaffiri was completely unaware of Young’s work (ivi, 119).

What emerges from the events quoted above is that the attention for the visual function of sound-based art is related at the same time to the micro dimension (time, timbre, form, generative ideas) and the macro dimension (installations, spatialization, interpretation and listening). The strong desire to achieve figural control over the sound itself in the closed form of traditional musical pieces (mirrored in notation and scores), is multiplied and amplified in the horizontal skyline (space and open forms).

Kinetic, optical, generative art, the first psycho-cognitive studies and the tradition of Gestalt Psychology, nurtured the experiences I have cited so far, as well as Fluxus and Pop experiences, but also composers of electroacoustic music or instrumental music who had introduced space, open form and installations in their musical research. Iannis Xenakis *Metastaseis* (1953-54) and Edgar Varèse’s *Poème électronique* (1957-58) were notorious at the time. Xenakis acknowledged electroacoustic music to be the door to add spatial techniques to traditional musical forms. However, these investigations and experiments remained little known among the mainstream musical and artistic scene in Italy at the time (not to the aforementioned artists, of course).

International networks

It would be impossible to cite here the numerous exchanges, experiences and networks these composers and artists had encouraged and cultivated over time. Suffice it to remember that in their numerous writings they stated the importance to collaborate with everyone in order to expand their musical and artistic research (most of Grossi, Rampazzi and Zaffiri writings – mainly articles – are published in Zavagna 2007). Pietro Grossi was

in Gand in 1964 «where I represented Italy» (Grossi 1966). Enore Zaffiri writes in another document: «From September 1-5, 1964 an international conference devoted to the problems of electronic instruments in music was held again in Gand. Schaeffer, Xenakis, Gazelle, Pousseur, Koenig, Pietro Grossi, for Italy, and others participated» (Zaffiri 1965).

Another major event took place in Florence in 1968: the “Maggio Musicale Fiorentino” hosted the International Convention of the Experimental Centres of Electronic Music (*Convegno Internazionale dei Centri Sperimentali di musica elettronica*), on the initiative of Pietro Grossi (June 9-14), with speakers from around the world (Figure 6). Concerts and ‘sound installations’ were proposed to the public with scores exposed on the walls and realized by the Italian groups, and sounds by Vittorio Gelmetti, the S 2F M of Pietro Grossi and the SMET from Torino.



Figure 6. Marcella Chelotti (left to right) and his husband Pietro Grossi, Teresa Rampazzi, unknown person and Antonio Mazzoni, music critic and friend of Grossi's. According to Albert Mayr, this is a picture taken very likely during the International Convention of the Experimental Centres of Electronic Music in Florence (June 1968).

Besides Grossi, Zaffiri, and Rampazzi, and composers from the Phonology Studio in Milan, there were also, among the foreigners:

«Fritz Winckel of the Technische Universität in Berlin and Vittorio Consoli of the Studio R7 in Rome dealt with topics relating to physics. Leo Küpper of the “Studio de recherches et de structurations électronique auditives” in Brussels, discussed psychoacoustics and the theory of information applied to auditory perception of music. The theme of sociology and communication was introduced by Abrams Moles (Paris). Karlheinz Stockhausen of the WDR in Cologne described and played two of his compositions. Iannis Xenakis of the University Indiana at Bloomington (USA) dealt with the problems of automatic composition via stocastic or probability theory calculations. A collaborator of Gottfried M. König’s of the University of Utrecht (The Netherlands), presented a paper on the use of computers in composition and in musical experiments carried out in teaching (Zaffiri 1968).

Among other participants at the 1968 conference, there were also the Russian Yevgeny Murzin (who also dealt with issues of graphics), James K. Randall (who described his composition *Tema con variazioni* for computer violin), Ivan Stadtrucker of the Experimental Television Studio in Bratislava (Czechoslovakia), who spoke about functional music and the use of electronic sounds in cinematography. The 1968 Maggio Musicale Fiorentino was as successful as other future international conferences such the International Computer Music Conference which would have opened ten years later, in 1976, in Cambridge (MS).

Conclusions

In the past two decades, Italian scholars, composers, musicologists, and sound artists have repeatedly stressed the importance of the long forgotten contributions of the 1960s in Italy. (The vast majority of the music has been only recently released on disc.) A series of conferences, articles, books vinyl and CD issues (or re-issues) have been dedicated to this electronic music scene. One of the first occasions was the CIM conference (Colloquium in Musical Informatics) in 2003 in Florence. Nicola Bernardini wrote in the preface to the proceedings:

Since the last edition of the CIM [2000], two much-beloved and respected pioneers of Electro-acoustic and Computer Music, Teresa Rampazzi and Pietro Grossi, have left us - mixing our sorrow to the mandatory obligation of perpetuating the memory of their work (which coincides with the origins of Computer Music in Italy). This Colloquium and these proceedings are dedicated to the memory of Teresa Rampazzi and Pietro Grossi. Therefore, a focus on the historical aspects which are starting to emerge in the Italian and international scene of Computer Music (and the analyses of their continuities and discontinuities) seemed to be the most obvious choice as a central theme (Bernardini-Giomi-Giosmin 2003, 4).

The list of publications that followed include (De Simone 2005; Giomi 1995; Giomi-Ligabue 1999; Mayr 2003, 2007; Valle & Bassanese 2014; Zattra 2000, 2003, 2008, 2014; Zattra-Canazza-Rodà 2011; Zavagna 2007). The new series of studies – based on historical, philological and analytical methods – does nothing but corroborate what other international scholars had previously seen in the Italian electronic music scene. Daniel Teruggi writes that it has a ‘regional’ quality, in opposition to the centralization of studios such the GRM or IRCAM in Paris. «Italy is an absolutely original example, due at the same time to the regional character of its political organization, the personalities and the type of approach of the first composers of electroacoustic music, and the impact this music had on the public. Studios were dispersed and located in the principal cities of the nation» (Teruggi 2001, 67).

In this article I have analysed this originality. I have portrayed the innovative impact of these “alternative places” (Giomi 2002, 73). Alternative sound-based experiences of the 1960s and the early 1970s in Italy were characterized by revolutionary approaches not only applied to sound and the compositional dimension. Quite the contrary, revolutions in sound and compositional or formal approaches were powerfully connected, even derived, from social and political positions. The privatized dimension (as opposed to national government institutions), collective approach to creation, the lack of leadership,

interdisciplinarity and the bond with visual arts are crucial characteristics which help to understand and appreciate their sonic outcomes.

There are other stories that I did not mention in this writing, and would need further research. Alvin Curran wrote to me:

«One very brief missing piece is the group collectively founded by Domenico Guaccero, Luca Lombardi and myself, who in the early 1970s performed as a Trio of VCS3 Synthesizers. We left little trace but were briefly on the case! There too was the electronic music studio at the Academia Americana di Roma (the American Academy of Rome) founded by John Eaton with one of the earliest voltage controlled synthesizers: The Synket by Paolo Ketoff. It is there using their professional tape machines that I composed my first important tape piece called *Watercolor music* (1966). What I find more interesting is: culturally how isolated this music was, and how – until the PCI's [the Italian Communist Party] full embrace of Afro-American and European free improvisation and its popular appeal (see Rai Radio 3 later broadcasting "Un certo discorso" 1976-1988) – the so-called new music (the Darmstadt variety) was a generic anomaly all over this bel Paese excepting for the Festival Nuova Consonanza and the Palermo new music Festival Internazionale di Music Contemporanea» (A. Curran, January 21st, 2019, via e-mail).

There is perhaps a reason why this part of the Italian music history has long remained in the shade after the first rebellious experiences. Many of the aforementioned musicians returned to institutional positions in the following years. Grossi, Rampazzi and Zaffiri did everything they could to convince the directors of the conservatories of music in Florence, Padova and Turin (respectively) to open a course of electronic music, and it is thanks to their efforts that today almost every Italian conservatory has a bachelor or a master degree in electroacoustic music (Di Scipio 2014). It was as though the making the new sound-based art through the use of technology and with new aesthetical approaches, had been brought everywhere, even in the most sceptical and traditional music arenas. It

had become normal and accepted by everyone. Once the revolutionary leaders had impacted the musical scene, their disciples spread the faith.

There is of course another more critical reason, that has to do with archival awareness and historicization. Due to the continued acquisition of knowledge and the urge of experimentation by musicians, composers, computer scientists, sound engineers, technicians, musical assistants etc., that brought to postpone, and often to forget, the organization and preservation of their materials, oblivion and/or inaccurate preservation have existed for a very long time. But even if archival awareness and the historicization of the electronic music past are rather recent disciplines, the innovative and revolutionary impact of the 1960s and 1970s upon the following generations of sound-based artists in Italy is flagrant. Suffice it to mention the name of Luigi Nono and his works of the last decade (1980-1990). Luigi Nono had a strong interest in music as a performance event, an idea that elicited thoughts about the incompleteness of any sound recordings, as for any type of fixed and definitive notation. In *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* composed in 1988, Nono creates a piece for eight pre-recorded tracks, but the Live Electronic Musician has the task to prepare them, mix them and think to the spatial distribution. This liberty leads to new versions of the piece every time it is played in concert. *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* is almost an Open Work, and thus equally is any of its recordings. (To Umberto Eco, the idea of openness inside any “Open Work” is not intended as “infinite possibilities” and complete freedom, rather a liberty inside a range of pre-established rules and interpretative solutions.)

Nono's works and its late musical approach have much in common with a typical Sound Art experience, were it only for the crucial and imperative dimension of the *listening* (to listen), which is a fundamental basis in his music. *Prometeo. Tragedia dell'Ascolto* (1984-1984), *A Pierre. Dell'azzurro silenzio, inquietum* (1985), and also *La lontananza nostalgica utopica future* (1988) and “*Hay que caminar*” *soñando* (1989) - where soloists must walk around (Daleman, forthcoming) - are, if we relate to the definition made by Alan Licht, «not [...] a stage show» (Licht 1997, 13). They are «defined by the space (and/or

acoustic space) rather than time» (ivi,169). These are dramaturgical experiments «subsumed in a sound world in which *sight* gradually cedes to pure *listening*» (De Benedictis 2013), in the pursuit of new sonorities, new manners of «experiencing sounds (by performers and listeners) but also new configurations for concert venues» (ivi), with the «determination to break down the traditional barrier between stage and audience [...], for he saw this as the relic of an ‘antidemocratic’ ritual with ‘the faithful attending and the celebrant officiating’» (Nono 1962, p. 122, cited in De Benedictis 2013).

Following the experiences of the 1960s and early 1970s described in these pages, Luigi Nono, as well as Salvatore Sciarrino with *Perseo e Andromeda*, 1991; *Noms des Airs*, 1994; *Lohengrin II*, 2004 (Vidolin 2005) and Agostino Di Scipio (*Zattra* 2014), are only a few among the most significant examples of Italian musicians who have experimented with new solutions involving sound and space.

Acknowledgments

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