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(Violoniste)

The Complexities of Authorship and Werktreue
in the Music of Giacinto Scelsi:
a Performer’s Take

The role and the function of the score has been questioned by several branches of musicological studies. Curiously enough, within the community of performers (and, specifically, within the new music circles of interpreters) criticism towards the written component of music has not been widely inquired. Concepts such as faithfulness to the score, respect for the composer's intentions and subordination of the performer/reproducer to the composer/creator are blindly accepted, and they respect is deeply embedded into players of classical and modern western music.

Due to the improvisatory nature of Giacinto Scelsi’s compositional process, to his peculiar understanding of his own role (“I am only an intermediary”) and to his disregard towards the completion of the written score, the traditional trust in the notated music as the only possible vehicle to carry the original and definitive idea of a sonic phenomenon appears in his case not sufficient nor appropriate.

This presentation aims to discuss the foundations of a creative performance practice of Scelsi’s music, questioning dogmas such as Werk-text-treue and composers intentionality.
A creative approach will be justified through the investigation of Scelsi’s complex creative routine, looking for interpretative suggestions residing within his compositional artefact, his artistic praxis and his collaborative approach to performance.

Among many collaborations with emerging and established composers, he has premiered works by Billone, Sciarrino, Eötvös, Cendo and Ferneyhough. Marco has performed with Pierre Boulez, Lorin Maazel, Alan Gilbert, Beat Furrer, David Robertson, and frequently plays with leading contemporary ensembles including Klangforum Wien, MusikFabrik, Meitar Ensemble, Mivos Quartet, Ensemble Linea, Interface (Frankfurt), Phoenix (Basel) and Handwerk (Köln). Marco records for Kairos (Pierluigi Billone – ITI. KE. MI / Equilibrio. Cerchio), Stradivarius (Salvatore Sciarrino works for violin and for viola; John Cage, Freeman Etudes; Scelsi Collection Vol. 7), Col Legno, Geiger Grammofon. Marco also plays viola d’amore, commissioning new pieces and collaborating with composers to promote and expand existing repertoire for the instrument. A strong advocate and educator of contemporary music, he lectures and workshops at Columbia University, University of California – Berkeley, Basel Musikhochschule, New York University, Boston University, Royal Danish Academy of Music – Copenhagen, University of Chicago. Marco teaches Contemporary Chamber Music at the Milano conservatory “G. Verdi” and is Researcher in Performance at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp.