

Egisto Macchi and Antonin Artaud: from *A(lter)A(ction)* to *München-Requiem* and Beyond*

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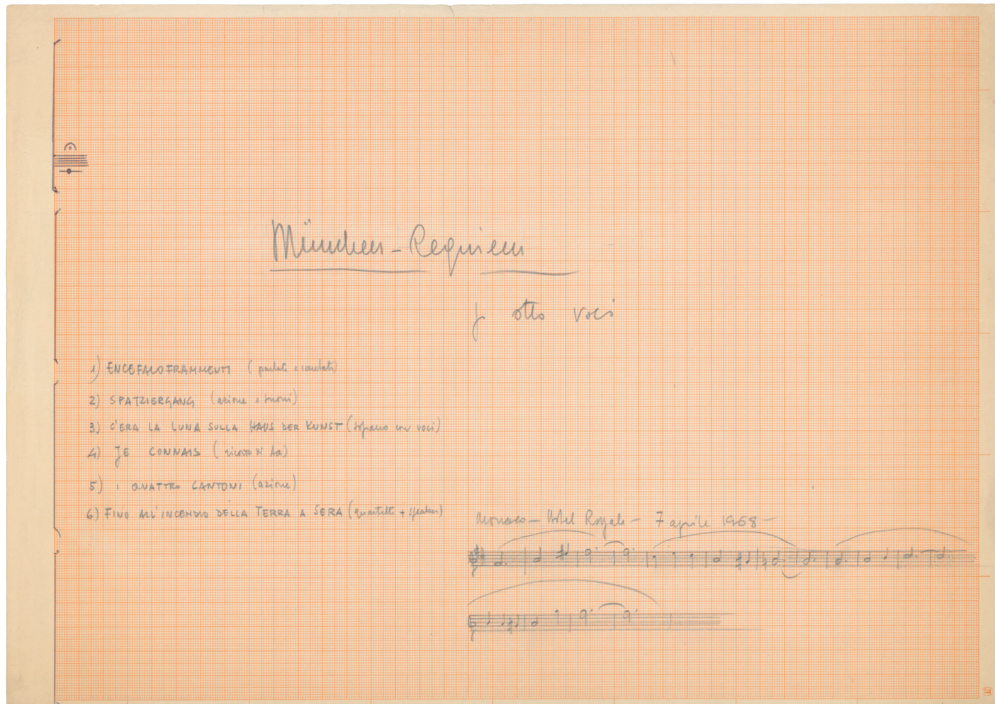
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to Jannis Kounellis,
in memoriam

The words of this work – do not claim to be in any way poetry – only the anguished recording of sounds – read, heard, imagined, uttered, invented or repeated by the author – in a certain month – of a certain year, in Munich.¹

It was April of 1968 when Egisto Macchi wrote *München-Requiem* (*per otto voci*) in a notebook containing seven loose sheets of graph paper. Written on the first sheet, the title *München-Requiem* is the first of a sequence of six numbered titles-parts: 1. *Encefaloframmenti (parlati e cantati)*; 2. *Spatziergang (azioni e suoni)*; 3. *C'era la luna sulla Haus der Kunst*; 4. *Je connais (ricordo di Aa)*; 5. *I quattro cantoni (azione)*; 6. *Fino all'incendio della terra a sera (quartetto + speaker)*. The title page is dated 'Monaco Hotel Royal 7 aprile 1968' and is followed by a quotation from Maurice Jarre's *Lara's Theme*, leitmotif of David Lean's film *Doctor Zhivago*, which in 1965 had won the Oscar for Best Original Music (FIGURE 1).

FIGURE 1. Egisto Macchi, *München-Requiem*: autograph score, frontispiece. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi



The year and the city connect *München-Requiem* to the shooting of Gregory Markopoulos' film adaption of Macchi's *A(lter)A(ction)* in Spring 1968² and to the performance staged in Munich at the Haus der Kunst between 15–23 April 1968, while the name of the hotel presumably refers to where the composer had been staying during its production.³

Although *München-Requiem* was listed in the 1996 catalogue of Macchi's production, it has not been studied so far, nor has it been considered in conjunction with *A(lter)A(ction)* and its production in Munich, even though the title itself gives an account of the referential context.

Furthermore, the exiguous archival sources – seven loose sheets of graph paper, handwritten in pen and pencil, with several glued-on stickers, along with the album cover and a detached back cover, held in the Fondo Egisto Macchi at the Istituto per la Musica of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia)⁴ – do not provide the reader with all the features of the entire musical project, since the listed sections-parts are neither fully developed nor transcribed by the composer. Nevertheless,

the highly visual composition informing the manuscript score invites reflection on its peculiarities. In fact, the inquiry into the visual and written components of the manuscript score allows its boundaries to be expanded and the analysis provides the opportunity to reconcile the fragmentary nature of this albeit incomplete autograph score with the circumstances of its creation, opening a new perspective on Macchi's work.

This paper aims to investigate how what is eventually an unfinished project for the *München-Requiem* represents a further step in the trajectory that the experience of *A(lter)A(ction)* and the meditation on Antonin Artaud had initiated in Macchi's production. My purpose is to define the role played by Antonin Artaud's poetry by unravelling the interrelations that *München-Requiem* has within the frame of other Macchi works.

The analysis of the autograph score in particular allows us to reveal Macchi's openness to a diverse range of stimuli and to look into his musical discourse as being urged by the exchanges and the mutual dynamics between artistic languages. The visual connotation characterising the manuscript score appears to document the composer as involved in the writing and visualisation of a musical notation that shows an interest in the interaction between word and image. The physiognomy of *München-Requiem* does indeed show Macchi composing by means of words and images, and through the adoption of the collage technique. The latter also serves as the base of the project's compositional syntax, conceived as an assemblage and juxtaposition of its parts, yet unified beneath the sign of a wider reflection which has still to be fully investigated: the relationships between sound, image, word and action, in the direction of an interdisciplinarity that is not the mere coexistence of different artistic languages but the interacting dynamics between these languages and their codes. *München-Requiem* has in fact to be placed in the context of a broader reception of Artaud's poetics that was crucial for the development of experimentations on language, in other words its visual, written, voiced and motion rendition, in which the arts had been engaged throughout the 1960s, through the reappraisal of the Avant-Garde.

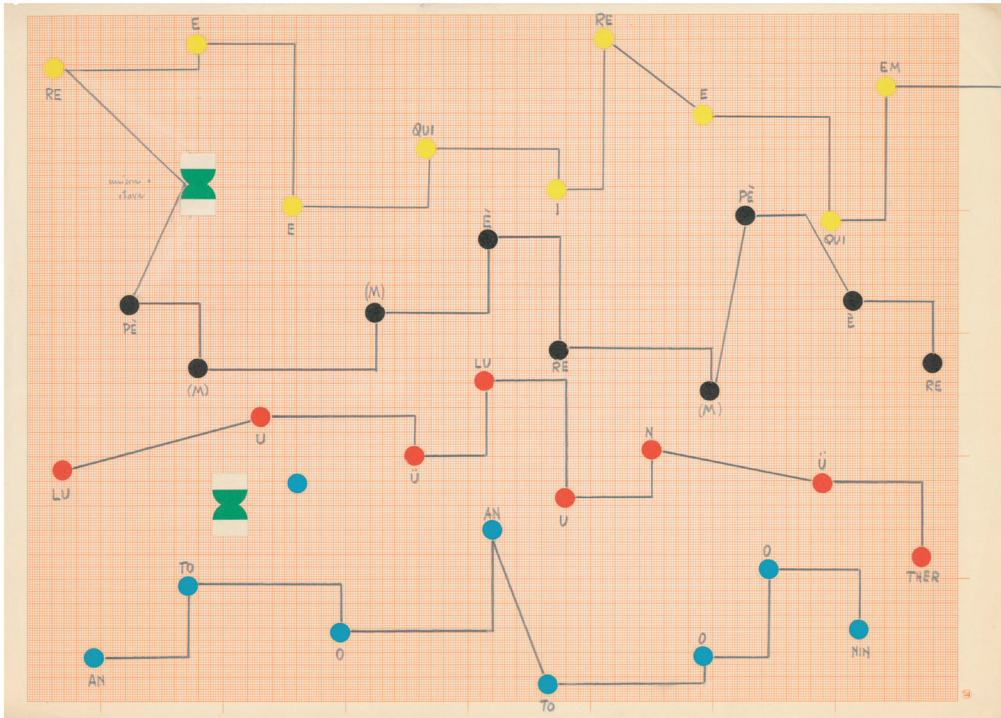
MÜNCHEN-REQUIEM

Four parallel broken-line segments fill and run through the entire second sheet of *München-Requiem*. These diagrams, sharply turning in alternating directions, vividly stand out as the frontispiece and as a presentation of Macchi's statement.

Round stickers of four different colours (yellow – black – red – blue) are used

to mark the points of conjunction of these segments, which highlight consonants, vowels and syllables, and draw attention to the four words emerging on the surface of the graph paper: REQUIEM – PÈRE – LUTHER – ANTONIN, while white and green hourglass stickers attempt to connect them in unison (FIGURE 2).

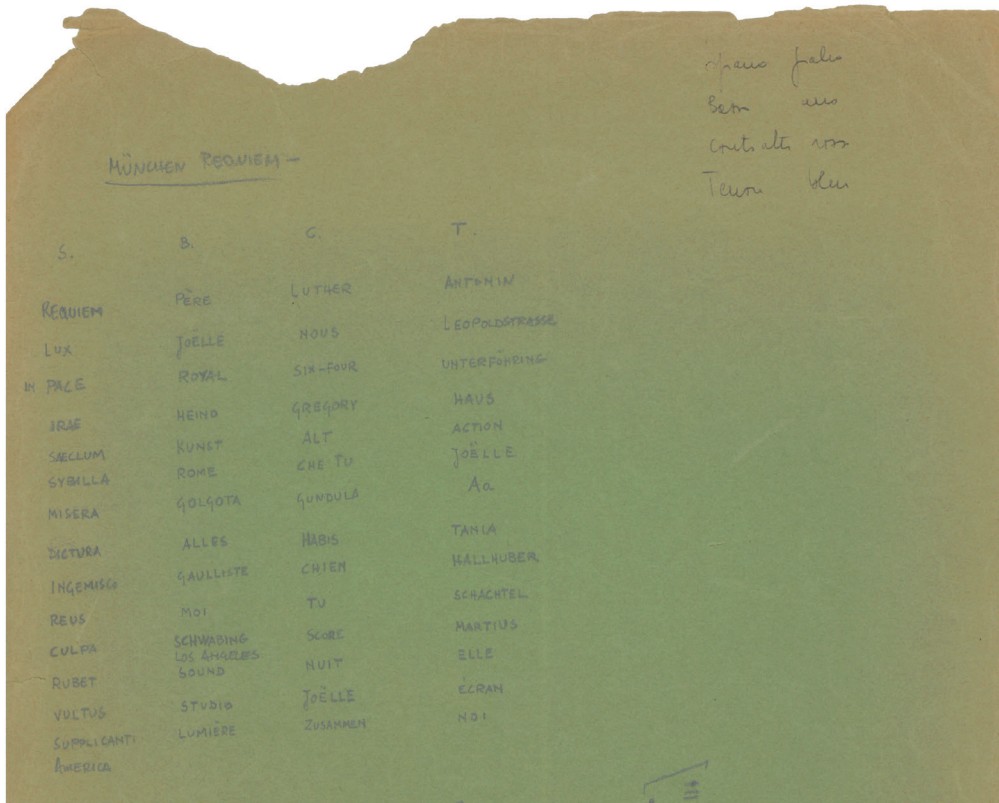
FIGURE 2. Egisto Macchi, *München-Requiem*: autograph score, second sheet. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi



On the notebook's back cover (FIGURE 3), these colours are respectively associated to soprano (yellow), basso (black), contralto (red) and tenore (blue), thus linking the vocal registers to the visibility of colours. Here, the corresponding initials, S. – B. – C. – T., are above all the headers of a four-column configuration where the four words that emerged from the opening figure constitute the top side of a rectangular template. Along with the other words, these form a table of nouns, whose vertical reading defines the four phrases that are transcribed horizontally on the fourth and fifth loose sheets of the score, where they are set forth as 'encefaloframmenti [encephalofragments]'. Macchi attached more stickers here in the form of green rectangles and orange arrows, to indicate the tempo and visually

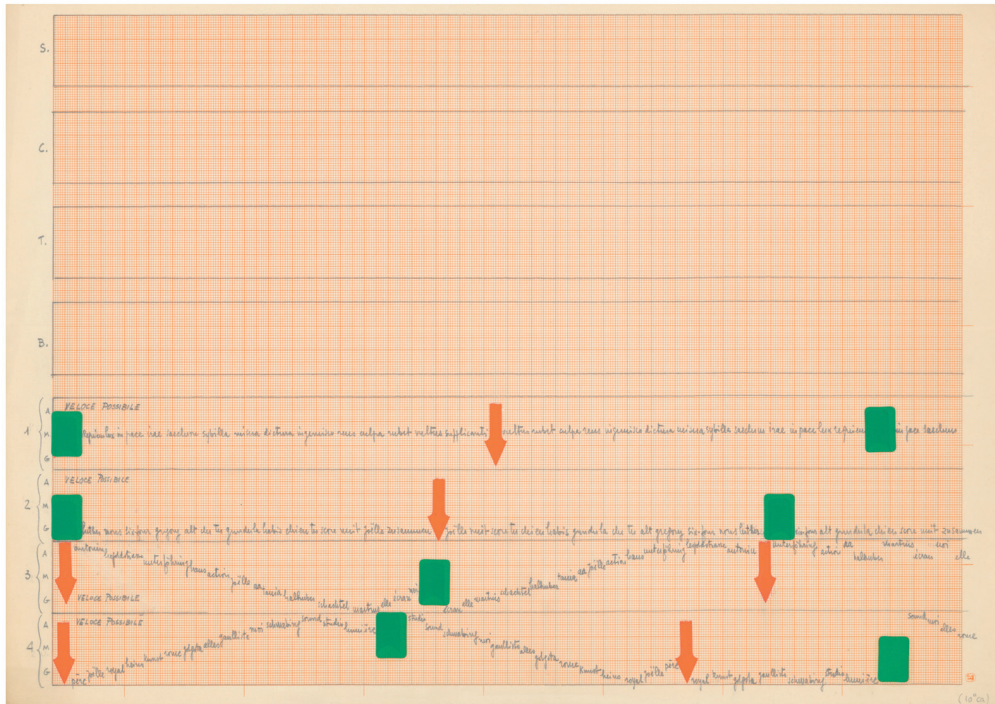
mark the composer's cursive transcript which pursues an ascending-descending writing and explores vocal possibilities and pitch range. Once the sequence is over, the word order in these lines is inverted and changes direction, with the words written back to front in a mirror-like sequence, hinting at new combinatory displacements and multiple combinations (FIGURE 4).

FIGURE 3. Egisto Macchi's text for the Soprano, Basso, Contralto and Tenore voices as they appear in the composer's handwriting on the verso of the detached back cover of the album of *München-Requiem*.⁵ Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi



The way in which the words are arranged in the columns does indeed seem to emphasise how the totality of the words was not intended to display any logically structured thought or to convey a univocal meaning. The sequences rather unfold chains of ideas and open up to autonomous associations of words which appear to be chosen as evocative yet imaginary elements of a play set in Munich (FIGURE 3).

FIGURE 4. Egisto Macchi, *München-Requiem*: autograph score, fourth sheet. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi



The cross-reading allows us to understand the stratigraphy of Macchi's recollection of memories whose references and intentions lie in the *A(Iter)A(ction)* laboratory and in his meditations on Antonin Artaud. Thus, within the array of columns, we are faced with the subject matter of *A(Iter)A(ction)* distilled into names, concepts, syntagms and morphemes, where one can identify a scattered inventory made of non-linear successions of words expressing the circumstances of its theatrical production and of its film adaptation. The persons engaged in the production of *A(Iter)A(ction)* [ACTION], the French choreographer and dancer TANIA Massine, the German actor and dancer HEINO HALLHUBER performing ANTONIN Artaud, and the American filmmaker GREGORY Markopoulos are registered with their proper names, and themselves become characters participating in Macchi's own narrative. The word SCHACHTEL clearly refers to Franco Evangelisti's *Die Schachtel*, *azione mimo-scenica* composed in 1962–1963, which would also have been adapted for the screen by Gregory Markopoulos in May 1968.⁶

Moreover, the Bavarian town itself and its places make an appearance in the piece: the long boulevard LEOPOLDSTRASSE, connecting the HAUS der KUNST to

the historical borough of SCHWABING are mentioned, as if to verbally sketch the city's urban landscape. Thus Munich emerges as a set for Macchi's discourse, and as a further stop along the itinerary that had begun in ROME, where the first *mise en scène* of *A(lter)A(ction)* took place in 1966. Furthermore, the mention of GOLGOTA constitutes an additional locus in the personal and cultural geography charted by the composer, a precise allusion to the musical theatre work *A(lter)A(ction)*, where Artaud's Christological self-representation is plainly declared in the recitative of Mario Diacono's text:

stavo sul Golgota
 duemila anni fa, e
 mi chiamavo come sempre
 A... A... A...A... A...
 Alteraction. Perciò fui
 messo in croce come poeta
 e illuminato senza tamburo
 né tromba – lontano dai miti di
 resurrezione – mi sono alzato
 in piedi...⁷

This recitative is emphasised by the actions that stage Artaud's body hanging upside down on the stage. The performance represents the martyrdom of the poet and contemporary society's responsibility for his death. George Charbonnier referred repeatedly to 'la Passion d'Artaud' in his essay dedicated to Antonin Artaud, published in 1959 by Pierre Seghers in the paperback series *Poètes d'aujourd'hui*, eleven years after the French poet's death.⁸ The careful survey of Artaud's bibliography during the 1950s and 1960s brought to light the Charbonnier's monograph⁹ whose in-depth investigation then showed to be one of the main sources from which the *A(lter)A(ction)* piece was conceived. This is proved not only by the presence of the word 'altération' amongst Charbonnier's considerations on Artaud's language,¹⁰ but further demonstrated by the correspondence between the sequence of actions in the musical theatre piece and the narrative structure through which the French critic organised his argument. Of these, the chapter entitled 'Le corps étranglé d'Antonin Artaud'¹¹ had also offered a pivotal image-concept which would maintain its centrality in the circular narrative of the filmic adaptation of *A(lter)A(ction)* and inspire the composition of a requiem for the poet, in *München-Requiem*.

'Alter-Action [sic]. Heaven knows, what it's based on. It's supposed to be a hodge-podge of Artaud and modern music theories' was Gregory Markopoulos' reply to Jonas Mekas' question about the TV film version, during a conversation

published in 1971 in *Film Culture*, three years after the production in Munich.¹² Whether Markopoulos' bewilderment was genuine or sarcastic, effective evidence of Macchi's intention actually comes from the filmmaker's response. As regards the final scene, he recalled that performing a *Deposition* was indeed Macchi's idea: 'The composer wanted to achieve something like a descent from the cross – it was supposed to be Antonin Artaud descending. The instructions were to set up an enormous frame and the action was supposed to hang from it'.¹³

Even if the religious relevance of Macchi's insight diverged from the filmmaker's secular vision as it was initially conceived, the result was a *tableau vivant* of mourning that visualises Artaud's *deposition* based on Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross*. This was due to Markopoulos' idea of using the painting,¹⁴ which might have resulted from a visit to the Alte Pinakothek, the art museum housing the painting and located a short distance from the Haus der Kunst. Other props on the stage that can be seen in the filmic version, such as the funeral wreaths hanging from the ceiling or leaning against the frame, would offer additional confirmation of Macchi's intention for the German production of *A(lter)A(ction)*. The *Missa funebris* genre, evoked by Macchi in the title *München-Requiem*, would also match the purpose of staging a final station of Artaud's Passion.

ENCEFALOFRAMMENTI

Macchi's contribution to *A(lter)A(ction)*'s visual dimension appears to be strengthened by his presence amongst the characters of the work's film adaptation, which allows the visual quality of *München-Requiem*'s score to be further comprehended. More precisely, the insertion of the composer's cameo in direct view of the screen – ÉCRAN – and in front of the Ampex electronic editing device used by Markopoulos, is the starting point of a meaningful sequence whose consequences are significant for the conception and understanding of the *encefaloframmenti*.¹⁵

Markopoulos' masterly montage intertwines Macchi's portrait with the take of the musical SCORE, subsequently associated with a shot of the electric shock instrument, eventually leading up to the mournful appearance of ANTONIN / HEINO HALLHUBER / aa, who lies down after the electric shock therapy. It is a visual chiasmus, in which the overlapping of the images represents a conceptual statement developed in the *encefaloframmenti* section by the composer, while the words SOUND – ÉCRAN – SCORE, annotated therein, create a triptych by association, in which Macchi's reflection on the relations between sonority, visuality and writing significantly emerges.

By virtue of his identification with Artaud, Macchi's writing assumes the features of a registration of encephalic activity. In the wavy form of the cursive script of the Sprechgesang, the *encefaloframmenti* 'parlati e cantati' actually assume the shape of a graphic transliteration of the sonority of the voices, which mimics the frequency of the brainwaves traced by an electroencephalographer; whereas when the words are arranged into columns, the *encefaloframmenti* are depicted as disconnected words and constitute an accumulation / collage of disjointed entries: that is the progressive annotation of an offbeat shorthand, the intermittent style of a narration expressed in fragments. Moreover, the *encefaloframmenti* fall in line with what Macchi introduced as the 'angosciosa registrazione di suoni [anguished recording of sounds]', which may also recall the sonority of an electroshock if we choose to follow Charbonnier once again: 'Si vous parlez encore d'envoûtement M. Artaud, vous aurez un électrochock [If you talk once more of spells, Mr Artaud, you will get an electroshock]'.¹⁶ And the graph paper adopted by the composer in the manuscript score of *München-Requiem* seems on the one hand to facilitate the arrangement of the musical notation, on the other, it precisely suggests the paper used for tracing the encephalogram, which is in fact what the four broken lines in the visual overture on the second sheet actually refer to in the first place.

Finally, the visual representation of the column-structure used by the composer to portray the simultaneity of voices may attest to the reception of the visual strategy enacted in the *A(lter)A(ction)* text by Mario Diacono. In the printed version, published in July 1967 in *Marcatré*, the words recited and sung ('parlate e cantate') by AA ('recitante'), Aa ('soprano'), aA ('tenore') are displayed on the left page in a three column arrangement, while the stage action is described on the opposite page as the column of aa.¹⁷ In order to render the coexistence of voices and action, both a vertical and a horizontal reading were devised to depict their concurrence and to generate multiple correlations, word-associations and homophonies on the same line, with the purpose of further playing with the arbitrary nature of the word investigated as a sign that is prone to different sound interpretations and visual reproductions. Even if Macchi's words remain intact, and are never subjected to the same kind of deconstruction and destructuralisation on which Diacono's linguistic enactment was based, the different languages used by the composer in his inventory in *München-Requiem* – Latin, French, Italian, English, and German – may recall the multi-layered language of *A(lter)A(ction)*. It is also quite probable that Macchi may have seen and read an early version of Diacono's visual poem *HINDU'S TRIAL DASEIGN*. Despite being published later in 1971,¹⁸ it was originally meant to have been printed in 1967 by Arturo Schwarz in Milan,¹⁹ and the date '[18-9-66]' written in the poem would refer to the period spanning from the staging of *Studio per A(lter)A(ction)* in June

1966 to the one of *A(lter)A(ction)* in November of the same year. Not only may the columns, the square grid and the fake meaning suggested by the vertical lines that divert attention from the horizontal reading represent an appropriate reference for Macchi's composition, but a more important confirmation of the relation between the two texts comes from some corresponding and equivalent words: specifically '[Rome]', '[action]', and '[Zug|samen]', becoming 'Zusammen [together]' in *München-Requiem*.

Whether or not the 'crypto|words|games' inscribed in the poem were indeed an incentive for Macchi, his statement that 'the words of this work, do not claim to be in any way poetry' may accordingly be considered as both an acknowledgement of the poetic divertissement or as an excusatio which Macchi addresses to himself or perhaps to his close friend.

JE CONNAIS

Je connais (ricordo di Aa) [I know (memory of Aa)] is reported but not transcribed in the listed parts that should have formed *München-Requiem*. However, it is where Macchi's aim to replay and relive the experience of the musical theatre piece *A(lter)A(ction)* is plainly manifest.

'Aa' is featured amongst the word sequences constituting the *encefaloframmenti* in *München-Requiem* and refers to the Soprano voice in *A(lter)A(ction)*, one of the characters through which the figure of Antonin Artaud is expressed. The double vowel is used to break up and at the same time to unite the four roles in both the stage action and the musical composition. The double vowel in particular reasonably aims to recall Monsieur Aa the 'antiphilosophes', the character-idea created by Tristan Tzara and populating his Dada manifestos. An allusion therefore which proves to a greater extent the scope of *A(lter)A(ction)*'s conception: the harking back to the deconstruction of the linguistic codes promoted by the Avant-Garde, which was also pivotal for the inception of Artaud's poetics considering that his early poems were in fact printed between 1920 and 1922 in the avant-garde magazine meaningfully titled *Action*.²⁰

Indeed, Charbonnier in his essay seems to conjure up the destructuralisation of the language significantly in the passage where the word 'Altération' assumes an iterative position of the thought he had developed on Artaud's poetry:

Allittération délibéréé, tricoté. Allittération du son, du mot, de leurs formes, de leur timbres, allittération de la lettre.

Altération.

A ne pas croire.

Il n'y a PAS.

Et le mot qui ne s'étrangle pas au passage, le mot qui échappe à l'inarticulé n'est rien.²¹

The unintelligible communication of meaning and the reduction of the language to its minimal phonetic units was actually expounded by *Il Mattino's* music critic Alfredo Parente in introducing the concerts given at the Biennale Internazionale di Musica in September 1967: 'We are in the fatuous world of the syllable that eludes every possibility of a comprehensible discourse'²² was his comment on the Concerto Strumentale dell'ensemble Musica Viva Pragensis. On this occasion, Egisto Macchi's *Cadenza 1–2* for soprano solo premiered on 12 September.²³ The voice was that of Erminia Santi, the soprano (Aa) in the performance of *A(lter) A(ction)* that had taken place in Grosseto between May and June 1967, who would then sing the same part in the Munich production just over a year later.²⁴ The programme for the Venice Biennale of Music unveils additional elements that are useful for the understanding of the elaboration of *München-Requiem*: as regards the reception of Artaud's poetics and the montage technique, and also the visual aspects of the musical notation.

The programme for the Venice Biennale of Music provides the reader with a photograph and a short biography of the composer and also with the texts of the piece performed. Under the title of *Cadenza 1–2*, two pieces were actually executed: 'Je con ai [Je connais]' is the first line of what is indicated as *Cadenza 1*, followed by three lines forming *Cadenza 2*:

Cadenza 1

Je con ai La Salle
petite Lope de bega
l'affreud poetit envoutueur
de Jougdea
Jazzsùs.

Tu la Tierra y el Centro
yo le Voyage
So vana city
syriena in+mortale nel segno in+decifrabile
delle (—) acque vegetali
è tEmpwurf di MassSacro.

Cadenza 2

Eli Eli sabaoth
Eli sabactani
Eli sabeth²⁵

Although Diacono was indicated as the author, and the composer specified that *Cadenza 1* came from the theatrical work *A(lter)A(ction)*,²⁶ closer examination reveals that it was instead a selection of passages chosen and assembled by Macchi from different sources. If *Cadenza 1* still combined some parts from *A(lter)A(ction)*'s text, belonging to both the Soprano (Aa) and the Tenore (aA) voices,²⁷ they were assembled with excerpts derived from Diacono's poem *Tell qu'Elle*, whose title retraces that of the French literary magazine *Tel Quel*, which had published up to four Artaud's pieces prior to 1966. The poem *Tell qu'Elle* appeared in *Alfabeto*, a book published to accompany Jannis Kounellis' exhibition at the Studio d'Arte Arco d'Alibert in Rome, October 1966²⁸ and therefore between the first and second performance of *A(lter)A(ction)*, for which the artist had created the set design. It flowed on double pages in which the text alternated with large capital letters, digits, typographical signs, and arrows taken from Kounellis' early works of 1959–1961, paintings that were actually performed as musical readings.²⁹ In this context, the provenance of *Cadenza 1–2* does not only unravel the tangle of relations that come into play both on and off the stage, but draws attention to the consonance and possible exchanges between them. The non-consequentiality of Macchi's selection of lines from the pages of *Alfabeto / Tell qu'Elle*³⁰ makes us reflect on his profound reading and appreciation of Diacono's visual poetry and Kounellis' pictorial writing, whose analogy, amplified by their concomitant and alternated printing throughout the pages of the publication, may offer additional terms of comparison for the understanding of Macchi's visual composition in *München-Requiem*.

Furthermore, with particular regard to *Cadenza 2*, which Macchi said had been composed at the end of July 1967,³¹ the verses that he selected from *Tell qu'Elle* are consonant with the religious vision that the composer would later ascribe to the *München-Requiem*. In Macchi's *Cadenza 2*, the Hebrew-Aramaic question uttered on Golgotha – disarticulated into a decreasing linguistic and visual scale by a double-edged assonance in Diacono's poem – appears to prefigure the funeral prayer as it emerges in the Soprano's part of the *encefaloframmenti*.

Cadenza 1–2 at the Venice Biennale thus represents a moment in the composer's persistent reflection on *A(lter)A(ction)* and hence on Antonin Artaud. Moreover, it can also be understood as a specific intermediate time towards the gestation of the *A(lter)A(ction)*'s Munich production as attested by its filmic adaptation, and a preface to the elaboration of *München-Requiem*. In his critical assessment following the Venice performance of *Cadenza 1–2*, Parente went on to comment:

Egisto Macchi, in “Due cadenze” for soprano, lets you open your spirit to a hope, announcing in turn a “wide-ranging melody”, but in fact he achieves nothing more than the dull lamentation of a demented person, partly with a closed mouth, partly with an open mouth, interrupted by

breaths, hisses, desperate shrieks (torture in either the physical or psychological sense) which, amongst other things, put Erminia Santi's voice to the test.³²

In spite of his evident reservations, the critic highlighted some characteristics of the performance that most probably are connected with some elements featured in the composition: not only Artaud, as the poet institutionalised in the Rodez asylum, but also Artaud the author and actor performing *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu*, the poem recorded in November 1947 at the Radiodiffusion Française and broadcast just once, a year after Artaud's death.

Even though I was unable to trace whether Macchi had been able to listen to the recording of *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu*, the declaration with which he introduced *München-Requiem* – 'anguished recordings of sounds read by the author' – appears to be linked to the glossolalia traits permeating Artaud's text as was declaimed in the *émission radiophonique* [radio programme]. In any event, a typewritten document, undated and unsigned, which I found amongst the miscellaneous and unclassified composer's materials related to *A(lter)A(ction)*,³³ clearly refers to an Italian translation of the foreword of the radio piece as it was published by K éditeur in 1948. This suggests that a further scene of the musical theatre's work might have been initially conceived, possibly envisioning an electronic device projecting onto the back wall, and an electronic sound uttering the words derived from *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu* (FIGURE 5).

The typescript must be ascribed to Mario Diacono, who had collected the magical-ritualistic phonetic poems, inserted in many of Artaud's writings, in 'Totem étranglé', published in the 1964 issue of *EX* magazine, including those excerpted from *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu*.³⁴

Besides the fact that various pieces from 'Totem étranglé' were used in *A(lter)A(ction)*'s text to counterpoint the Sprechgesang of Artaud's life, Macchi might also have had a certain familiarity with, or knowledge of, *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu* by the time of his collaboration with Sergio Tau for *Morte all'Orecchio di Van Gogh* in 1964. Presiding over the title of Allen Ginsberg's 1958 poem *Death to Van Gogh's Ear!* through the allusion to *Van Gogh le suicidé de la société*, Artaud's name actually occurs in a line where is followed by that of Aleksandr Blok, 'Crossfertilization of Blok and Artaud', preceded by another line where the American poet alludes to the words derived from *Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu*: 'and Kra belongs to Kra, and Pukti to Pukti'.³⁵

Even though these lines are not present in the text of *Morte all'Orecchio di Van Gogh* as far as I could verify in the documentation kept by the composer,³⁶ the text was significantly conceived for a recitante male voice recorded on tape. Moreover, it offered Ginsberg's poem in an Italian reduction which attests to its circulation before its translation by Fernanda Pivano appeared in *Jukebox all'idrogeno* in 1965,³⁷ the very same year that the *Artaud Anthology*, edited by Jack Hirschman and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, was published by City Lights Books.

Many years later, Macchi would return to these Artaud's words in the corrections and amendments he had been making in the 1980s to the text composed by Diacono in 1979 for *Apocalypsis Altera*, a project based on an idea by Antonino Titone suggested by the *Apocalypse* that Adrian Leverkühn was supposed to be writing in Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. On the page numbered bottom centre as fifteenth and in the top left as 'XII' referring to the twelfth plate of Albrecht Dürer's *Apocalypsis cum figuris*, which is part of a group of twenty-three sheets of photocopies of Diacono's *Apocalypsis Altera* typewritten text³⁸ (FIGURE 6), Macchi underlined the word 'indicibile [unspeakable]' in the lines conceived for the Chronicler's voice, and he added: 'Angelo – tout vrai langage est incompréhensible [Angel – all true language is incomprehensible]', and on the right side he transcribed:

dakantala
 dakis ketel
 ta redaba
 ta redabel
 de stra muntils
 o ept enis
 o ept atra

FIGURE 6. Photocopy of Mario Diacono's *Apocalypsis Altera* typewritten text with annotations by Egisto Macchi. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi

XII.		
Cronista	Ed ecco, vidi l'Agnello stare ritto sopra un monte, e con lui erano centoquarantaquattro mila uomini, che portavano il suo nome inscritto sulla fronte. Cantavano un cantico indicibile se non da quei centoquarantaquattro mila elettiis.	XIV, 1 M. 442
ANGELO	Tout va si finit est incompletable -	
Coro	Magna et mirabilia sunt secreta tua, iustae et verae viae tuae, rex saeculorum. Quis non timebit te, et magnificabit nomen tuum? quoniam iudicia tua manifestata sunt.	XV, 3 M. 444
	dakantala dabis ketel ta redaba ta redabel de stia munitils o ept eris o ept aha.	Ashtand - CI-GIT
Cronista	E poi vidi una folla immensa, che nessuno poteva contare, d'ogni nazione, popolo e lingua, in piedi davanti all'Agnello gridando con voce altissima:	VII, 9 M. 442
Coro	Salus Deo nostro, qui sedet super thronum, salus Agno, qui nos deducet ad vitae fontes aquarum, et omnem absterget lacrimam ab oculis nostris.	VII, 17
Cronista	Poi vidi un Angelo volare in mezzo al cielo, e portava un Vangelo Eterno gridando:	XIV, 6
Angelo	Cecidit, cecidit Babylon illa magna, quae a vino irae fornicationis suae potavit omnes gentes.	
Cronista	E udi l'Agnello dal monte, dirmi:	XIV, 13
Agnello	Scribe. Beati mortui, qui in Deo moriuntur. Amodo iam dicit Spiritus, ut requiescant a laboribus suis; opera enim illorum sequuntur illos.	
Cronista	Ed ecco vidi una nuvola bianca, e seduto sopra la nuvola un Figlio d'uomo, con in mano una falce tagliente. E l'Angelo volò nel cielo gridando all'Uomo seduto sulla nuvola:	
Angelo	Mitte falcem tuam et mete, quia venit hora ut metatur, quoniam aruit messis terrae.	
Coro	Mitte falcem tuam acutam et vindemia botros vineae terrae, quoniam maturae sunt uvae eius.	

/15/

He also used an arrow to point out the reference to Artaud and *Ci-gît* (that is *Ci-gît précédé de la Culture Indienne*), the source of those magical words which were collected by Diacono in ‘Totem étranglé’.³⁹ In his recollection of Artaud, Macchi associated those obscure expressions and impenetrable shamanic sounds with the unfathomable celestial language of a divine revelation, tracing, in his meditation on Artaud, a straight line joining the work of the musical theatre piece *A(lter) A(ction)* to *Apocalypsis Altera*, the large scale composition for chorus that he was never able to completely set to music.

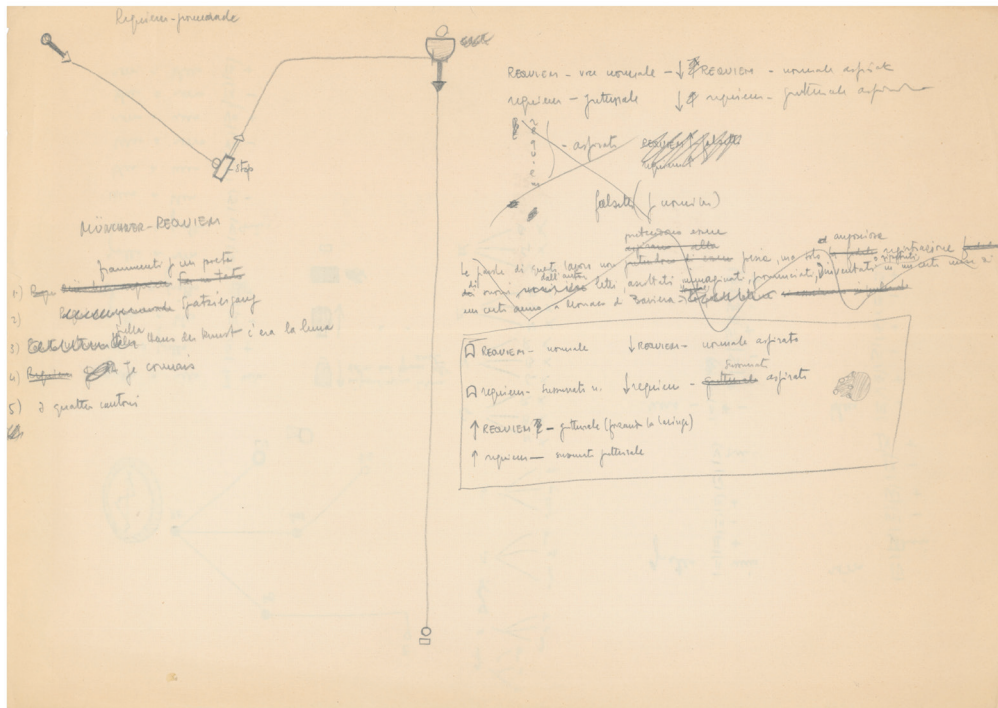
SPATZIERGANG

If the Venice performance of *Cadenza 1–2* in 1967 confirms Macchi’s interest in Artaud’s poetry, the description of the score of *Cadenza 2* gives further evidence of its interrelations with *München-Requiem*, including the visual scheme informing both. That is how the composer described *Cadenza 2* in the Venetian programme:

Cadenza 2 was completed at the end of July. It is a piece open to multiple solutions, amongst which that of being performed by a male voice or by several voices. Despite the aleatory feature which differentiates it from 1, this Cadenza aims to be an ideal completion of the other. The score is drawn as a street map, where the small circles represent the pitches, and the lines the direction. The tempo is given by the length of the lines, almost in scale, and the intervals by the swerve between the small circles. Absolute pitches are not marked but only “relationships” between free pitches [...] ascending and descending intervals are always indicated. The performer of the work applies the dynamics.⁴⁰

The word picture of *Cadenza 2* foretells the musical notation of *München-Requiem*, both with regard to what concerns a possible performance with additional voices, and because of the visual elements informing the musical score. Furthermore, the promenade, which Macchi sketches in words by inserting the place names of Munich’s urban landscape in the *encefaloframmenti*, might be associated to that idea of street map, which also seems to be suggested on the verso of the seventh loose sheet of the manuscript of *München-Requiem* where he appears to outline directions and stops along the route (FIGURE 7).

FIGURE 7. Egisto Macchi, *München-Requiem*: autograph score, seventh sheet verso. Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia), Fondo Egisto Macchi



On the very same sheet, Macchi had been editing the titles-parts, in search of an accurate vocabulary demonstrating his intentions: he deleted the expression ‘Requiem-Promenade’ in favour of the German ‘Spaziergang [walk]’. Moreover, the specification ‘azioni e suoni / actions and lights’, added on the frontispiece as a subtitle, seems to disclose a supplementary element of the performative aspect of a sort of *dérive urbaine situationniste* [situationist urban dérive] imagined in Munich.

The last line of the biographical note dedicated to Macchi in the 1967 Biennale programme reads: ‘The composer is currently working on a third work of musical theatre’.⁴¹ Accordingly it would perhaps not be too difficult to think that *München-Requiem* was meant to be just that. Following the titles given by the composer on the first sheet of *München-Requiem*, the piece should have concluded with a quartet and a speaker that would have probably conveyed a passage from the twenty-third chorus of ‘Ultimi cori della Terra Promessa’ from *Il Taccuino del Vecchio* by Giuseppe Ungaretti:

Puoi imparare come avvenga si assenti
 Uno, senza mai fretta né pazienza
 Sotto veli guardando
 Fino all'incendio della terra a sera.⁴²

Notes

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- * This article presents findings from a three-month research period (19 September–19 December 2016) at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venezia) with the support of a scholarship from the Centro Internazionale di Studi della Civiltà Italiana “Vittore Branca”.
- 1 ‘Le parole di questo lavoro – non pretendono in alcun modo essere poesia – ma solo angosciata registrazione di suoni – dall’autore letti, ascoltati, immaginati, pronunciati, inventati o ripetuti – in un certo mese – di un certo anno a Monaco di Baviera’. These verses were handwritten in pencil by the author on the third of the seven loose sheets of graph paper. Venezia, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Fondo Egisto Macchi (henceforth FEM), fasc. *München-Requiem*.
 - 2 See Matthew Yokobosky, ‘Image, Beauty and Association: Biographical Notes on the Life and Work of Gregory J. Markopoulos’, in: *Gregory J. Markopoulos: Mythic Themes, Portraiture, and Films of Place*, ed. by John G. Hanhardt and Matthew Yokobosky, New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996, pp. 45–46.
 - 3 See Daniela Tortora, ‘Catalogo’, in: *Archivio Musiche del XX secolo. Numero monografico Egisto Macchi*, Palermo: CIMS, 1996, pp. 77–130: 115. For more information about the work, see also Daniela Tortora, ‘*A(ler) A(ction)*: un tentativo di teatro musicale d’avanguardia’, *Il Saggiatore Musicale*, V/2, 1998, pp. 327–344.
 - 4 FEM, fasc. *München-Requiem*. The archival documentation consists of 9 loose sheets: album cover and detached back cover, plus 7 loose sheets of graph paper, handwritten in pen and pencil, stickers of different shapes and colours glued on the paper; dimension: 295 x 425 mm. One of the sheets is written on the *recto* and *verso*.
 - 5 [First column] S[opran]o Requiem / Lux / In Pace / Irae / Saeculum / Sybilla / Misera / Dictura / Ingemisco / Reus / Culpa / Rubet / Vultus / Supplicanti / America [second column] B[asso] Père / Joëlle / Royal / Heino / Kunst / Rome / Golgota / Alles / Gaulliste / Moi / Schwabing / Los Angeles / Sound / Studio / Lumière [third column] C[ontralto] Luther / Nous / Six-Four / Gregory / Alt / Che Tu / Gundula / Habis / Chien / Tu / Score / Nuit / Joëlle / Zusammen [fourth column] T[enore] Antonin / Leopoldstrasse / Unterföhring / Haus / Action / Joëlle / Aa / Tania / Hallhuber / Schachtel / Martius / Elle / Écran / Noi
 - 6 See Gianmario Borio, ‘Franco Evangelisti’s *Die Schachtel* and its filmic transposition by Gregory Markopoulos’, *Worlds of Audio Vision*, 2011, pp. 1–12 (http://www-5.unipv.it/wav/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=52&lang=it) (last accessed 5 April 2017).
 - 7 [I was on Golgotha / two thousand years ago, and / as always my name was / A...A...A... A...A... / Alteraction. Therefore I was / crucified as a poet / and illuminated with no drums / or trumpets – far from any myth of / resurrection – I got up ...] ‘(A)ALTER(A)CTION. Composizione per teatro di Egisto Macchi. Testo di Mario Diacono. Azione scenica di Sergio Tau e Franco Valobra’, *Marcatré. Notiziario di cultura contemporanea*, 30/33, 1967, pp. 87–115: 103.
 - 8 ‘La Passion d’Antonin Artaud c’est l’incarnation de son propre corps par un homme et non par

- un dieu, la constatation de ce qu'un homme trouve dans son corps [Antonin Artaud's passion is the incarnation of his own body by a man, not by a god, it is the learning of what a man finds in his body]'. Georges Charbonnier, *Antonin Artaud: un essai*, Paris: Editions Pierre Seghers, 1959, p. 53.
- 9 I have consulted a copy of the 1962 reprint from Luigi Squarzina's book collection, held at the Istituto per il Teatro e il Melodramma at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini (LSQU A 0196), which meaning fully attests to a wide circulation of the monograph in Italy.
 - 10 Charbonnier, *Antonin Artaud*, p. 21.
 - 11 Charbonnier, *Antonin Artaud*, pp. 45–67. In particular, the French writer began the chapter by recalling the Conférence au Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier (13 January 1947), Antonin Artaud's last public appearance.
 - 12 Jonas Mekas and Gregory Markopoulos, 'Index to the work of Gregory Markopoulos, Years 1967/70', *Film Culture*, New York, Spring 1971, p. 48.
 - 13 Mekas and Markopoulos, 'Index to the work of Gregory Markopoulos', p. 49.
 - 14 As regards Markopoulos' film *AlterAction* (1968), I was able to watch a copy of the film provided by the Bayerischer Rundfunk Archives Munich, 44740-1 at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Markopoulos' intention for the final scene was to take down Artaud's nude body and light as it appeared in Rembrandt's composition and then burn the frame. See Mekas and Markopoulos, 'Index to the work of Gregory Markopoulos', p. 49.
 - 15 As regards the use of the medium of television in *A(lter)A(ction)*, see Marco Cosci, *La scena media(tizzata): teatro, cinema e televisione in A(lter)A(ction)*, in: *Teatro di avanguardia e composizione sperimentale per la scena in Italia 1950–1975*, a cura di Gianmario Borio, Giordano Ferrari e Daniela Tortora, Venezia: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 2017, pp. 235–257 <http://omp.cini.it/index.php/FGCOP/catalog/view/3/3/11-1>.
 - 16 Charbonnier, *Antonin Artaud*, p. 71.
 - 17 See '(A)ALTER(A)CTION. Composizione per teatro di Egisto Macchi'.
 - 18 See Luciano Caruso, *Scritture e testi di Villa, Diacono, Martini*, Napoli: Colonnese, 1971. *HINDU'S TRIAL DASEIGN* reprinted in: Mario Diacono, *MysticFicActions. Texti 1962–1967*, Roma: Edizioni Eos, 2011, p. 52.
 - 19 Proofs of the unpublished 1967 *Mystificactions* book, Mario Diacono's private collection.
 - 20 Antonin Artaud, 'L'Antarctique; Poème', *Action. Cahiers de philosophie e d'art*, 10, 1921, p. 20; 'La Bouteille et le Verre, Verlaine boit, Mystagogie, Madrigaux', *Action* (Special issue), 1921, pp. 42–45; 'Bar Marin, Aquarium', *Action*, March–April [unnumbered], 1922, p. 42. One of the episodes of Tzara's *Monsieur Aa* was published in *Action* (Special issue), 1921, p. 48.
 - 21 [Alliteration deliberate, knitted. Alliteration of sound, of word, of their shapes, of their timbres, alliteration of the letter. / Alteration. / Not to believe it. / There is NOT. / And the word which doesn't strangle itself in passing, the word which eludes the inarticulate is nothing.] Charbonnier, *Antonin Artaud*, p. 21.
 - 22 'Siamo nel mondo fatuo della sillaba che elude ogni possibilità di comprensibile discorso'. Alfredo Parente, 'Composizioni di punta eseguite dal complesso "MusicaViva Pragensis"', *Il Mattino di Napoli*, 14 September 1967, now in: *La Biennale di Venezia. XXX Festival internazionale di musica contemporanea, 9–16 settembre 1967. Giudizi della critica e notizie di stampa*, a cura dell'Ufficio stampa della Biennale di Venezia 1967, Venezia: ASAC, 1978, p. 70 [cyclostyle volume].
 - 23 [Programme of the concerts given on 12 September 1967], in: *La Biennale di Venezia. XXX*

- Festival internazionale di musica contemporanea 9–16 settembre 1967*, Venezia: Biennale di Venezia, 1967, p. 33.
- 24 As regards the performance at the Haus der Kunst 15–23 April 1968, Daniela Tortora reports the following performers: Heino Hallhuber (aa), Erminia Santi / Gundula Von Woyna (Aa), William McKinney / Thonnie Busch (aA), Kenneth Aesch / Johannes Roehring (AA). See Tortora, ‘Catalogo’, p. 83.
- 25 ‘Egisto Macchi. Cadenza 1–2’, in: *La Biennale di Venezia. XXX Festival internazionale di musica contemporanea 9–16 settembre 1967*, Venezia: Biennale di Venezia, 1967, pp. 36–37.
- 26 ‘Egisto Macchi. Cadenza 1–2’, p. 36.
- 27 *Cadenza 1* reunites what in the text belongs to the Soprano (Aa) and the Tenore (aA), nevertheless the verses are combined with a line taken from another passage. See ‘(A)LTER(A) CTION. Composizione per teatro di Egisto Macchi’, pp. 92, 94.
- 28 Mario Diacono, ‘Tell qu’Elle’, in: *Jannis Kounellis “alfabeto” & testo di Mario Diacono*, Roma: Studio d’Arte Arco d’Alibert, 1966, w.p. Reprinted in: Mario Diacono, *MysticFicActions. Texti 1962–1967*, Roma: Edizioni Eos, 2011, pp. 44–47.
- 29 *Jannis Kounellis*, a cura di Germano Celant, Milano: Mazzotta, 1983, p. 39.
- 30 The lines in *Cadenza 1* derived from ‘Tell qu’Elle’ are the following: ‘Tu la Tierra y el Centro / yo le Voyage [...]’; ‘So vana city / syriena in+mortale nel segno in+decifrabile / delle (—) acque vegetali [...]’; ‘è tEmpwurf di MassSacro’. See Mario Diacono, ‘Tell qu’Elle’, w.p.
- 31 ‘Egisto Macchi. Cadenza 1–2’, p. 36.
- 32 ‘Egisto Macchi, nelle “Due cadenze” per soprano solo, ti lascia aprire l’animo a una speranza, annunciando a sua volta una “melodia di ampio respiro”, ma ottiene nient’altro che l’insipida lamentazione di una demente, parte a bocca chiusa, parte a bocca aperta, interrotta da soffi, da sibili, da strida disperate (uno strazio in senso fisico o psicologico), che, tra l’altro, han messo a dura prova la voce di Erminia Santi’. Parente, ‘Composizioni di punta eseguite dal complesso “MusicaViva Pragensis”’, p. 70.
- 33 FEM, fasc. *A(ler) A(ction)*.
- 34 Mario Diacono, ‘Totem étranglé’, *EX*, 2, 1964. The passage is numbered XI.
- 35 Allen Ginsberg, ‘Death to Van Gogh’s Ear!’, in: Allen Ginsberg, *Kaddish and other Poems 1958–1969*, San Francisco: City Lights, 1961, pp. 61–65: 63.
- 36 FEM, fasc. *Morte all’Orecchio di Van Gogh*.
- 37 Allen Ginsberg, ‘Morte all’orecchio di Van Gogh’, in: Allen Ginsberg, *Jukebox all’idrogeno*, a cura di Fernanda Pivano, Milano: Mondadori, 1965, pp. 334–344.
- 38 FEM, fasc. *Apocalypsis Altera*.
- 39 Mario Diacono, ‘Totem étranglé’. The passage is numbered XV.
- 40 ‘La Cadenza 2 è stata terminata alla fine di luglio. È un brano aperto a molteplici soluzioni, fra cui quella di poter essere eseguito anche da una voce maschile o da più voci. Nonostante il carattere aleatorio che la differenzia dalla I, questa Cadenza vuole essere il complemento ideale di quella. La partitura è disegnata come una pianta stradale, dove i circoletti rappresentano le altezze, le linee la direzione. Il tempo è dato dalla lunghezza delle linee, quasi in scala, gli intervalli dallo scarto fra i circoli. Non sono segnate altezze assolute ma solo “rapporti” fra altezze libere. L’esecutore, cioè, deve solo preoccuparsi di intonare intervalli la cui nota di partenza è sempre lasciata alla sua scelta, e non di cantare intervalli la cui nota di partenza sia data. Gli intervalli ascendenti e discendenti sono sempre indicati. Le dinamiche vengono applicate dallo stesso esecutore. I testi sono di Mario Diacono’. ‘Egisto Macchi. Cadenza 1–2’, p. 36.

- 41 'Attualmente sta preparando un terzo lavoro teatrale'. 'Egisto Macchi. Cadenza 1-2', p. 36.
- 42 [You can discover how one might quit / With never haste nor patience / Peering beneath the veils / Till eve when earth is set ablaze.] Giuseppe Ungaretti, 'Ultimi cori della Terra Promessa', in: Giuseppe Ungaretti, *Il Taccuino del Vecchio*, Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1960, p. 33 (engl. transl. of 'Last Cantos for the Promises Land', from *The Old Man's Notebook* by Giuseppe Ungaretti, in: *A Major Selection of the Poetry of Giuseppe Ungaretti*, bilingual edition transl. by Diego Bastianutti, Toronto: Exile Edition, 1997, pp. 377-399: 395).