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POLITICAL ALLEGORY OR MULTIMEDIA EXTRAVAGANZA? A HISTORICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE OPERA COMPANY OF BOSTON'S *INTOLLERANZA*

Music will always be an historical reality to men who face the process of history and who at every moment make their decisions intuitively and logically. This will create for them new and developing possibilities. Art is alive and will continue to do its work. There is still a great deal to be done.¹

In the fall of 1993, I had the pleasure of interviewing the world-renowned Czech scenographer Josef Svoboda. We spent some time talking about his career and his longevity as a designer, but it was his response to a question about a specific production that prompted further investigation. When asked about his first full-scale U.S. design for The Opera Company of Boston's 1965 production of Luigi Nono's *Intolleranza*, the already animated Svoboda exploded. His eyes sparkled as he recalled "the biggest, most complicated and best production I have ever done. It has not been surpassed since."² This was an intriguing comment from a man with over 700 designs to his credit in a career that has spanned six decades, and who has worked in virtually every major opera house and theatre in both Europe and America.

Svoboda's remarkably favorable recollection not only places this work into a very elite category but also necessitates a thorough examination. Jarka Burian's introduction to Svoboda's work, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*,³ offers an exemplary place to begin this reconstruction. Burian's description is complete with a lengthy quotation by Svoboda, a ground plan, and two photographs. While this text adequately stresses the fact that with *Intolleranza* Svoboda was able to build upon his already successful multimedia *Laterna Magika* technique by employing technology not previously at his disposal, the mounting of this production is more noteworthy than the discussion in Burian's text would indicate.

To begin with, the American premiere of *Intolleranza* was not the first encounter between Svoboda and Nono. The two had worked together on the

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opera's 1961 Venice premiere, a collaboration that ultimately was marred by the hand of censorship. After securing the Boston commission, Nono suggested to Sarah Caldwell, the artistic director of The Opera Company of Boston and the director of the American *Intolleranza*, that she hire Svoboda as the production's scenographer. It was her decision to do so that allowed the composer and designer to complete the work they had begun in Venice. Although the Boston production did not succumb to the same form of censorship that affected the work's 1961 premiere, the behind-the-scenes action was hampered by political controversy, miscommunication, and Nono's suspicions about American culture. Using the recollections of Svoboda and Caldwell, combined with reviews of the performances⁴ and my own observations, this article will attempt to describe the controversy that surrounded the mounting of *Intolleranza* while working to reconstruct this little remembered but historically significant production.

Preliminary research revealed that the rehearsal process for the Boston *Intolleranza* was, at best, a tempestuous affair that led to only two performances.⁵ Despite its limited run, however, it was a significant enough event to warrant reviews by both *Time* and *Newsweek*. Beyond this, it seems that both the opera and Caldwell's production have virtually faded from our collective memories. In fact, aside from a few oblique references in connection with Nono's compositional work, the only contemporary mention of the Boston production is in Svoboda's own memoirs. The fact that the opera, as well as its composer, is both musically and politically challenging may account for its disappearance from the opera repertory as well as opera history.⁶

As hinted at in the introductory remarks, Luigi Nono's reputation was that of a temperamental artist with whom it was difficult to work. Politically, Nono was a Communist dedicated to creating aggressive and accusatory works with the goal of provoking social change. To this end, he has been described as "an artist with a strong commitment to relate artistic revolution to the social revolution of our time."⁷ It is perhaps due to this political affiliation and artistic commitment that Nono initially was denied an entrance visa by the U.S. State Department.⁸ This ruling, which eventually was overturned by the intervention of Caldwell, Senator Ted Kennedy, composer Aaron Copland, and the agitation of the Boston press and music critics,⁹ had a profound affect on Nono's approach to the production.

Arriving toward the end of the rehearsal process, Nono, already wary of the U.S. due to his political beliefs and problems with his visa, found certain aspects of the production very exciting while other aspects troubled him. As Caldwell recalls, "We had it staged by the time he got there, and I thought it worked very well. I could have been more aggressively defending what I was doing, but I was so

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interested in arriving at something that he found interesting aesthetically that I did change a number of things."¹⁰ What Caldwell soon discovered was that the things that disturbed Nono about the production "grew out of his suspicion that we were all trying to misrepresent his intent."¹¹ Described by Caldwell as "an excitable person,"¹² Nono's explosive nature led to a number of outbursts during his stay in Boston.¹³ Thankfully, for those involved in the production, his aggressiveness was tempered by the presence of his wife Nuria, daughter of the famed twentieth-century composer Arnold Schönberg,¹⁴ and his mother-in-law, who recognized "what we were trying to do, and who had the sense to know that no one was trying to distort anything."¹⁵

Musically, Nono used an atonal compositional style that is difficult to perform and perhaps even more difficult to listen to. By using clusters or blocks of sound to structure his compositions, Nono created works that challenge both the ear and the intellect and function as a musical slap in the face of complacency. At times grating and dense, Nono's musical compositions parallel his political convictions by working to provoke a reaction on the part of the listener.

Representative of both his political and musical affiliations, *Intolleranza* was created by Nono to express his indignation with the atrocities of the twentieth century. Unfolding in little more than an hour, the piece is not a full-scale "opera," but, as Nono described it, a "scenic action" or "theatrical composition."¹⁶ The work relies less on a formalized linear plot than it does on contemporary aural and visual images to constitute a theatrical montage of events. In this respect *Intolleranza* owes more to the episodically motivated political allegories of the Brecht-Weill collaboration than it does to the narrative process of the operatic tradition.

Didactic as well as episodic in nature, the piece employs a variety of "Brechtian" techniques (a series of short scenes, voice-overs, projected slogans and images) to shape the scenic action. The work does not hinge on a coherent narrative but presents isolated events in the life of an emigrant-miner/refugee as he travels through what *Newsweek* called "a series of fragmented, expressionistic disasters, from mine cave-ins to concentration-camp tortures, from the hydrogen bomb to a final cataclysmic flood."¹⁷ Shaping this odyssey according to his political convictions, Nono periodically comments on the stage action with what he described as "the voice of humanity," a radio commentator who not only reports on the deeply symbolic hurricane that threatens to destroy humankind but also reads messages from Sartre, Brecht, Mayakovsky, and others.

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As the director of the production, Caldwell was extraordinarily sympathetic to the structure of Nono's work, believing that opera exists as "everything rolled into one—music, theatre, the dance, color and voices and theatrical illusions." A daring and innovative producer,¹⁸ Caldwell has demonstrated her devotion to expanding the opera's repertory by offering not only the American premiere of *Intolleranza* but also the first American viewing of Aron Schönberg's *Moses and Aaron*, the east coast premiere of Berg's *Lulu*, and the introduction of other important contemporary artists to American audiences. As one reviewer noted, "Every season since [1958] she has exploded operatic firecrackers beneath proper Bostonians."¹⁹ Certainly, due to its politically controversial nature, both on stage and off, the Boston production of *Intolleranza* was no exception.

Relating Caldwell's style to Svoboda's work, Jarka Burian points out that "Sarah Caldwell is the right American producer for his techniques—brilliant and single-minded, she simply 'gets' whatever is necessary for her conviction of what the show should be."²⁰ Created to document the horrors of the twentieth-century through a series of aural and visual fragments, *Intolleranza* seems to have been written specifically for Svoboda's unique multimedia style of design. By building on the tradition of the Czech theatre revolutionary E.F. Burian, whom Svoboda cites as having had a profound influence on his own work,²¹ Svoboda continually has worked to integrate projections and film within the realm of the live performance. Svoboda does not merely use the technology at his disposal for novel effect but believes that "each of these [scenographic] elements must be adaptable enough to act in unison with any of the others, to be their counterpoint or contrast, not only to project a two-or-more voiced parallel [in terms of physical independence] with the other elements but to be capable of *fusing* with any of the others to form a new quality."²²

While the use of film and projections in the theatre historically can be traced to Piscator's work in the 1920s and 1930s, Svoboda's use of these techniques seems to owe more to Burian than to his predecessor. Piscator used projections only incidentally to illustrate local color or to provide necessary information, whereas in Burian's theatre the focus was on a more "metaphoric, dramatic use to convey the emotional atmosphere of a scene in a number of ways."²³ This use of projections echoes Svoboda's desire not to allow the image on stage to remain static "but something that evolves, that has movement, not necessarily physical movement, of course, but a setting that is dynamic, capable of expressing changing relationships, feelings, moods."²⁴ It is this desire to integrate the design with both performer and text that has carried Svoboda to the forefront of his profession. As a designer, he understands that "Scenography is not a background nor even a container, but in itself a dramatic component that becomes integrated with every other expressive component or element of production and shares in the cumulative effect upon the viewer."²⁵

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When called upon to create a production for the Czechoslovakian Pavilion at the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels, Svoboda collaborated with director Alfred Radok on an exhibition that was to be the hit of the fair. They devised a form of presentation dubbed "Laterna Magika" that reflected Svoboda's desire for the integration of *all* dramatic elements, a process that is embraced by both Caldwell's directorial style and Nono's combination of music, images, and text. A "theatrical synthesis of projected images and synchronized acting and staging,"²⁶ the original *Laterna Magika* that combined live actors and musicians with prerecorded film sequences. When commenting on the combination of the two, Svoboda states that "The play of the actors cannot exist without the film, and vice-versa—they become one thing. One is not the background for the other; instead, you have a simultaneity, a synthesis and fusion of actors and projection. Moreover, the same actors appear on screen and stage, and interact with each other. The film has a dramatic function."²⁷

Aside from the obvious restriction of working with prerecorded film, Jarka Burian writes of the 1958 exhibition: "*Laterna Magika* never experienced the ultimate test of presenting a work that was written especially for it; that is, a work other than a revue or cabaret entertainment."²⁸ Demanding a combination of elements both aural and visual, Nono's *Intolleranza* used the *Laterna Magika* technique more fully and effectively than any production Svoboda had worked on by the early 1960s.²⁹ Chosen by Nono to design the work's 1961 premiere, Svoboda was given the opportunity to work on material written specifically for a synthesis of all theatrical elements.

As stated earlier, the Boston production of *Intolleranza* was not the first collaboration between Svoboda and Nono; the two originally worked together on the 1961 Venice premiere of the opera, a production that, unfortunately, ended with Svoboda's design only half realized. His complex arrangement of mobile projection surfaces was permitted to be utilized (Figure 5), but Svoboda's choice of projected documentary material was censored. When asked about the censorship, he states that "the 1961 production was politically difficult, very much to the left. The films were not permitted by the head of the city. The stage setup was the same, but Emilio Vedova's [abstract expressionist] paintings were substituted for the political films."³⁰

Despite the suppression of the intended documentary footage, the dedicated communist composer's intricate atonal score, combined with the political nature of the work, succeeded in provoking an opening night riot by the Italian Fascist contingency.³¹ As a reporter for the *New York Times* pointed out, "the performance had to be halted while members of the audience were shrieking unprintable



Figure 5.
Svoboda's collage of the elaborate arrangement of mobile projection surfaces
and projections for the Venice premiere of *Intolleranza*.
Teatro la Fenice, Venice, 1961.

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names.³² While it is possible to use this fact to stress the confrontational force of Nono's work, the protesting faction of the audience, who arrived "equipped with whistles and stench bombs,"³³ had clearly come prepared for a fight. While such an aggressive response did not greet the opening of Nono's work in Boston, save one lone protest from a Polish Freedom fighter who spent the first act parading outside the theatre with a sign that branded Nono a "Red Fascist,"³⁴ the wave of controversy that surrounded Nono's admission to the United States, followed by his displeasure with certain aspects of the production and his subsequent printed attack on the work, lived up to the controversy provoked in Venice.

Due to the problems he encountered securing an entrance visa, Nono arrived in Boston two weeks later than he had originally intended, an event that caused an irredeemable loss of rehearsal time. As Nono subsequently described, "When I arrived and saw the work I rejected everything. I held long meetings and arguments and explained the meaning and significance of my work and how it should be produced."³⁵ Beverly Sills, the production's lead soprano, describes one of these meetings in her autobiography *Bubbles: A Self Portrait*:

From the start he raised havoc. The English translation of his opera, he complained, had lost all of its poetry... At one point in the opera I had an aria entitled "Ban the Bomb," which contained a phrase "the screaming voices of Hiroshima," on the "shi" in "Hiroshima" I had to hit a high C-sharp. I tried to explain to Mr. Nono that on a note that high the text would be indecipherable and so it would be better to sing the word "Hiroshima" on a lower note so that people could understand. "No" he said, he wanted the high C-sharp to sound like the screaming of the bomb itself. When I said that I did not think I could bring it off, he began to yell, accusing me of acting this way because I did not want to admit my country's guilt in dropping the bomb.³⁶

Although Nono's political beliefs certainly did affect the structure of *Intolleranza*, it is important to note that his compositional style reflects a valuation of sound for emotional effect as opposed to intellectual understanding. It is perhaps for this reason that he relied on the prerecorded "voice of humanity" to comment on the stage action. In fact, so important to the overall effect of *Intolleranza* was this prerecorded material that, when the tape machine broke in the final minutes of one of the Boston performances, Nono could be seen in the orchestra pit pulling the tape through by hand. As one critic noted, "at performance's end he stood knee-deep in tangled tape like a partially unraveled mummy."³⁷

Sills' comment regarding Nono's displeasure with the English translation of the opera is, however, not unfounded. As Caldwell points out, the performance was being filmed by WGBH of Boston for television, and they were unable to get clearance on a specific translation of the Brecht text: "So they had another

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translation made which was just as accurate and maybe even better. But a young man from Harvard, who was one of the few communists that Nono was able to find, discovered that it was not the translation which he [Nono] was used to. So Nono decided that we were trying to hide something."³⁸

Nono's critique of the production did not end with his departure from Boston. On 17 April 1965, he issued a lengthy letter in *Rinacita*, the Italian Communist weekly, describing, in great detail, his displeasure with the production. He attacked the lack of time to mount the production, the translation, Caldwell's alleged attempt to censor the term "bourgeoisie" and the phrase "the capitalist exploitation," the lack of funding for the arts in America, the technical imperfection of the orchestra, the lackluster attendance by American composers, and even the pessimism of the students at Harvard University. Adding to the controversy that surrounds this production, Caldwell maintains that this letter was not written by Nono. In fact, when recently asked about the letter, she stated that "I remember saying Luigi Nono did not write this. And later he wrote a statement saying that he did not write it. I can think of a lot of things he might have said, but I don't believe he did this. He went to great trouble to write here and say he didn't write that and to reject it and reject it in Venice."³⁹

While this controversial letter voiced displeasure with nearly every aspect of the production, it did, however, recall Svoboda's work in a favorable light. Although Svoboda had worked on the opera's 1961 premiere, a comparison of the two productions makes it clear that the 1965 design was not simply a matter of picking up where he had left off. Sharing with the Venice production the fundamental principles of the *Laterna Magika* technique, the Boston production, due to financial limitations and time constraints, was designed with a predominantly bare stage supplemented by a much simpler arrangement of projection surfaces. While the two productions utilized a combination of live performers and projected material, Svoboda's design for the American premiere is memorable due to certain technical modifications that he made to his established multimedia process.

Before proceeding, it is imperative to point out that the *Laterna Magika* technique is not as simple as turning on a film or slide projector and expecting that an integration between live and filmed action magically will transpire. The two exist in very different spatial and temporal realms. The three-dimensionality of the human figure can be represented only marginally by light-projected images. The flexibility of the film to change perspective and location with the push of a button cannot be replicated by the materiality of the actor. The film, though unfolding through time, repeats its actions with the precision of a painting or a sculpture. The

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images are fixed, segmented, and arranged for maximum dramatic interest. The live actor, on the other hand, recreates the images anew each time. As rehearsed as the actions may be, the actor stumbles, sweats, speeds up, and slows down, responds to the audience, and adjusts his or her performance to individual rhythms for which the film cannot accommodate. All of this works toward revealing the seams of the construction and dissolving the union between these disparate elements.

This problem of the intersection of a spontaneous live actor with an unchanging filmed image was addressed directly by Svoboda's design for the Boston *Intolleranza*. One of the crucial adjustments to the Laterna Magika technique was a removal of the strict adherence to prerecorded images. As Svoboda described it to Burian, "Instead of film I used television techniques in such a way as to project a TV image onto many screens placed on the stage."⁴⁰ Commenting on this production in the recently published English translation of his memoirs, *The Secret of Theatrical Space*, Svoboda states that "In the Boston theatre I was able to put my hands on equipment and facilities that I previously could only dream about. Part of the dream was industrial television with the possibility and capability of reproducing whatever was being shot."⁴¹

It is important to keep in mind that, as a designer, Svoboda always has drawn on the expertise of scientists, technicians, and electricians to help create his scenographic marvels. His career exists as a testament to the fact that collaboration between the arts and sciences ultimately can benefit both disciplines. When commenting on this during his lecture tour of the United States in 1972, he remarked that "if there were a joining of colleagues in the university—theatre people with architects, scientists, engineers—real benefits would result in knowledge gained and assistance offered."⁴² Svoboda further recalled that, in conjunction with staff members of WGBH, "MIT was a great help to me when I did a production in Boston [*Intolleranza*]. They were happy to be of assistance; they weren't aware they had so much to offer to the theatre."⁴³

Gaining access to previously unavailable equipment and assistance enabled Svoboda to eliminate the rigidity of film and replace it with closed-circuit television. With this technology, he was able to develop a more flexible application of the Laterna Magika technique.⁴⁴ Rather than merely present the intersection of prerecorded and live material, the production created what Svoboda described as "TV in this second."⁴⁵ Merging television and Laterna Magika principles allowed him to combine prerecorded material with live actions performed in studio spaces (both adjoining the theatre and as far as three miles away), delayed actions (by preserving the image on tape to force the actor to confront his/her former self), reverse or negative images of what was being presented live (Figure 6), and what

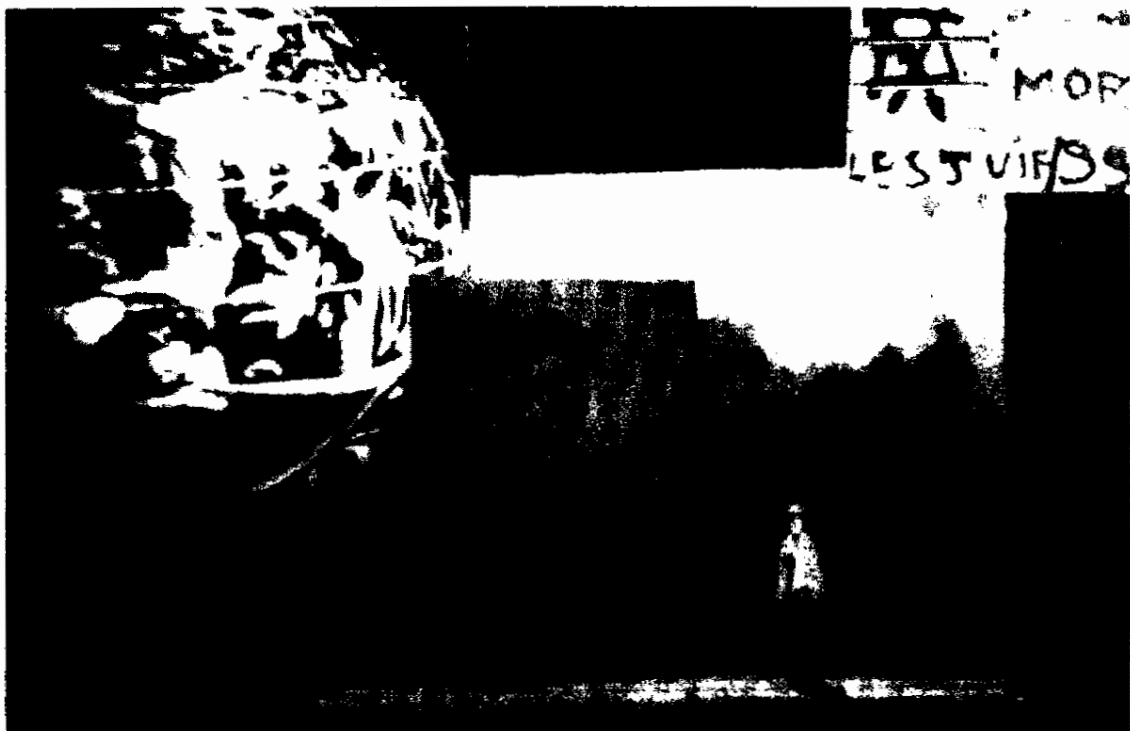


Figure 6.
The merging of performer and technology:
Beverly Sills accompanied by her own negative image.
The Opera Company of Boston, 1965. Photo by Josef Svoboda.

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he called "TV from the city. TV of the actual protesting of the production that was going on outside the theatre, filmed and put on the stage."⁴⁶

This dizzying array of "live" images demanded that the performers not only enact the events in the life of the emigrant-miner/refugee in a traditional sense but also be aware of, and respond to, the multitude of projected imagery that surrounded them. When asked about the difficulty of staging such a multimedia-heavy production Caldwell stated that:

It wasn't difficult at all. We [simply] staged a production. We had the cameras there, with Svoboda's set, various screens which would unfold and close up again in various ways, and we experimented and found what seemed to work and seemed to have an emotional impact in the combination of what was on-stage and what was on the television screen. It was a creative process all the way.⁴⁷

In responding to the demands of a multimedia event that proceeded more like a live news broadcast than an opera, Svoboda recalls that "This pictorial collage was given coherence and meaning in the television control booth, which determined the sequences of images filling the giant receiver screen on stage."⁴⁸

In addition to allowing the *Laterna Magika* technique employed for the Venice production to evolve via the use of television technology, the Boston production equally is memorable because Caldwell did not censor the confrontational documentary images. As one reviewer described, "there was a nightmarish montage of 'scenes of injustice'—a Negro lynching, street riots, the desolation of Hiroshima, decaying bodies stacked in graves—flashed on dozens of various-sized screens, some dropped from the flies, others held aloft by the chorus in a jigsaw pattern"⁴⁹ (Figure 7). When asked about the difference between the choice of images in 1961 and 1965, Svoboda commented that, for the Boston production, "I had access to *The New York Times* film archives, and we used 16mm films of the KKK and other films. The experience was miraculous. It was great to get all of this material. It was a paradise."⁵⁰

Basing the selection of images on Nono's scenario, Svoboda and Caldwell responded to the accusatory stance of the work by selecting "those images that seemed most representative of what we were trying to do at any given moment."⁵¹ In light of the political aggressiveness of some of these images Beverly Sills recalled that there was a specific confrontation between Nono and the cast in reference to the apparent focus on American atrocities:



Figure 7.

Svoboda's arrangement of projection surfaces
complete with the documentary material.

The Opera Company of Boston, 1965. Photo by Josef Svoboda.

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Mr. Nono felt that man's inhumanity existed only in the United States. He had chosen slides of black men being lynched, for example, but refused to allow any of the Russian invasion of Hungary... We all agreed [the cast] to protest Mr. Nono's one-sided slide projections of man's inhumanity; they didn't all have to bear a made-in-America label. After a tremendous struggle we wound up with a kind of sixty-forty breakdown in the choice of slides as between the United States and the rest of the world.⁵²

Although the argument certainly is understandable in terms of the reaction of a primarily American cast, what Ms. Sills fails to take into account is that the political nature of Nono's work demanded that the piece not be presented for an American audience but at an American audience.

Nono's work, designed to illuminate the atrocities of the twentieth-century, was aimed at his present audience, an action that allowed the piece to be critical of American ideology as well as foreign and domestic policy.⁵³ When asked about the seemingly innate controversial nature of the work, Caldwell responded: "I don't think the piece is controversial. I think its composer caused a lot of excitement during his lifetime in various political ways. I think if you look dispassionately, if you read the text, there is nothing in *Intolleranza* except grief that intolerance exists throughout the world."⁵⁴ This aside, Svoboda recalls that "the films were from everywhere. The production was not about America but about the world."⁵⁵ Or, as Caldwell puts it, the production was "critical of America like it was critical of every country in the world. It was simply to lament intolerance wherever it was found."⁵⁶

In conjunction with the live performances and prerecorded material, the production's most innovative use of the television equipment was the choice to project the image of the audience directly into the theatrical space. While this effect was utilized a number of times, the production's two most notable occurrences were 1) during the concentration camp scene, when the audience was forced to confront its own image behind superimposed bars and barbed wire;⁵⁷ and 2) as an African-American singer sang a protest song, the image of the predominantly white audience was switched from a positive projection to a negative one, thus making the entire audience suddenly appear black.⁵⁸ It was this use of the projection system that so remarkably supported the confrontational aspect of Nono's work.

By incorporating images of the audience within the stage space, the spectators were both forced to become part of the horrors depicted by the stage action and were directly implicated in the continuation of these horrors. Although the originally planned 1961 production had elements of this implication, it was in Boston in 1965 that Svoboda and Caldwell created the perfect visual representation

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of the social and political accusations inherent in Nono's score. The audience was confronted by such atrocities as Hiroshima, concentration camps, street riots, and the KKK and was forced, visually, to be involved and to take responsibility for them.

What Svoboda, Caldwell, and Nono created in 1965 was no less than a revolutionary form of music-theatre directly descended from, but technologically advanced beyond, the work of Piscator and Brecht. It was a production that embraced Caldwell's "everything rolled into one" approach to opera and encapsulated Svoboda's scenographic ideal of fusing all of the theatrical elements (performer, projections, music, text, and even the audience) to form a new and dynamic quality. In an article entitled "Notes for an Actual Musical Theatre," Nono partially defines this new form as "a theatre of conscience, with a new social function for the public: they are not limited to attending a rite but confronted with precise choices."⁵⁹ Quite simply, the *Intolleranza* presented in Boston confronted the spectator with a visibly tangible choice: either work to eradicate these atrocities or remain mired within them. When responding to the fact that the audience was not permitted to remain passively objective but became a part of the production, Svoboda described the piece not as an opera or form of music-theatre but as "a directed Happening."⁶⁰

By foregrounding the confrontational nature of the work, Nono created *Intolleranza* to employ the Brechtian device of projecting slogans to supplement the sung text (Figure 8). As one reviewer noted, "The eyes as well as the ears of the audience are incessantly bombarded. On screens and backdrops flash slogans like 'Cherish Life' and 'Never Cease to Love.'"⁶¹ In addition to the projected texts that were used during the production, the letter dubiously ascribed to Nono claimed that "the slogans on demonstrations were omitted with the exception of 'Down With Discrimination'" and that "Svoboda had added the slogan 'Cuba Yes—Yenki no'," but only just before opening night did Caldwell accept it."⁶²

Despite the possible censored phrases,⁶³ the Boston performances took full advantage of the combination of projected texts and the image of the audience via the television cameras by underscoring the staged injustices with such accusatory phrases as "And you? Are you blind like a herd of cattle?"⁶⁴ What can be seen in this description of the visual aspect of the production is that Svoboda's design and Caldwell's staging not only supported Nono's difficult score but also worked to incite in the audience an intolerance of the depicted atrocities. It is this aspect of the design that caused *Boston Globe* critic Kevin Kelly to state that, "even if Luigi Nono's atonal score somehow leaves you uninvolved, Svoboda's graphic visual counterpoint haunts the mind... Thus everything Nono expects us to hear is also seen, and seen with unforgettable clarity."⁶⁵



Figure 8.
Staged action supplemented by projected text.
The Opera Company of Boston, 1965. Photo by Josef Svoboda.

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ENDNOTES

1. Luigi Nono, "The Historical Reality of Music Today," *The Score* 27 (July 1960): 45.
2. Personal Interview with Josef Svoboda. Prague, Czech Republic. 15 September 1993 (subsequently noted as "Svoboda Interview").
3. Jarka Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1971), 103-106.
4. For additional sources not included in this article, see Quaintance Eaton, "Far Out Boston," *Opera News*, 1 May 1965, 34; Meter Glickman, Review of *Intolleranza*, *Musical Courier*, June 1961, 16; Harold Rogers, "Nono's U.S. Premiere," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 February 1965; and Michael Steinberg, "Nono's *Intolleranza* Debuts Despite Delays," *The Boston Globe*, 22 February 1965, 1+19.
5. Due to the time constraints of mounting such a complicated piece, the original plan to present the work on Friday and Sunday night was altered to a matinee and an evening performance on Sunday, 21 February 1965.
6. After a hiatus of fourteen years, the opera was staged by the Hamburg State Opera in 1985. The most recent production was staged by the Stuttgart State Opera in 1992. It should be noted, however, that very little of Nono's work is performed with any regularity.
7. Eric Saltzman, *Twentieth-Century Music: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), 180.
8. *The New York Times*, 29 January 1965, 23. The article states that, when asked if Nono was denied a visa because he was a Communist, the spokesperson for the State Department refused to comment. It is interesting to note that, despite his Czechoslovakian citizenship, Svoboda had no problem securing an entrance visa. This point is conditioned by the fact that Svoboda was a coming from a Communist country while Nono was a Communist coming from a non-Communist country.
9. *The New York Times*, 4 February 1965, 24.
10. Phone interview with Sarah Caldwell on 16 February 1996 (subsequently noted as "Caldwell Interview").
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. As a composer, Nono was not only confrontational artistically and politically but publicly as well. When feuding openly in the press with fellow Italian composer Gian Carlo Menotti, Nono refused to allow *Intolleranza* to be performed on the same bill as Menotti's *The Consul*. Menotti's composition allegedly was referred to as an anti-Communist opera, thereby prompting Nono to pull his work from the Florence Maggio Musical of 1972. For more information, see Stelios Galatopouls, "Intolerant Nono," *Music and Musicians* (February 1972): 10-11.
14. To whom *Intolleranza* is dedicated.
15. Caldwell Interview.
16. Everett Helm, "Bedlam in Venice," *The New York Times*, 7 May 1961, X11.
17. "Nono? Yes and No," *Newsweek*, 8 March 1965, 84.
18. After battling the U.S. state department, the financial and technical demands of the work, and Luigi Nono himself, it remains a tribute to her talent as a producer that the Boston premiere took place at all.
19. "Nono? Yes and No," 84.
20. Jarka Burian, "A Selection of Josef Svoboda's Production Work, 1965-1970," *Theatre Design and Technology* (February 1970): 6.
21. For a more complete overview of E. F. Burian's work, see Jarka Burian's "Czechoslovakian Stage Design and Scenography, 1914-1938: A Survey - Part II," *Theatre Design and Technology* (Fall 1975): 23-32; and Frantisek Cerny's "Lighting that Creates the Scene and Lighting as an Actor," *Innovations in Stage Design*, ed. Francis Hodge (Austin: Published by American Society for Theatre Research and Theatre Library Association, 1972): 126-145.

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22. Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*, 30. Italics mine.
23. Burian, "Czechoslovakian Stage Design and Scenography, 1914-1938: A Survey - Part II," 31.
24. Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*, 125.
25. Jarka Burian, "Josef Svoboda: Theatre Artist in the Age of Science," *Educational Theatre Journal* 22 (May 1970): 125-126.
26. Josef Svoboda, "Laterna Magika," *The Drama Review* 11 (Fall 1966): 142.
27. Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*, 83.
28. *Ibid.*, 86.
29. This statement reflects Svoboda's work with the Laterna Magika technique at the time of his design for the Boston production. He subsequently used this technique to great effect for a production of *The Last Ones* in 1966 and several works created specifically for the Prague theatre named Laterna Magika, of which Svoboda is one of the founders and current artistic director: *Night Rehearsal* (1981), *Vivisection* (1987), and *Odysseus* (1987). For more information on these last three productions, see Jarka Burian, "Josef Svoboda and Laterna Magika's Latest Productions," *Theatre Design and Technology* 24 (Winter 1988): 17-27.
30. Svoboda Interview.
31. "Rioters Disrupt Opera Premiere," *The New York Times*, 14 April 1961, 22.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. Harold C. Schönberg, "Opera: Luigi Nono's *Intolleranza 1960*," *The New York Times*, 22 February 1965, 15.
35. Michael Steinberg, "Red Composer Nono Bites Hub Hospitality," *The Boston Globe*, 26 May 1965, 13.
36. Beverly Sills, *Bubbles: A Self Portrait* (New York: Warner Books, 1976), 100.
37. "Swatches & Splashes," *Time*, 5 March 1965, 66.
38. Caldwell Interview.
39. *Ibid.* While Caldwell points out that the authorship of this letter is disputable, her claim seems to be wholly based on a private correspondence from Nono; I was unable to find any published documentation to support this claim. Despite the possible renunciation of the letter, the repercussions stemming from Nono's alleged attack were played out in *The Boston Globe*, complete with replies by Sills, music critic Michael Steinberg, and editorial writer Otto Zausmer. Curiously, Caldwell chose not to reply.
40. Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*, 103.
41. Josef Svoboda, *The Secret of Theatrical Space*, ed. and trans. Jarka Burian (New York: Applause Theatre Books, 1993), 79. Although Svoboda writes of the accessibility of this equipment, the *Rinacitu* letter attacked the Boston production for only using four of nine available projectors. The letter further stated that Svoboda "worked like mad saving a little of the situation, intervening in the direction of the work." For more information on the response to these accusations, see Michael Steinberg's comments surrounding the reprint of the *Rinacitu* letter; Beverly Sills, "A Red-Head Sets the Record Straight," *The Boston Globe*, 29 May 1965, 4; and Michael Steinberg, "Nono's Letter: Dishonest, Vain, Silly, But What is the Real Issue?," *The Boston Globe*, 30 May 1965, 16.
42. Jarka Burian, "Josef Svoboda's American University Tour 1972," *Theatre Design and Technology* (May 1973): 11.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Although Nono's arrival was delayed, Svoboda recalled in 1993 that he had two weeks to experiment with the equipment in the theatre (Svoboda Interview). This statement refutes the *Rinacitu* letter's claim that "Lights and projectors could be tried out only in the last three days, with quarrels taking place continuously over either their use or their positions." For more information, see *The Boston Globe*, 26 May 1965, 13.
45. Svoboda Interview.

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46. *Ibid.* Taking advantage of all images at his disposal, Svoboda projected the image of the production's lone picket into the dramatic space.

47. Caldwell Interview.

48. Svoboda, *The Secret of Theatrical Space*, 79. This sequence of images was, as Caldwell remembered, carefully rehearsed and planned by a committee consisting of herself, Svoboda, and members of the WGBH staff (Caldwell Interview).

49. "Swatches & Splashes," 66.

50. Svoboda Interview. While Svoboda recalls an imagistic paradise, Caldwell points out that even the selection and processing of these images was not immune to the miscommunication that haunted the production. Svoboda dealt with a Russian photographer at MIT who was responsible for transferring the chosen images into slide form. According to Caldwell, "They thought they communicated with one another, but they didn't. So, slide after slide came over not the way Svoboda wanted it" (Caldwell Interview).

51. Caldwell Interview.

52. Sills, 101. While Sills recalls this confrontation between Nono and the cast with regard to the selection of images, it was Caldwell and Svoboda who were most responsible for the choice of projected material.

53. In fact, when Nono staged the piece at Nürnberg in 1970 and then again at Nancy in 1971, he changed the text and the visual material to reflect specific national issues.

54. Caldwell Interview.

55. Svoboda Interview.

56. Caldwell Interview.

57. Dora Jane Hamblin, "She Puts the Oomph in the Opera," *Life*, 5 March 1965, 78. While this use of the barbed wire remained in the final production, Caldwell recalls that Svoboda had designed a light-box in which two pieces of barbed wire were hung, one vertically, the other horizontally—essentially creating a cross. Despite the fact that the cross image was unintentional, Caldwell recalled that "Nono just went berserk when he saw this. He said we were trying to make it a cheap Christian something or other." At that point the light-box was struck from the production (Caldwell Interview).

58. Svoboda, *The Secret of Theatrical Space*, 79.

59. Luigi Nono, "Appunti per un teatro musica attuale," *La Rassegna Musicale* 31 (1961): 419. Translation by Janet Monteith Gilbert, "Dialectic Music: An Analysis of Luigi Nono's *Intolleranza*," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign, 1979, 16.

60. Svoboda Interview.

61. "Nono? Yes and No," 84.

62. Steinberg, "Red Composer Nono Bites Hub Hospitality," 13.

63. Perhaps a miscommunication that, like the Brecht text, can be attributed to an unfamiliar translation.

64. "Swatches & Splashes," 66.

65. Kevin Kelly, "Intolleranza Set Makes Audience Into Camera...That Absorbs All The Horror," *The Boston Globe*, 22 February 1965, 21.

66. Burian, *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*, 105-6.

67. William D. Miranda, "Review of *Intolleranza*," *Opera* (September 1965): 639.

68. Schonberg, 15.