

Foreword

Susana González Aktories / Susanne Klengel

This volume is the culmination of a series of encounters originally triggered by an enthusiastic dialogue held in Berlin in 2017 among Susana González Aktories, Barbara Ventarola and Georg Witte, while sharing their common passion for the connections between music and literature. This in turn led to discussions on notation that in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have opened up a broad field of creative proposals, as well as theoretical and analytical challenges.

As a result of this casual exchange, an idea arose for organizing a more formal event where these topics could be confronted, discussed and updated with other scholars and artists, not only coming from different fields of research and from diverse artistic disciplines, but also from various geographical and cultural contexts in Europe and the Americas.

The efforts crystallized into a three-day international colloquium on notation entitled *Material Contemplations, Open Scriptures. Crossroads and Contemporary Practices in a Dialogue Between Latin America and Europe*, which was held in September 2018 in Mexico City, with Susana González Aktories and Cinthya García Leyva as head organizers on the Mexican side, and Barbara Ventarola and Georg Witte on the German side, with the special participation of Susanne Klengel as a key bonding figure between Germany and Iberoamerica. The event was hosted by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (National Autonomous University of Mexico, UNAM), with the support of the Science-Art and Technology Program ACT and the Freie Universität Berlin. It included an art exhibition, a recital, working panels with suggestive papers, and a variety of artistic performances. All these presentations induced the organization of a further encounter in the form of a one-day follow-up-workshop around notation, *Notating Time*, held in July 2019 and hosted by the Freie Universität Berlin, with the support of UNAM and the ACT-Program.

The aim of this volume is not to embody the papers presented during both memorable encounters. Instead, it is a continuation, as well as an expansion of this multilateral dialogue on notation, within the bilateral frame in which it was originally conceived, between UNAM and Freie Universität Berlin, now with the additional engagement of the Institute for

Latin American Studies as a binding institutional unit. Thanks to these joint efforts we gathered an array of voices from both sides of the Atlantic, with authors coming mainly but not exclusively from Mexico and Germany. We also have the privilege to include on the European side scholars and artists from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Spain and Italy, and from the Americas, contributors from Argentina, Uruguay, and Canada.

Through these articles we have been able to extend the dialogue, taking advantage of the opportunity to delve deeper into certain topics, or even generate additional reflections from the analyses as well as from the creative side of the artists involved. Each article was thoroughly debated with the authors and, in many cases, this encouraged partial reformulations, expansions, as well as updates of certain findings. We would like to thank all the authors for being open to this dialogue throughout the process of the conception of this book.

It is clear that neither the fruitful personal exchanges nor the writings intend to exhaust the richness of this field. In this sense, the dialogue is open for further debates. As for this volume, we intend to give an account of the questions that often arise when thinking of notation from different interdisciplinary points of view, to capture the sort of concerns it poses today, and to reflect on possible outcomes and developments in the future, ruled by new paradigms, mediations, technologies, and therefore new forms of noting, inscribing and decoding artistic expressions. These eclectic proposals are the proof that there is still much to be conceived and analyzed in terms of this broad, fundamental concept of notation, as it has been used throughout time and cultures, knowing that it will keep on being a debated topic in many years to come.

When entering the third stage of our dialogue, as we began giving form to this volume, we experienced the sudden loss of our dear colleague Barbara Ventarola. This volume honors her memory as an enthusiastic, committed and versatile scholar.

We want to thank the Ibero-American Institute that took interest in this volume in its advanced stage and considered its publication within the series *Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana*. We very much appreciate and acknowledge the engagement of all collaborators who made this edition possible. Our special thanks go to Patricia Schulze for her meticulous editing work.

Finally, our gratitude goes again to all the authors for their generosity and confidence in this project.