

META-XENAKIS

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON IANNIS XENAKIS'S LIFE, WORK,
AND LEGACIES

EDITED BY SHARON KANACH AND PETER NELSON





<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

©2024 Sharon Kanach and Peter Nelson.

Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapter's authors



This work is licensed under the the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the text; to adapt the text for non-commercial purposes of the text providing attribution is made to the authors (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Sharon Kanach and Peter Nelson (eds), *Meta-Xenakis: New Perspectives on Iannis Xenakis's Life, Work, and Legacies*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0390>

Copyright and permissions for the reuse of many of the images included in this publication differ from the above. This information is provided in the captions and in the list of illustrations. Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

Further details about CC BY-NC licenses are available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0390#resources>

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-80511-224-2

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-80511-225-9

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-80511-226-6

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-80511-227-3

ISBN HTML: 978-1-80511-229-7

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0390

Cover image: Iannis Xenakis at the C.R. MacIntosh Museum, Glasgow, Scotland, 1987. Photo by Henning Lohner, courtesy of CIX Archives, Lohner collection.

Cover design: Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal

With generous support from: Centre Iannis Xenakis, Xenakis Project of the Americas/The Brook Center, Université de Rouen: BQRI, IRIHS, GRHis, CÉRÉdI.



Institut de Recherche
Inter-disciplinaire
Homme Société



Centre d'Études et de
Recherche Éditor/Interpréter

Preface

The Meta-Xenakis Team Leaders

[...] one can create a fantastic network of optimistic and pacifistic art throughout the world. Never before has such a thing been feasible. Today it is.¹

The year 2022 marked the centenary of the birth of Iannis Xenakis (1922), a true polymath, who left indelible traces with his own works in music and architecture as well as in his pioneering polytopes in the second half of the twentieth century.² His visionary production, focused on the perspective of the arts and sciences as an alloy, continues to inspire artists today.

In the spirit of Xenakis's optimism expressed in the epigraph above, beginning in 2020, the Centre Iannis Xenakis (CIX) at the Université de Rouen Normandie, France, and the KSYME (Contemporary Music Research Center) at the Athens Conservatoire, Greece, began brainstorming common events to celebrate the centenary of the composer, architect, theoretician, philosopher, and founder of their respective institutions. These events were scheduled to take place in 2022, and characterized as modest but meaningful, as many of us had had close ties with the composer over many years.³ Soon after though, we were joined by another former close collaborator and friend of Xenakis, our Mexican colleague Julio Estrada and his SUICREA research laboratory.⁴ In turn, Julio enlisted some of his former students and we swiftly partnered with our colleagues at the Nagoya City University, in Japan.⁵ It only made sense then to invite the Xenakis Project of the Americas (XPA) to participate as well, to make it a truly global manifestation.⁶ Our jointly organized Meta-Xenakis Consortium, spanning five

1 Xenakis and Kanach, 2008, p. 255. The original text, published posthumously, dates from 1974, a half a century ago!

2 "Polytope," from the Greek *poly-*, or "several," and *-topos*, "space." In the mathematical literature, the term 'polytope' has come generally to mean different overlapping sets of objects. In Xenakis's creative output, his five realized (and several unrealized) polytopes were all works where music, space, light, and architecture (or landscape, for his outdoor polytopes) were combined to create an immersive environment. For more information on his polytopes, see Xenakis 2008, Part Four.

3 *Centre Iannis Xenakis*, <https://www.centre-iannis-xenakis.org/>; KYSME, <http://www.ksyme.org/>

4 SUICREA, <http://suicrea.unam.mx>

5 *Nagoya*, <https://www.nagoya-cu.ac.jp/sda/english/>

6 "Xenakis Project of the Americas," *The Brook Center*, <https://brookcenter.gc.cuny.edu/projects/xenakis-project-of-the-americas/>

countries and three continents, was therefore founded by several of Iannis Xenakis's former students, collaborators, and dedicatees.⁷

Our common, ambitious goal became to create a truly transcontinental celebration of the life, work, and multiple legacies—both philosophic and artistic—of the true Renaissance man who was Iannis Xenakis. The main partners collaborated actively with other local artists, scholars, and institutions in each region, which resulted in multiple concerts, educational workshops, masterclasses, exhibitions, public lectures, a brand-new feature-length documentary film, as well as open calls and composition competitions, several of which are documented under the Sustainable Resources section in this volume.

One of the highlights of our events, thanks to the resources of post-pandemic interconnectivity, was the Meta-Xenakis Global Symposium, a forty-one-hour non-stop marathon (true to the Xenakian spirit of *dépassement de soi*) that took place between the morning of 30 September (in France) and the evening of 1 October 2022 (in Mexico) as a distributed collaboration between participants located in the five countries, in hybrid mode and live-streamed.

We are all delighted to share with a broader public these highlights of a truly unforgettable and transformational experience. And a special thank-you to all of the artists, scholars, and friends for their shared enthusiasms, as well to as all the Meta-Xenakis Consortium members and Associate Partners.⁸

References

XENAKIS, Iannis (2008), *Music and Architecture: Architectural Projects, Texts, and Realizations*, translated, compiled and presented by Sharon Kanach, Hillsdale, New York, Pendragon Press.

7 *Meta-Xenakis*, <https://meta-xenakis.org>. Two committees were founded to brainstorm and put to execution all the Meta-Xenakis events. The **Scientific and Artistic Committee** comprised (local coordinators in bold): **Rodolphe Bourotte**, Angelica Cathariou, Juan Ignacio del Cueto, Cyrille Delhay, Athanassios Economou, **Julio Estrada**, Teresa Frenk, Kiyoshi Furukawa, Nickos Harizanos, James Harley, Robert Hasegawa, Nikos Ioakeim, Toshie Kakinuma, **Sharon Kanach**, Kuniko Kato, David Lieberman, Apostolos Loufopoulos, Barbara Mackenzie, Stephanie Merakos, Mikako Mizuno, Marcos Novak, Lorenda Ramou, Curtis Roads, Evis Sammoutis, Ryosuke Shiina, Takehito Shimazu, Gabriella Spanó, Daniel Teige, Olga Touloumi, Nikos Tsouchlos, Panos Vlagopoulos, Jean-Noël von der Weid†, **Haris Xanthoudakis†**. The **Organizational Committee** comprised: Hubertus von Amelunxen, Marianna Anastasiou, **Pierre Albert Castanet**, Carla Delfos, Laurence Descubes, **Itziar Fadrique**, Fabienne Fendrich, **Conrad Harris**, Ai Higashikawa, Jonathan Katz, **Stella Kourmpa**, Keita Matsumiya, Costas Mantzoros, Stephanie Merakos, **Mikako Mizuno**, Vivane Monel-Villa, Takeshi Mukaikuchi, Yoshihiko Nonomura, Benny Sluchin, Michèle Smith, Hugo Solis, Gabriella Spanó, Yoshihisa Suzuki, Katerina Tsioukra, Valia Vraka, Haris Xanthoudakis†. The Meta-Xenakis Team Leaders were Stella Kourmpa (Greece), Mikako Mizuno (Japan), Julio Estrada (Mexico), Barbara Mackenzie (USA), Sharon Kanach (France).

8 "About," *Meta-Xenakis*, <https://meta-xenakis.org/about/>