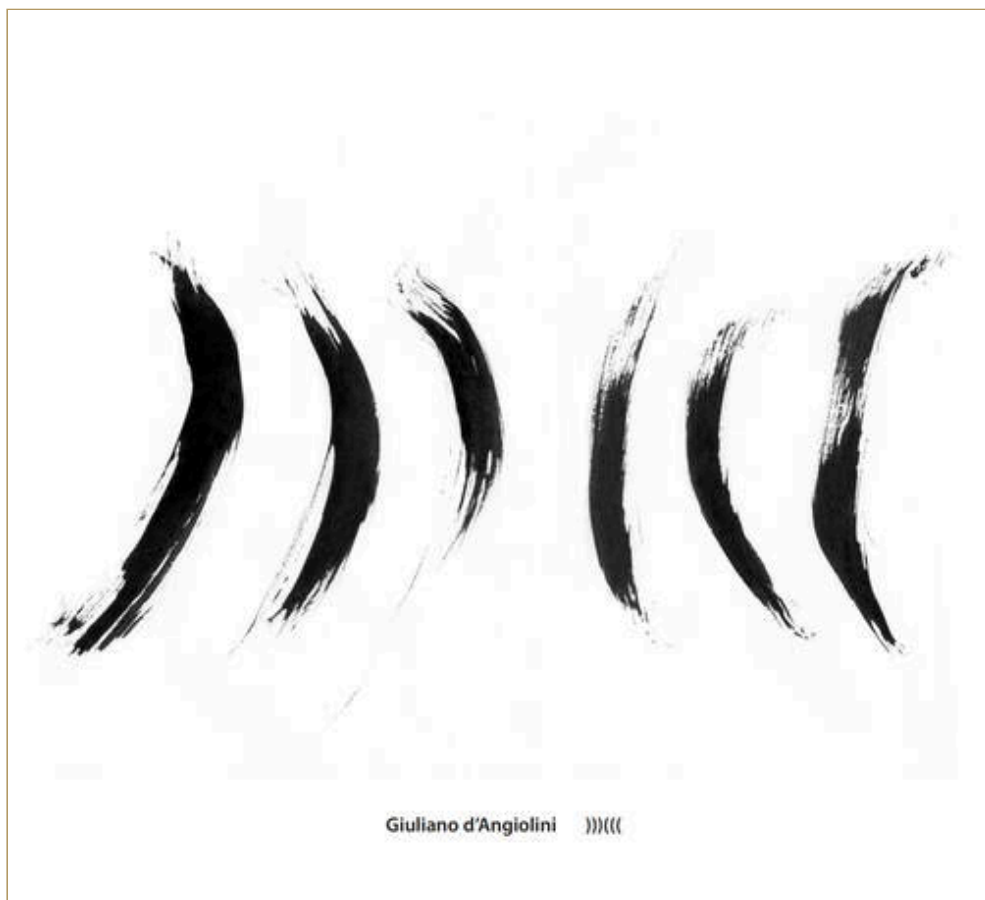


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## Q&A with Giuliano d'Angiolini about )))(((

*I was particularly interested in the roughness of sounds, acoustic beats and combination (resultant) tones. These tones do not exist physically, they are produced by the brain: we hear them inside our heads. — Giuliano d'Angiolini*



**Yuko Zama (YZ):** You have released two albums on Another Timbre (in 2016 and 2020), and both of them included pieces featuring the flute. I remember being deeply moved by your flute piece *Aria del flauto eolico* on 'Cantilena' (at102), which felt as natural and neutral as the wind with a calm, unforced intensity. In fact, it was the piece that first struck me when I first came to know your work.

**Your flute pieces on this album sound quite different in structure, in a way pretty radical. How do you think your compositions have changed (evolved) over the years?**

**Giuliano d'Angiolini (GD):** I think an artist must keep experimenting throughout his career, trying out new approaches and therefore inventing new techniques to achieve them that are different from what he has done before. Which carries the risk of failing...

In my recent pieces the sound material changes, the phenomena change, the kind of process and also the compositional technique change, but the underlying thought has not changed.

))))( and *100100* are rather violent impact pieces, very different from what I have done so far. It is a phenomenal violence, like that of nature: it does not imply an intention, or a will, it does not include drama and it does not carry a moral judgment.



'))((( excerpt

**YZ:** I agree that for me, these pieces don't evoke any particular emotion or drama and I really like this neutral, detached feel.

**When I listened to your new pieces ))))((( and *100100*, I didn't feel that they were violent to my ears. They certainly come close to overwhelming the ears at their maximum volume, but they are under control and don't overwhelm the ears too strongly. I was impressed by this exquisite balance, and I can even sense the quiet beauty (and a hint of harmony) lying hidden behind the loud sounds, which is mesmerizing. Can you please tell me what you meant by the word 'violent' describing these pieces?**

**GD:** I was particularly interested in the roughness of sounds, acoustic beats and combination (resultant) tones. These tones do not exist physically, they are produced by the brain: we hear them inside our heads. I like the feeling they produce inside us, as if we were a sound source ourselves; which makes us lose our distance from the sound and a bit of our own integrity. In *100100* there are so many of them that it can give rise to a distortion effect (if you listen with headphones or at a high volume). This piece is also very dissonant and starts with a huge three-octave cluster!

But in a sense, you are right: if there is violence it's only in the sound and

furthermore, as I said, it is a violence without intention and without drama, so it can be experienced with serenity. I don't think this music is devoid of emotion; though it's a bit like when we look at the sea or the outline of a mountain that arouses an emotion in us, a poetic feeling, but there's no intention, no goal, behind them.



Giuliano d'Angiolini (photo © Fiammetta d'Angiolini)

**YZ:** That reminds me of the work of the American composer Maryanne Amacher, whose music creates psycho-acoustic illusions in which the listener's ears themselves produce audible sounds that do not physically exist. I noticed that your piece *100100* had a similar hypnotic effect on my brain to her music. Are you familiar with her work?

**GD:** No, I'm sorry, I don't know this composer... Now we have talked about the sound aspect of these compositions, but in the music I write there is never only this aspect; it's more complex: there is always something concerning the human being, his life, day by day.

I wrote elsewhere: this is the scenario in which man has always evolved: the sun rises each day; in the night, the moon and the stars. The blue of the sky. Sounds are part of nature and nature is, for me, that which the eyes of men

have always seen, day after day.

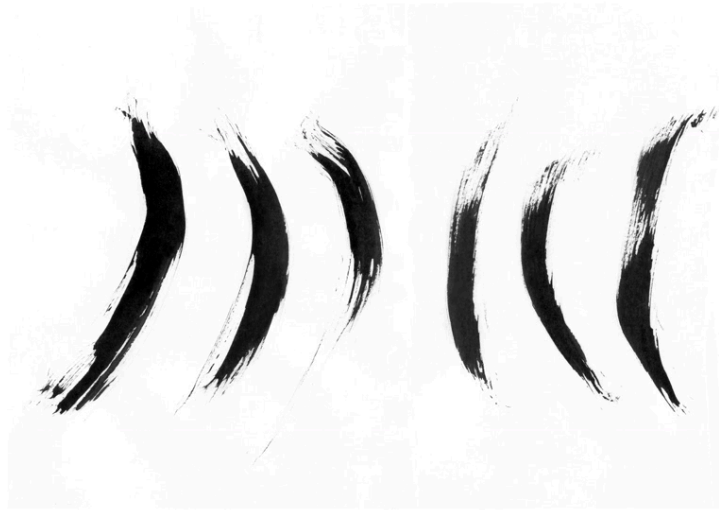
(You can find the whole text [here](#))



photo © Fiammetta d'Angiolini

**YZ:** Your piece *100100* was written for 36 flutes, which seems like a very unique idea. It's quite wild to imagine the sight of 36 flutes gathered on stage. What does "100100" mean in this composition? Why did you choose to use 36 flutes?

**GD:** Composing, etymologically, means arranging sounds together, by accumulation. The music of *100100*, on the contrary, proceeds by subtraction, from noise to harmony. The form is given by a calculation process in which the presence of the instruments (1) is progressively replaced by the absence (0) in an evolution that leads, gradually, to a greater rarefaction. The title evokes the numbers 0 and 1, used in this calculation, by adopting the binary language: 100100 in binary language is equal to thirty-six, which is the number of flutes used. The beginning of *100100* is the musical equivalent of a gaseous state, which is defined by the chaotic movement of its particles and which involves all the thirty-six notes that can usually be played with a flute. Then there happens a phase transition to a sort of solid state. That calculation process leads to an unexpected development in which unpredictable phenomena occur (between 6'14" and 6'35" we can hear a *pelog* scale from the Balinese gamelan...). Then the resulting structure is distributed in time in an indeterminate way.



'100100' excerpt

**YZ:** These pieces, especially *100100*, are very fascinating to me. Every time I listen to them I find new details and impressions that I hadn't noticed before. Perhaps that's precisely because it is an indeterminate composition that it is so infinitely intriguing. Back to your piece )))(((, what inspired you to write the piece for flutes and clarinets?

**GD:** As I said, before I was interested in that kind of sound material and also in a particular formal arrangement. In )))((( the flutes and clarinets never play together. The form proceeds by juxtaposition of panels, which are composed by events of different types, and this formal arrangement is also a novelty. Mobile ascension of the flutes vs. static sound columns of the clarinets. Expanded unison of the flutes vs. harmonies of the clarinets.

I had originally conceived the piece for four flutes and *sheng* (the Chinese mouth organ). It is an extremely restrictive instrument and very limited in its possibilities, but still I was able to develop thirty-five harmonies that are all structurally different from each other. Composing this piece I often thought about Japanese *Gagaku*.

))))((  
Sheng  
(accordéon, clarinettes)

Giuliano d'Angiolini

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a page from the score to ))))((

**YZ:** Interesting. Actually, when I listened to your piece ))))((, some moments reminded me of the rustic tones of Japanese instruments like the shakuhachi or the shō, which was very nice (I like the sounds of the shakuhachi). This title ))))((( is also very unusual. Why did you decide this title for the piece?

**GD:** The title is indeterminate (while the music is almost entirely determined). Everyone will pronounce it as they wish. For me it's the graphic representation of sound waves colliding, but not only that.

**YZ: Can you please tell us about the piece *7 flauti*, too?**

**GD:** *7 flauti* is a piece written fifteen years ago: I don't remember anything about how I composed it and therefore I know as much about it as the other people (I'm interested in compositions that I want to do or those just done; of past ones I often don't even remember the titles... But I consider the pieces that I have kept in my catalog as well-done or even very satisfying).

About *7 flauti*, I can say what I have already said elsewhere about the music I write, in general: in all aspects of life our brains never stop to smooth discontinuities and imposing a direction to the events. Our brains are always establishing causal relationships between phenomena, using both memory and anticipation. It's a fundamental activity which makes our intelligence an instrument that is working for our survival. These attitudes mean that our brains are "starved of stories", as Oliver Sacks puts it.

A large part of musical art (as well as cinema or theatre) is spontaneously in phase with these thought mechanisms and corresponds to the habitual expectations of our mind. Now for me, it's a question of proposing a different experience, that of a music without development; a music which privileges the percept rather than the concept, and which escapes the laws of cause and effect. This is the essence of art : it allows us to discover worlds which we don't yet know.





Manuel Zurria and Paolo Ravaglia

**YZ: Manuel Zurria also played some of your pieces on your two previous releases. How did your collaboration with Manuel Zurria and Paolo Ravaglia evolve in your work?**

**GD:** I have been in close contact with Manuel and Paolo as musicians and friends for over thirty years. They are performers of the highest quality, both technically and artistically.

About fifteen years ago, Manuel and I began a close collaboration: I think he is attracted by the music I write and for this reason he has committed himself to performing it. This commitment has become a real militancy in him! And this is also an uncommon attitude. Manuel is an enthusiastic person always open to new challenges. He was he who had the idea of making an album with new compositions. To tell the truth, I had written a third piece for this occasion, but it didn't satisfy us... (I throw away a lot; at least half of what I write).

**YZ: I love the calligraphy you chose for the album cover. I feel that this**

**creates a strong impact with vibrant raw energy, but also a deep sense of tranquility that has a clean atmosphere in great simplicity. It resonates perfectly with your music. Can you tell us about this album cover?**

**GD:** The cover image simply echoes the title of the album, which in itself has a graphic quality. But the idea was to try (very modestly) to execute a graphicism that recalls Japanese calligraphy. After all, as I said, this music can contain allusions to Japanese music. Moreover, my musical thoughts (but not only musical) owes a lot to Zen Buddhism and this for many years.



photo © Fiammetta d'Angiolini

*In the zen garden, the passage of the rake is a trace that underlines, like light makeup, and that succeeds abruptly in imposing a new order of appearance. It is a simple gesture, but full of force and efficacy. That which is transformed makes no resistance to change, because no violence is done to things: for the gravel already contains in itself the nature of the wave. (from "Day after day")*

(Interview conducted in October 2024)



This album contains three new works by Italian composer Giuliano d'Angiolini:

*)))(((*, *7 flauti*, and *100100*.

*)))(((* was composed in 2023 for four flutes and sheng or accordion, or six clarinets, and the version here is for four flutes and six clarinets. It is recommended to listen at high volume.

*7 flauti* was written in 2010 for seven flutes, and *100100* was written in 2023 for 36 flutes. Both *7 flauti* and *100100* follow strict procedures of indeterminacy. Thus, at each performance they sound differently.

Performers are Manuel Zurria on flute (Track 1, 2, 3) and Paolo Ravaglia on clarinet (Track 1).



\*CD preorder and digital album are available here on the elsewhere

# site and Bandcamp

(CD release: December 15, 2024)

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