

Nichetti, Maurizio

b. 8 May 1948, Milan

Director and actor

Mime, actor, scriptwriter, director of features, animated films and commercials, Nichetti is an eclectic and exuberant personality. After his debut with the short *Magic Show* in 1978, he gained public acclaim with his first feature *Ratataplan* (1979), a silent generational filmic tale of Milanese youth living at the borders of consumerist Italy. He soon became one of the most prominent directors of the **New Italian Cinema** as he pursued a fertile contamination of comedy and drama, mime and slapstick, realist narrative and animation. He has frequently produced exhilarating critiques of a society suffering from a general feeling of loss and estrangement, which are at the same time original and witty self-parodies characterized by the surreal juxtaposition of multiple levels of reality in films such as *Ladri di saponette* (Icicle Thief) (1989), *Volere volare* (1991) and *Stefano Quantestorie* (Stefano Many-Stories) (1993).

MANUELA GIERI

Nono, Luigi

b. 29 January 1924; d. 8 May 1990, Venice

Composer

Nono studied at the Venice Conservatory under Gianfrancesco Malpiero and Bruno **Maderna**, and was deeply influenced by the music of Schoenberg. During the Second World War he served in the **Resistance** as a member of the **PCI** (Italian Communist Party). After the war, his social commitment and espousal of communism gave his work its dramatic edge. *Il canto sospeso* (The Suspended Song) (1955–6) is a setting of excerpts from the last letters of members of the European Resistance condemned to death by the Nazis. *Suite: Intolleranza* (Intolerance Suite) (1960), one of his earliest works to utilize recorded material, is a passionate denunciation of both fascism and intolerance, which provoked a violent reaction from neo-fascists at its premiere in Venice (see also **fascism and neo-fascism**). Working from Germany in the early 1960s, Nono became recognized as one of Italy's leading composers of electronic and serial music and, in keeping with his political commitment, he created many portable tape works suitable for recitals in factories and small halls. He crowned his career of socially committed music with *Prometeo* (Prometheus), composed in 1985 and widely regarded as one of the twentieth century's most moving spiritual works.

LAURENCE SIMMONS