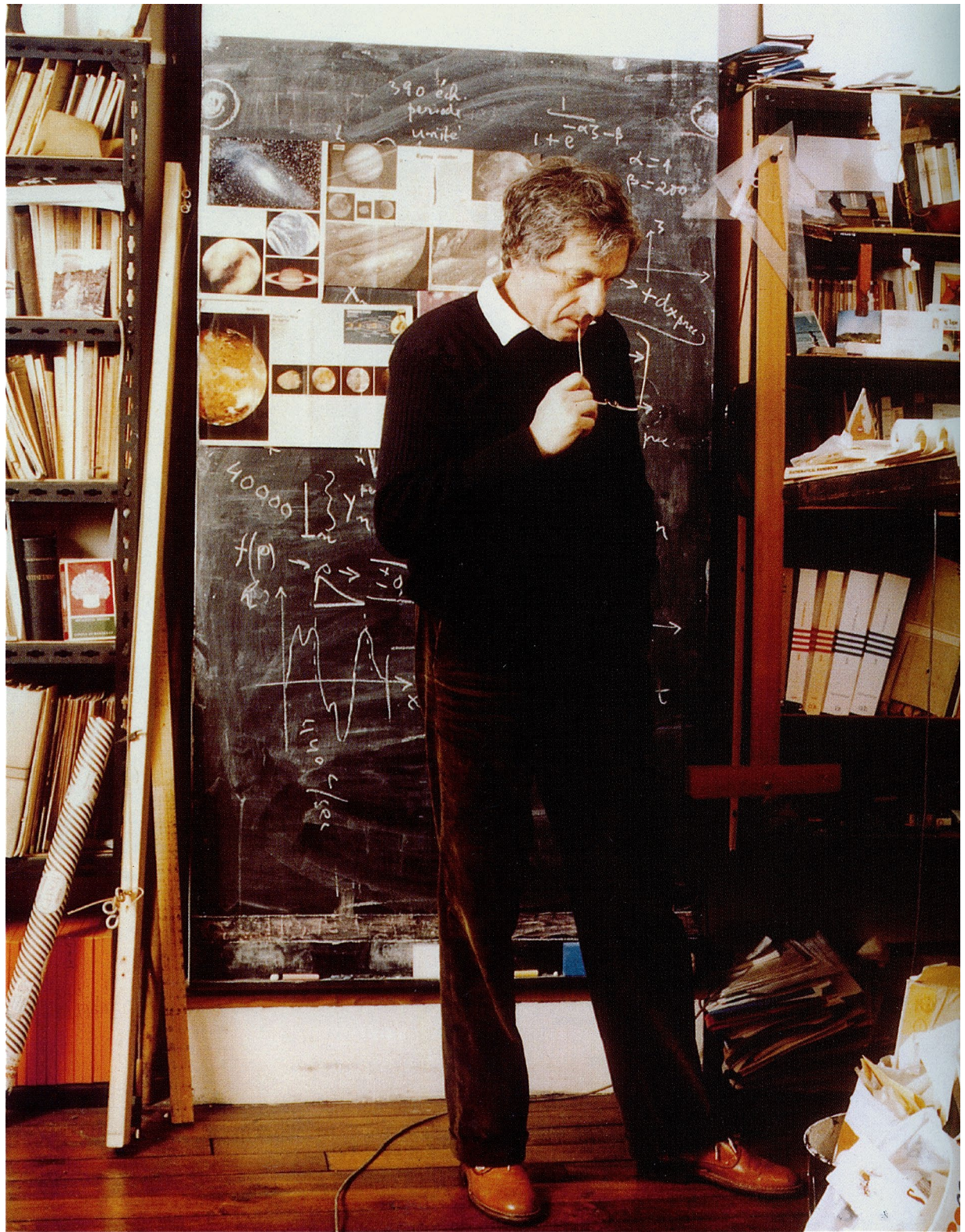


SIMIAN



“Each group would spend seven days in open country, and on the eighth, they had to break camp and head out for four days to finally reach a place where one discovers, stretching all across the sky and over the earth, a beam of light straight as a pillar, akin to a rainbow, but much more radiant and pure.”
– Plato, *The Republic* (c. 375 BC)

“From there emerged a crying out, indistinct, one I likened to a voice of fire, just as there emerged from the light... a holy Word blanketing all of Nature, and the purest of fire was thrust out of the humid natural world toward the sublime area above.”
– Hermes Trismegistus, *Poimandrès* (c. 100–300 CE)

“For indeed, what is man within nature? A void in the face of infinity, a whole before the void, a center between nothingness and wholeness... unable to perceive the void from whence he came, nor the infinity in which he is submerged.”
– Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (1670)

“Christ went on: ‘I traversed the worlds, I ascended into the suns, and soared with the Milky Ways through the wastes of heaven; but there is no God. I descended to the last reaches of the shadows of Being, and I looked into the chasm and cried: “Father, where art thou?” But I heard only the eternal storm ruled by none, and the shimmering rainbow of essence stood without sun to create it, trickling above the abyss.’”
– Jean-Paul Richter, *Siebenkäs* (1796–1797)

“In the first stages of the explosion, the general distribution of the star’s energy closely matches the distribution known for theoretical black holes at a temperature of 12,000 degrees Kelvin. In the case of SN 1970g the radius was measured at 3×10^{14} centimeters, in other words, as large as the orbit of Uranus. Once the supernova’s radius is known, it is possible to determine its absolute luminosity. For SN 1970g, this was calculated at 10^{42} ergs per second, or one trillion times that of the sun... During the 30 days following the explosion, the radius of the surface from which the light was emitted increases at a near-constant speed of 5,000 kilometers per second. At the end of this period, the star’s photosphere, in other words, its visible surface, reaches a radius of 2×10^{18} centimeters, a much larger radius than that of our solar system.”
– Robert P. Kirshner, *Supernovas in Other Galaxies* (1976)

Iannis Xenakis (b. 1922, Brăila – d. 2001, Paris) was a composer and musical theorist whose work radically expanded the possibilities of composition by integrating mathematics, probability theory and concepts drawn from physics and biology into its organisation. Rejecting traditional hierarchies of melody, harmony, he developed what he called *stochastic music*: a method in which sound parameters such as rhythm, pitch, density, duration, dynamics, and movement are initially derived from probabilistic laws.

Xenakis aestheticised the fact that a purely statistical distribution of individual sounds, when taken together, can form a characteristic imprint, a sound achievable in no other way, in which no individual part is any more important than any other—like the sound produced by cicadas, crowds or rain, pioneering a music based on the emergence of form from large numbers of interacting sonic events. His practice extended beyond concert works to include electroacoustic composition and large-scale multimedia events, in which sound, space, and perception are inseparable. His lifelong goal was ‘to imbue sound masses with the complexity and vitality of living systems’.

La Légende d'Eer (1977) is Xenakis’ final electroacoustic composition and one of the most expansive realizations of his artistic vision. It was conceived for the Diatope, a purpose-built audiovisual structure created for the opening of the Centre Pompidou, where it formed part of a total environment in which sound, light, architecture, and text coexisted without hierarchy.

Lasting 46 minutes, *La Légende d'Eer* unfolds as a single, continuous gesture. Built from a relatively small set of acoustic recordings and computer-generated sounds, the piece evolves through slow mutation rather than contrast or dramatic articulation. Sonic events appear as shimmering points, agitated clouds, grinding low frequencies, and overwhelming waves of energy, distributed across multiple channels and moving through space. Stochastic synthesis plays a central role: instead of assembling sounds from simple tones,

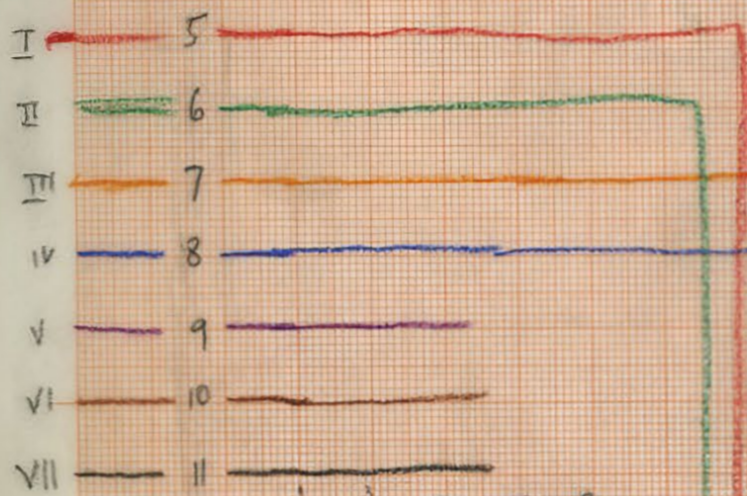
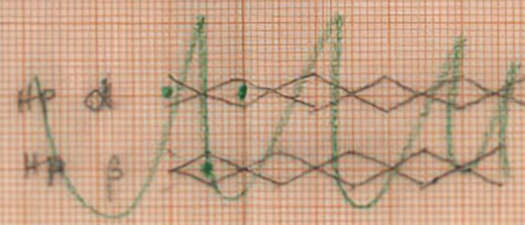
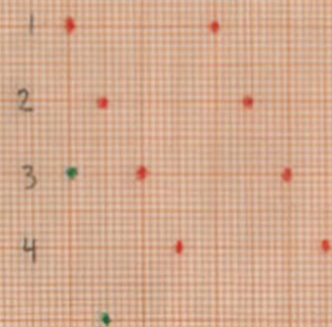
Xenakis generated entire waveforms through probabilistic processes, producing textures that feel alive, unstable, and elemental.

The form is circular, closing with the same fragile sounds with which it begins, suggesting eternal return rather than resolution. Immersive, impersonal, and often deafeningly intense, *La Légende d'Eer* places the listener inside a sonic cosmos—at once indifferent and sublime—where perception is stretched and time seems suspended. It stands as a summation of Xenakis’ belief that music can mirror the structures of the universe itself.

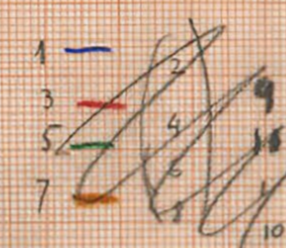
The title refers to Plato’s myth of Er, a cosmological narrative of death, rebirth, and the eternal circulation of souls—an idea that resonates with Xenakis’ desire to integrate music into the incomprehensible machinery of the physical universe.



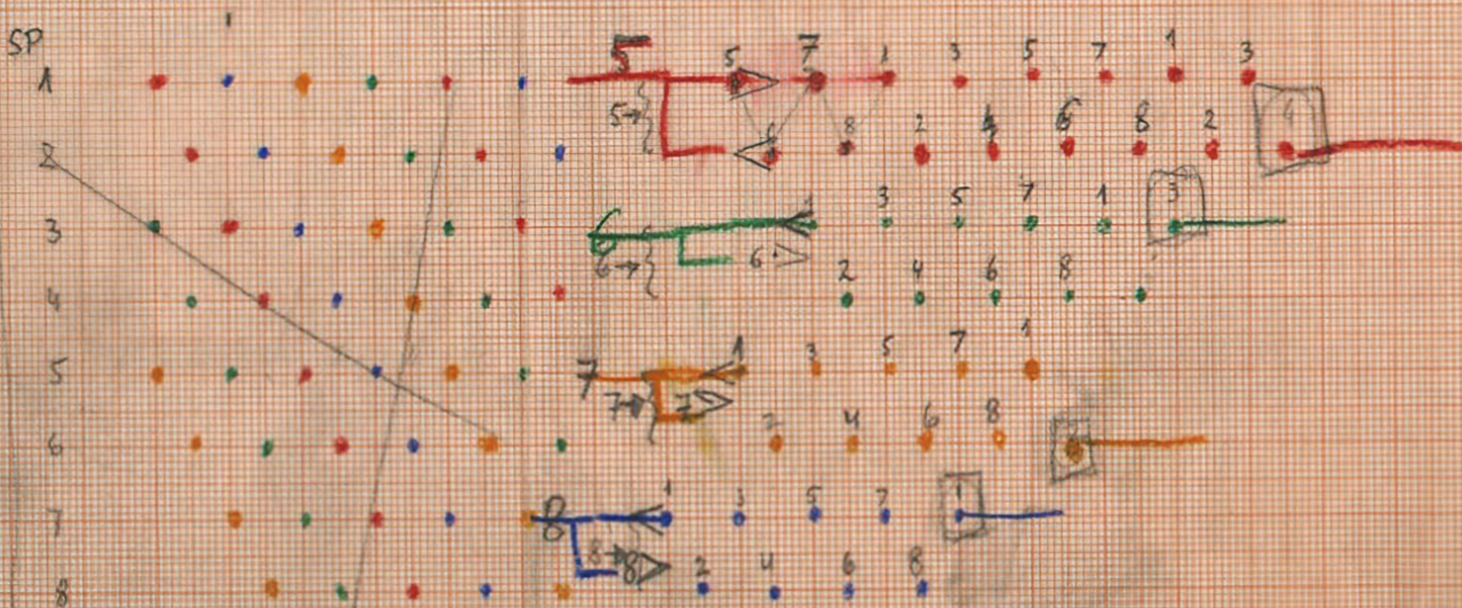
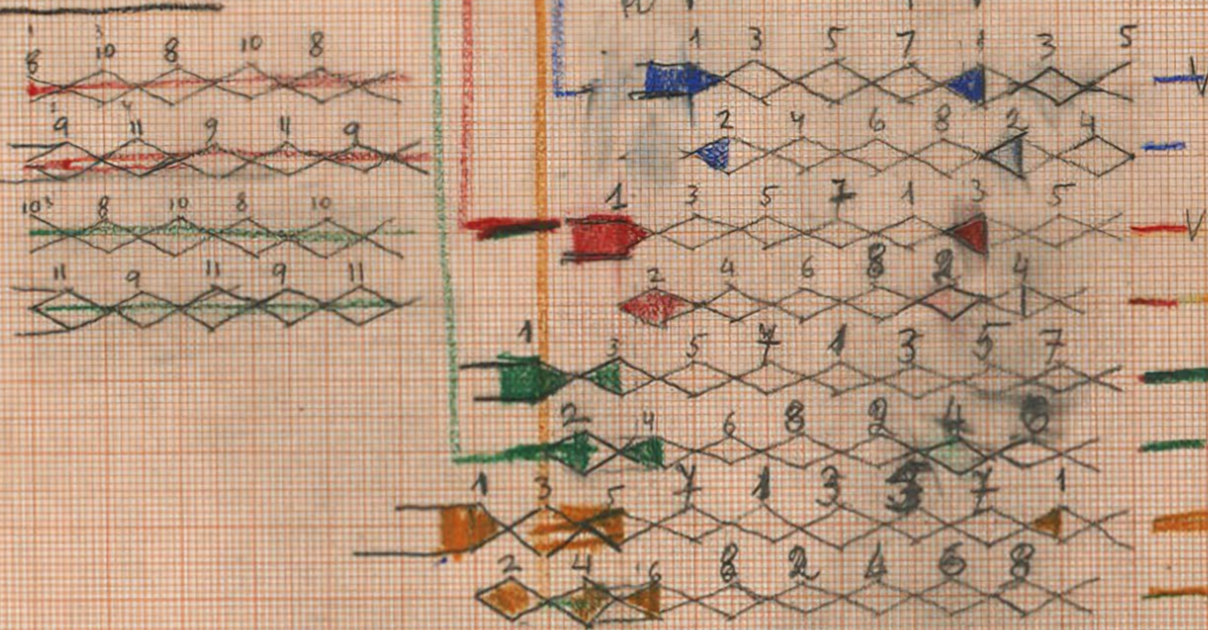
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 1
 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 1 2
 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 1 2



período aux HP
 par pte.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



5 6 7 8
 9 10 11



1.

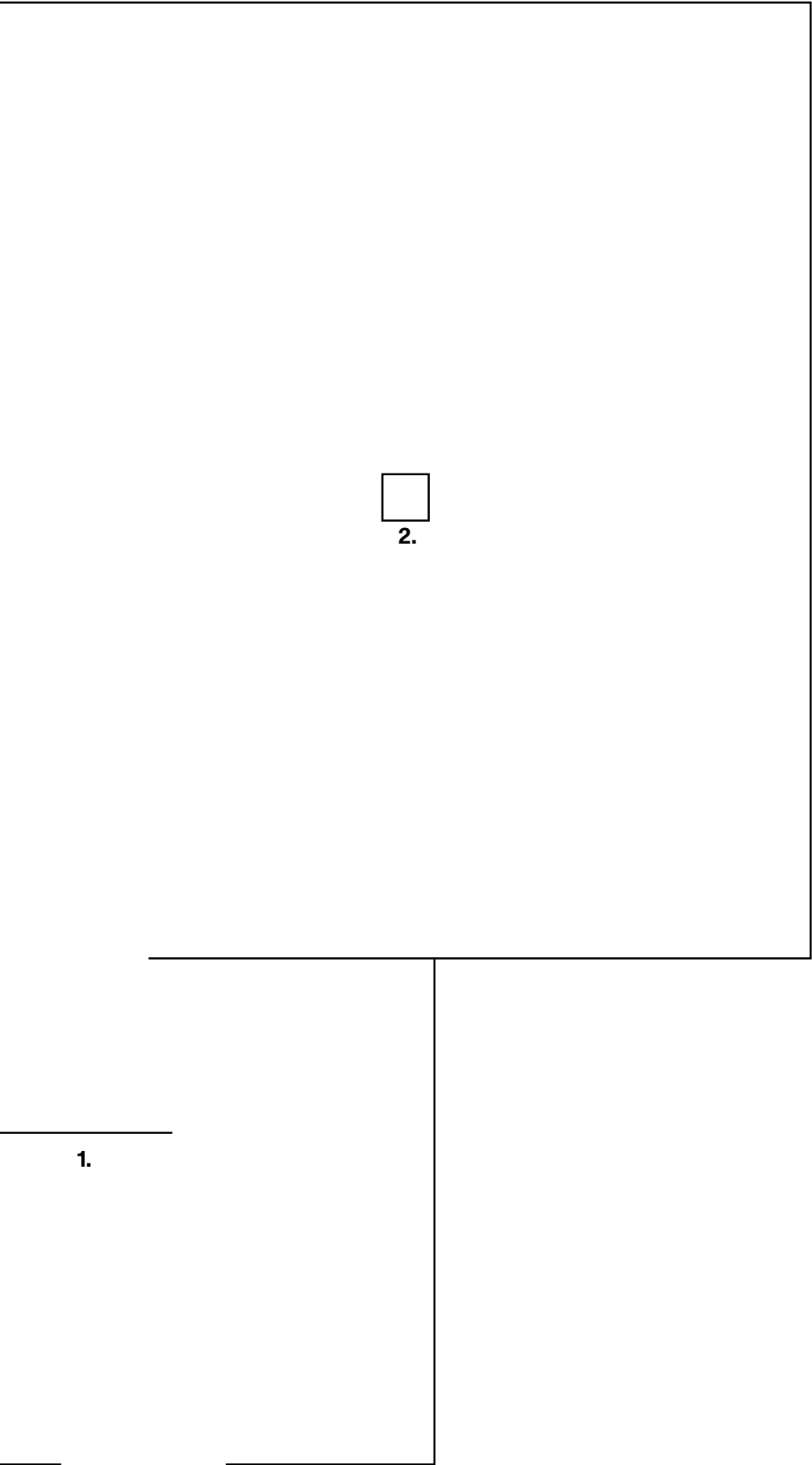
Graphical score, page 1,
La Légende d'Eer, 1977

Graphical score, page 9,
La Légende d'Eer, 1977

Graphical score, page 14,
La Légende d'Eer, 1977
2.

La Légende d'Eer, 1977

Composition, 10 channel audio. 46 min.



Simian's 2026 program is supported by:

Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansen Foundation
The Obel Family Foundation
Danish Arts Foundation
Augustinus Foundation
New Carlsberg Foundation
By & Havn
City of Copenhagen
CEJ Foundation
Balder Danmark

Works courtesy of:

Les Amis De Xenakis

Thank you:

Mâkhi Xenakis
Etienne Assous
Kristyan Nicholson
Anskar Beau
Yana Deliyiska
Didi
Mark Kidel
Kunsthall Charlottenborg

La Légende d'Eer is realized in collaboration with Les Amis De Xenakis and Pierre Carré from Ircam, Paris.

The documentary *Something Rich and Strange: the Life and Music of Iannis Xenakis* (1991) is shown in Simian's office area, with permission by the film's director Mark Kidel and editorial consultant Noura Matossian.

The exhibition is accompanied by a newly commissioned podcast about Xenakis, produced by Chris Cutler.

Listen here:



**Simian, Kay Fiskers Plads 17
2300 Copenhagen
Denmark (DK)**

**Opening hours during exhibitions:
Friday, Saturday, Sunday 12-17
or by appointment**