

Opera e Tecnologia: Ensaio sobre a Cultura Lírica Oitocentista/

Opera's Technoaesthetic: Essays on the Nineteenth-century Lyrical Culture

1. Sumário

Desde há duzentos anos que a ópera faz uso vigoroso e imaginativo de novos saberes técnicos e produtos industriais—mecanismos como a lanterna mágica e a lâmpada de carvão, objectos como pedras falsas, todo um conjunto de novos engenhos teatrais, e tecnologias industriais de iluminação. O projecto desenvolve um estudo do som musical considerado no contexto desta alteração histórica da cultura material do teatro investigando a noção de sensibilidade musical moderna, tradicionalmente entendida como objectificação de ideias—de um *Zeitgeist*—à luz da experiência material e da crescente familiaridade estética com o domínio dos novos *media* e da técnica. Os objectivos do projecto são três. Primeiro, escrever uma história cultural dos pontos de intersecção da música e tecnologia na cena operática moderna. Considera-se aqui o uso de técnicas e mecanismos técnicos usados no palco operático e a sua circulação entre teatros e culturas teatrais europeias. Segundo, descrever a emergência de um novo paradigma tecno-estético de experiência musical na produção e recepção operática a partir de 1800. A noção de uma tecno-estética desenvolve-se a partir de estudos de caso, focando o impulso que a nova familiaridade, atracção e suspeita do tecnológico dá à produção do imaginário lírico oitocentista. E terceiro, pretende-se promover uma nova abordagem teórica ao estudo da ópera que dê relevo à natureza efémera do som enquanto objecto e experiência. Dois capítulos de um livro estão já concluídos—“A Diva como fantasmagoria,” e “Egiptomania na *Aida*”. Outros quatro estão em preparação: “Diamantes e o Inhumano,” “A Tecno-estética da Ópera,” “O Som e o marítimo” e “O Cantar Eléctrico.”

Publicações:

Cruz, Gabriela. “Aida’s Flutes” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 14 (Summer, 2002): 177–200.

Comunicações:

Gabriela Cruz, “On the Properties of Gems and Voice” *Technologies of the Diva*, an interdisciplinary, international conference held at Columbia University, New York, NY 23–24 March 2007.

-----, “The Diva as Phantasmagoria or Meyerbeer in the

Hoffmannian Labyrinth" Opera Seminar, Humanities Center, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 15 March 2007.

-----,"Diva as Phantasmagoria", Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Los Angeles, 1–3 November 2006.

-----,"Glittering forms: Gounod´s *Air des bijoux*", Diva Cultures Symposium, The University of Leeds, U.K. 12–13 July 2006.

Activities:

"Technologies of the Diva" An International, interdisciplinary Conference, Co-organized by Gabriela Cruz and Karen Henson, Italian Institute for Advanced Studies, Columbia University, NY, 23–24 March, 2007. (<http://www.italianacademy.columbia.edu/divas/>)

"Technologies of the Diva" Conference Session, Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society at Washington, D. C., October 2005. Panel sponsored and organized by me.

1. Abstract

Over the past two centuries, opera has made vigorous and inventive use of new technical knowledge and of industrial products—apparatuses such as the magic lantern and the carbon lamp, commodities such as paste jewelry, a plethora of new stage-engineering crafts, and lighting technologies. The project develops a new study of musical sound in light of the opera theater's changing material culture and investigates the degree to which we may rethink a modern musical sensibility, traditionally understood as an objectification of ideas — of a *Zeitgeist* — in light of material experience and of increasing familiarity, aesthetic or otherwise, with the domain of new media and of the technical. The aims of the project are threefold. First, to write a cultural history of the intersections between music and technology on the modern operatic stage. This line of research accounts for the specific techniques and apparatuses used on the operatic stage and for their circulation between European theaters and theatrical cultures. Secondly, to argue for the emergence of a new techno-aesthetic paradigm of musical experience in operatic production and reception beginning around 1800. The argument is developed in the form of case-studies, which illustrate the ways in which a modern familiarity, attraction and suspicion of technology informed contemporary imaginative efforts to come to terms with sound. Third, and finally, to argue for the development of a new theoretical

approach to the study of opera which brings to the forefront of intellectual consideration the ephemeral nature of sound as object and as experience. Two chapters of a book — “The Diva as Phantasmagoria,” “Egyptomania in *Aida*.” — have thus far been completed. Four other are in progress: “Operatic Diamonds and the Turn to the Inhuman”, “Opera’s Techno-Aesthetics”, “Shipping Sounds”, “Electrical singing.”

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Papers:

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“Technologies of the Diva” Conference Session, Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society at Washington, D. C., October 2005. Panel sponsored and organized by Gabriela Cruz.
