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Orquestra Errante: a musical practice deeply rooted in life

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Abstract: In this article I intend to describe, investigate and reflect on the creative environment of the Orquestra Errante¹ in its relations with improvisation and processes of subjectivation and individuation. I am also interested in discussing to what extent and in what way improvisation interacts with certain sociocultural and political configurations. For this, I intend to examine records (written notes and audio recordings) of rehearsals and presentations, as well as interviews and conversations with group members. In this type of research, it is important to know what the members talk about themselves in the orchestra environment. Some concepts by Gilles Deleuze and Gilbert Simondon will be used to support these reflections.

Keywords: Improvisation, processes of subjectivation, individuation, Georges Simondon, Gilles Deleuze, Orquestra Errante.

¹ Orquestra Errante is an experimental group dedicated to the study and practice of improvisation. The orchestra – which was founded by me in 2009 – is composed of performers from various music backgrounds and with varied musical formations. The activities of the orchestra – which functions as a kind of laboratory – include the realization of creative proposals brought by its members who, in general, develop research on the connections of improvisation with other areas of study. Activities are developed in a democratic and non-hierarchical way and are based on interaction and collective creation. In OE, all are performers-creators and the only prerequisites for participation are desire, presence and active and deep listening. The OE is linked to the *NuSom - Research Center on Sonology at the University of Sao Paulo* (<http://www2.eca.usp.br/nusom/>). To know more about Orquestra Errante see, for example: <https://soundcloud.com/orquestraerrante>, <https://soundcloud.com/ocdownprovisadorlivre>, <https://youtu.be/kmSewXpEj9g>.

1. IMPROVISATION AS PLANE OF CONSISTENCY²

In the environment of free improvisation music is always an action. This is because it occurs in a relational space focused on the process and not on the production of musical works, and what matters is the preparation of this environment that can be defined in Deleuzian terms, as its plan of consistency. In this regard, I quote a passage from my book:

The plan is, in the case of free improvisation, a block of space-time, indefinable in its contours, where improvisers perform and where different energies, singular attitudes, thoughts, connections, personal and collective histories coexist. It is the “event horizon” of free improvisation that emerges as a result (in motion, because performance is a process) of free and casual movements of parallel (polyphonic), a-parallel (accompanied melodies), transverse (short, medium and long memories), vertical (harmonic), horizontal (melodic) interactions and connections. The plan is what it enables the movement of the performance. The performance occurs within the plane, but is not confused with it. A performance depends on the existence of this plan, which must be prepared from desire, availability and necessity (Costa, 2016: 38-39).

The plan, therefore, is pure virtuality while each performance is a possible actualization. As an empirical relational musical practice, performance is temporal and spatially localized in the *here* and *now*. But this *here* is multidirectional and this *now* is an intense present crossed by the energies of the various past – of its individual members, of the relationships between them, of the memories of the whole and of its subgroupings – that cross it and compose it, and by the future that it projects.

2. RELATIVE MUSIC

What results is an “impure and relative” music, not absolute, nor universal; a musical practice “drenched” with life, emotion, body and context (personal,

² “All multiplicities are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions: we will therefore speak of a *plane of consistency* of multiplicities, even though the dimensions of this ‘plane’ increase with the number of connections that are made on it. Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities. The plane of consistency (grid) is the outside of all multiplicities. The line of flight marks: the reality of a finite number of dimensions that the multiplicity effectively fills; the impossibility of a supplementary dimension, unless the multiplicity is transformed by the line of flight; the possibility and necessity of flattening all of the multiplicities on a single plane of consistency or exteriority, regardless of their number of dimensions” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005: 9).

cultural, social, etc.); music of listening, seeing and living, in which multiple regimes of listening, not only sonorous, coexist. It is a molecular³ music that happens in the form of collective performances and that is part of a complex and multilinear relationship process that involves several components arranged in the plane. In this respect I quote the musicologist Simon Frith:

[...] for various researchers, music (and in particular improvisation) is in a privileged position: "Music as an experimental, social and aesthetic process is in a unique position to articulate in itself an understanding of both group relations and individuality, based on which ethical codes and social ideologies are understood (Frith, 1996: 110).

The permeability is fundamental for this type of relational process and for the performance becoming. What matters is what's in between. Between the inside and the outside, between languages, between bodies, between bodies and instruments⁴, between body and mind, between energies, ideas, intentions, expectations, looks, etc. The potential differences, the incompatibilities, the asymmetries between the components are what make this becoming possible. Improvisation is a tense system, saturated with energies and, in its becoming unfolds individuating itself. In this type of system there is no stable equilibrium – which would lead to stagnation – and even each participating performer is a metastable subsystem.

Therefore, it is possible to affirm that in improvisation, the performers are also components of a network and go through processes of individuation from the contact with the elements that make up the plan: the other, technology, the public, instruments, environment, architecture etc. And the knowledge base⁵ of each one is not restricted to concepts and ideas, but is also knowledge of the body in motion. The individual defines him/herself in

3 In regard to the Deleuzian idea of molecularisation, it is possible to say that "for free improvisation, the 'molecular', 'virgin' sound, free of its eventual molar (territorial, idiomatic, social, stylistic, instrumental, historical, geographical, etc.) conditioning, ready to be constructed and shaped from the instrumental action of the musicians during the dynamic flow in an interactive performance (solo or collective) is a desired utopian horizon" (Costa, 2015: 130).

4 Concerning this relationship between musicians and their instruments, I quote here another text: "In free improvisation the performer produces and 'plunges' into the sound, either through a traditional instrument, a digitally controlled instruments or a hybrid instrument, either through his/her own body (sometimes through combinations of all these features). Thus, the performer establishes with his instrument a very intimate, corporeal and empirical relationship" (Costa, 2017: 77).

5 The knowledge base needed for the practice of improvisation, according to Jeff Pressing, includes materials, excerpts, repertoire, sub-skills, perceptual strategies, problem-solving routines, hierarchical memory structures, and schemas that are constructed in a "long-term memory" of the individual interpreter (Pressing, 1984: 53).

his/her contact with the collective and is thought of as a phase of the individuation process, not the contrary. The plan is pre-individuation and each performance is a process of collective individuation that is realized through the interchanges between the structures (provisional states of the flow) and the operation (becoming). According to Simondon, being is preserved by becoming and not by identity, which is always provisional. For him,

[...] becoming is a dimension of being, corresponds to a capacity that the being has to do away with himself, to resolve himself when he loses himself [...] the only principle by which we can orient ourselves is that of the conservation of being by becoming; this conservation exists through the interchanges between structure and operation [...] (Simondon, 2003: 101-102).

So too, the improvisation environment is a becoming. It is possible to perceive aspects of this process of individuation that becomes possible in the environment of improvisation in this fragment of interview with a member of the Orquestra Errante:

... it is a space that I feel very comfortable for ... I do not know ... depending on the day, let flow what is happening inside me ... for many years I went to the rehearsals soon after the therapy and together with the research that I did in the Scientific Initiation on eutonia and all research with the body, also began to be a laboratory for me, to say: 'Ok, I will not think too rationally, I will let it manifest what is happening here (inside me)'. Sometimes I do not have the slightest idea ... it seems that I'm not even listening, but I'm listening in 'another place' ... when I had pain to play, it hurt to play Mozart but it did not hurt (to play) in OE ... I feel very free ... (but) have this thing of wanting to do what is missing ... (I think): 'are missing high pitch notes, (so) I go to the high region or ... it was a long time smooth, (so) I need to do something striated' ... to balance ... I have this habit to do this ... at the same time I like to do things that provoke transformations, but I do not like to impose myself, so I have this habit of waiting for filtrations ... seduce by the beauty (of the material) ... learn to respect. More and more, I am learning to admire what each one does. We have listened a lot. This kind of listening has increased a lot. It depends on the expectation that each one has. Sometimes I have an expectation and a person is playing more than I'm expecting ... it's the very dynamics of social relations (Mariana Carvalho).

3. ORQUESTRA ERRANTE: A RELATIONAL SPACE



Fig. 1: Orquestra Errante: after a presentation in an auditorium; posing in the garden; and preparing for a presentation in a public school.

The Orquestra Errante is an example of this type of environment that constitutes itself as a space of subjectivation and interaction. In the orchestra, free improvisation establishes an environment of cooperative and shared exercise of creative powers, of empirical activism through listening, playing and conversation. It is a free and unimpeded space that favors the flow of energies and energy exchanges. From the point of view of the performer (which here can be thought of as a medium – a body/mind provided with memories, desires, intelligences and thoughts), this space is activated by relationships and interactions with the outside: other performers, space,

instrument, architecture and audience – if any⁶. In this regard, I reproduce here these fragments of interviews with two members of the orchestra:

... it influences a lot, it changes the ways of thinking, the ideas of music, the conception of musical making. The doing and thinking about music is collective ... it is also in the collective thinking and talking about it. This is very cool because it is in this exchange of ideas that we are forming these new conceptions of music. There are so many connections and so much that happens. So in this conversation, in this dynamic that happens after the performances we learn a lot to hear the others talk. There is a very strong political issue that is to give voice to the collective. And has a clash at times of ideas of music. But in this exchange there is a growth that influences me today in all other musical contexts where I act. An aesthetic ideal is more a sensation of freedom. It means to be able – from nothing, or from any proposal, or from the use of triggers – to discover this aesthetic of doing together, which is different (Migue Antar).

... I feel that OE is a super cozy space to try things out, so since I joined, it was very strong and I even changed a lot during all this years ... the moments of the rehearsals have always been like this: it has this space in my week, regardless of what's going on in life, of what I'm doing ... it's a place that I know I'm going to experience things that I'm living, whether they're musical or ... I do not know. Even things that I'm going through in my life ... it's a place of testing things, testing relationships with people. (Besides it) I feel like I'm acting politically participating in OE because I'm a woman, because I'm occupying an important space as a woman (Mariana Carvalho).

As a way of guaranteeing the flow of the energies within this environment we problematize the structures of power and the value judgments that would function as stagnation factors, tightening the environment. The question of judgment in the context of the performative practices of the “erudite” European musical tradition is generally linked to the ideas of excellence and technical rigor that are at the service of the execution (reproduction) of a certain repertoire produced in deferred time and, in this case, there is the idea of right and wrong, judgment parameters, etc. In relation to these issues I quote another text:

[...] the emphasis on the creation of “works of art”, the ideals of technical excellence, virtuosity, references of specialization,

⁶ Despite eventually playing in concerts, shows and events, the Orquestra Errante does not rehearse to perform. In the daily life of the orchestra, rehearsals and presentations have the same importance and, although they are different, there is no hierarchy between these two activities.

knowledge and compulsory dominance of certain ideas of music (which include sound materials and established procedures of articulation) imposed by the hegemonic models, are questioned and replaced by an emphasis on ideas of process, creative freedom (which presupposes creation with available knowledge), intuition, musical and social interaction, flexibility in the use of (sound) materials, experimental attitude and use of new instrumental resources (Costa, 2017: 73).

For these reasons, the ideas of judgment and valuation are absent from free improvisation practices. In place of right and wrong and the judgments derived from reference repertoires, there is collective creation in real time driven by asymmetries and potential differences. There are also disagreements, conflicts and disagreements. But these are solved within a collective dynamic and on a provisional basis. This type of environment built collectively and collaboratively is clearly related to a political and ethical positioning that questions power structures. Regarding this topic, it is worth mentioning the response of an OE member:

... just to say what interests me in OE: I'm interested in the anti-political and anti-institutional side. In the anarchist sense that it is necessary to do in the present what you would expect from politics ... OE realizes these relations very close to the horizontal and it is a field open to contestation ... it is a place of strong discussion. Horizontal relations require that nothing be inviolable. And how does the making of music cease to be sacred? This is part of a certain ethical project of life that OE is doing in the present. How does OE accomplish this without waiting for ideal conditions, without waiting for the ideal university, without waiting for the dissolution of the state, etc.? But one might say, "then you are a bunch of bourgeois who stand there doing things among you and are not militating." But I would never say that OE is enough, right? ... That's why it is so important the things that we do and that dialogue with the outside: going to public schools, or playing for the students of the Music Department etc. OE is public in a certain sense because it is open to anyone, but it is not an indiscriminate "anyone". Anyone, in the sense that it is not elitist. But it does not mean that everyone can go ... the fascist, no. No! This is the ethical and aesthetic project that is there for good understanding. Association is not a generalization. And this is not elitism. It is not like "you get there and do what you want". Otherwise you would think that what is public and democratic is "anything" (Stênio Biazon).

4. ORQUESTRA ERRANTE: A SMOOTH SPACE

The collective free improvisation of the Orquesta Errante can be considered as a smooth space. It is smooth because there are no *stretch marks*. There are no measurements, hierarchies, pre-established functions and previous stratifications. In the performances of the orchestra form is formed from the immanent movements of performance. In performance thought as smooth time space, heterogeneous flows and energies confront their potential differences and asymmetries. It is this game of differences that enables the movement and composes the assemblages. These assemblages come about through listening, talking and gambling of differences. The free improvisation of the Orquesta Errante is not intended to be universal, but rather local. Absolutely local and open to contingencies. It is a singular and shared space of public and private experience, of negotiation of alterities and subjectivation.

A group that improvises or uses improvisation in their artistic practices, shares ideas and images about music. This set of ideas and images is what unifies, gives coherence and enables this kind of collaborative practice. These are images and ideas of music linked to their social, cultural, and emotional function, to their materials and procedures, to their relationships with the design and organization of time. [...] It is necessary to locate these social groups and their music in their specific territories. The musical practice of these groups with respect to materials and procedures is a manifestation of a way of being/thinking/acting in the world (Costa, 2017: 77).

Therefore, the orchestra is not only a space of performances. It is also a space for study, coexistence, and creative and collaborative (not just musical) practices. In Foucauldian terms it can be said that this is what he calls heterotopia⁷. Orquesta Errante is a laboratory, a space of musical practice, creation, research and education. In this space, rigid stratifications are avoided. To the extent that the present is faced at every moment by the interacting musicians, both the constant variation of materials (processes of

⁷ The term heterotopia was coined by Foucault and refers to realized utopias. According to him, "there is likewise and probably in any culture, in any civilization, real places, actual places, places which are outlined in the very institution of society, and which are kinds of counterpositions, kinds of realized utopias in which real positions, all the other real positions that can be found within the culture are at the same time represented, contested and inverted, kinds of places that are out of all places, although they are effectively localizable. These places, because they are absolutely different from all the positions they reflect and of which they speak, I will call them, as opposed to utopias, heterotopias" (Foucault, 2002: 414-415).

de-stratification) and the configuration of provisional states (stratification processes) are constituted as fundamental dynamisms. Regarding this double dynamism present also in the processes of subjectivation, Suely Rolnik refers to the concepts of forms and forces:

Thus, virtual worlds engendered in the experience of forces produce a friction with the experience of shaped forms according to prevailing socio-cultural cartographies. [...] This generates a tension between, on the one hand, the movement that presses subjectivity in the direction of the conservation of the forms in which life is materialized and, on the other hand, the movement that presses it in the direction of the conservation of life in its germination power [...] (Rolnik, 2018: 55-56).

5. ORQUESTRA ERRANTE: THE OPERATION OF A NON-INSTITUTIONAL SPACE



Fig. 2: Orquestra Errante: rehearsing at the Studio LAMI-USP and experiencing a proposal outdoors.

8 Suely Rolnik is a psychoanalyst, critic of art and culture and a curator. She is a Full Professor at PUC-SP, founder and former coordinator of the Nucleus of Subjectivity Studies at the Graduate School of Clinical Psychology.

5.1

The OE, although it was founded, coordinated by me and has been rehearsing regularly (every Thursday from 5PM to 8PM) on the facilities of the Music Department of the University of São Paulo, has practically no institutional link with the university. Of the members that are, for the most part, students of the Music Department (undergraduate) or Post-Graduation in Music⁹, no registration is required, there are no selection or evaluation processes, notes or lists of presence¹⁰.

There is no discipline syllabus or program of activities. It is an autonomous and horizontal group that remains active, solely and exclusively due to the commitment of its members. These members become part of the group as soon as they decide to participate in the rehearsals with some regularity. It can be said that the orchestra functions as a living organism that maintains cohesion due to the more or less assiduous presence of a certain number of members¹¹ and the continuity of the practical and theoretical researches on improvisation that are developed there. In several senses and aspects, this project balances the ideas of impermanence (adaptability, informality, flexibility, porosity and malleability) and permanence, since it is not a totally open and purposely unstructured environment in which, at each weekly rehearsal, the group changes completely (as is the case with activities that have been coordinated by musician Edwin Prévost¹² for more than 20 years in London). In this regard a member of the orchestra tells us:

9 The Orquestra Errante is not a discipline in the curriculum of the Music Department of the University of São Paulo. The only official reference to the existence of the group is, as mentioned above, on the page of NuSom - Research Center on Sonology at the University of Sao Paulo, where the orchestra appears as an associated group (<http://www2.eca.usp.br/nusom/OE#overlay-context=%2523OE>). People become aware of the group's existence through concerts, presentations, informal announcements in classrooms and conversations with friends.

10 It is worth mentioning that there are also members from other places: former students, students from other USP schools (FFLCH, IME, CAP etc.), Unicamp, EMESP, as well as friends of members etc.

11 There are members who participate very regularly and others who participate more sporadically. In the rehearsals and presentations, the number of participants ranges from 7 to 15 people. The level of engagement of each person is differentiated. And there is no problem about this since the activities (rehearsals, presentations, discussions, etc.) occur with any number of participants. As an example, it is worth mentioning the fact that during the year 2018 the orchestra held several public performances without my participation as a coordinator and with different instrumental formations each time.

12 Some members have been in the orchestra for more than 10 years.

13 Edwin Prévost is an English improviser and percussionist. He was part of AMM, a group dedi-

One person ends up 'facializing' the orchestra. If I've been there for so long, of course the orchestra is going to have a bit of my face, just like it has the face of all the other people and specially people who have been there for the longest time. There's that 'sound of the Orquestra Errante' thing. The orchestra has something like this: it's open and everyone is welcome, but it's still a group. We work things, we know people, we go deep in relationships. It has this thing of a continuity ... it does not have to participate from the beginning to follow it, but there is something of a formation that has to do with an experience in the group (Mariana Carvalho).

5.2

It can be said that the exercise of power in OE takes place in the most dialogical, democratic and horizontal way possible. Through the discussion and conversation processes that occur during the rehearsals, the OE members themselves establish criteria for collective evaluation (which includes the ideas of responsibility and commitment), aiming to achieve certain desired results related to specific objectives and contingencies, whether they are a presentation, the discussion of a concept, the study of an interaction strategy, an experience related to music education or the research of some member, etc. This emphasis on collective learning and the negotiation of subjectivities appears clearly in the following fragment of interview:

From five years to now, my biography includes free improvisation. And when I speak in biography I think of rock and heavy metal, which I never gave up. My activities with OE and Teca (Maria Teresa de Alencar Brito, professor of Music Education in the Music Department of the University of São Paulo and author of several books on musical education and on the work of HJ Koellreutter) were the only occasions of my (academic) music studies where it was possible to resume these things in some way, because these highly erudite fields where I have studied (EMESP, Escola Municipal, USP) were always places where I had to pretend I did not like tritons, pentatonic scales and distortion. In this sense, OE welcomes this repertoire that is not legitimized by any school. So how do I deal with my biography? It does not mean that I do not dissolve these

cated to free improvisation and collective creation between the 1960s and 1970s. In his words: "In November 1999 I made it known that a free improvisation workshop would start weekly in a room at London's Community Music Center, near London Bridge. Originally, under the auspices of the London Musicians' Collective, administered then by Ed Baxter, these premises were found and minimal lines of communication to possible interested parties were opened. The first Friday evening (not thought to be an auspicious evening of the week because people 'went out' to have a good time) duly arrived. The room was clean and comfortable. I waited" (Prévost, 2011: 115-116).

rock sounds in OE. The biographies need somehow, to submit to the particularities of free improvisation. People go there to try something new and need to dissolve these other knowledge, it is a prerequisite. I am well contaminated by a certain speech that crosses the OE which is that of the non-idiomatic. The interesting thing about OE is to move from my aesthetic project. In the contingencies of the collective I have to give up my project (Stênio Biazon).

My role as coordinator in the day-to-day rehearsals (besides ensuring that the environment remains “smooth”, fluent and horizontal) is more to mediate conflicts and to propose conversations, readings, music listening, analysis, study strategies, reflection or discussion topics. Even this type of action that is usually conducted by me, is sometimes exercised by any other member of the group. My “authority,” which is based on my experience and supposedly greater knowledge of the various themes, is often questioned by OE members and even by myself. In this regard, I collected these responses from members of the orchestra:

We try to be a group without hierarchies, horizontal, but in fact, you have a strong symbolic representation, because you are a teacher. In fact, you represent, symbolically, an authority and I think we do not have to worry about it because it's natural. And it's cool because we talk about this free relationship we have ... like, the hierarchies, how we try to dilute them, create a democratic environment etc. But it is ok to have the figure of the professor ... otherwise the entropy gets too high. And you make sure not to let it become a bureaucratic thing. So this figure of authority is diluted (Migue Antar).

... and although you dissolve enough the figure of the coordinator and even jokes that it would be good to dissolve it even more, I always think that this is the right thing to do. I mean, how much you continue being a professor in the Orquestra Errante. I think this is essential ... this is something that has to continue (Stênio Biazon).

5.3

Obviously, there are some aesthetic, ethical and conceptual presuppositions established when the orchestra was founded that are transmitted in a more or less systematic¹⁴ way to the members of the orchestra: 1) the orchestra is dedicated to free improvisation which is not subjected to any specific musical idiom or style; 2) any sound can be used in performances; 3) no

¹⁴ In addition, as coordinator of the group, I have been encouraging the reading and discussion

technical proficiency of the members¹⁵ is required and the prerequisites for participation are the desire (composed by the corporal, mental and emotional engagement), the attentive listening and the respect for the contribution of each one; 4) the orchestra creates and produces music collectively (in real time) and does not dedicate to the reproduction of any pre-established repertoire. In any case, it is not rhetorical to say that, as a participating member, I am learning as much as the other members of OE.

... I am not the same as I was 10 years ago ... I learned with the OE the posture to listen, to have patience, to control the anxiety ... The OE offers this space for people to feel free to put themselves in the way they are, and this is cool, because in a more rigid environment you do not have this chance ... through this idea of music. Free improvisation implies in an attitude of commitment. In the context of the OE you put yourself in a very sincere way (Migue Antar).

From OE I take things back to my work all the time, whether it's for my guitar class, music education groups, or whatever class I'm going to give. Really OE is a field of reflection, it's this type of thing that goes through teaching, research, practice and performance and dissolves these borders (Stênio Biazon).

5.4

The orchestra's links with the academic activities of the Music Department of the University of São Paulo are quite diffuse since, in a superficial glance, the eventual participation of students in the orchestra is not clearly related to the current specific objectives of the undergraduate courses in

of texts related to the question of intentional and unintentional listening regimes (according to John Cage), reduced listening (according to Pierre Schaeffer), deep listening (according to Pauline Oliveros), etc. I have also produced (and suggested that the members of the OE read it) various texts related to the environment of free improvisation, to ideas of control and non-control, to the relations between composition and improvisation, between pedagogy and improvisation, between ethnomusicology and improvisation, etc. Another important activity related to coordination has been to propose listening of varied repertoires in order to broaden the members' ideas of music. These issues are discussed in more or less systematic ways during the rehearsals. It is worth mentioning, for example, the discussion of the concepts of figural, gestural and textural thinking that has been carried out during several rehearsals during the last semester.

15 In this respect it is worth mentioning the fact that it is important that the members establish intimate and creative relations with their instruments, considering their use in performances, even in the case of invented instruments. It is not, therefore, a banal and irresponsible attitude.

instrument, conducting and singing¹⁶. The bonds with composition and music education are more promising since the participation in the orchestra can encourage the practices of creation, experimentation, invention, imagination, structuring, etc. Despite this, there has not been much interest from composition students of the Music Department in participating in the orchestra activities.

The links with my graduate activities and my research on improvisation are fairly consistent. Most projects supervised by me at the University of São Paulo (4 under graduation course work, 2 Scientific Initiation, 13 master's degrees, 12 doctorates and 4 postdocs, until 2018) relate more or less directly to the activities developed in the OE. There are even some works that investigate subjects related directly to the operation of the orchestra.

Due to its being a smooth space, always under construction, OE does not maintain a fixed structure, in any aspect (number of members, instrumental formation, level of technical excellence of the instrumentalists, schedule of presentations, functions, etc.). The "subjects" of the OE rehearsals are free, contingent and built in the immanence of each encounter. It is an intentionally "disorganized" or "semi-organized" space open to contingencies. In this sense, it can be said that this is a musical practice deeply rooted in life: everything that happens in a Orquestra Errante's meeting is a result of the interactions between its members, their wishes, projects, bodily and emotional dispositions.

5.5

In the Orquestra Errante nothing is imposed from the outside. The only rule of institutionalized functioning (apart from the ethical rules set out above) and maintained for more than 10 years is the commitment to rehearse every Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The concerts and presentations take place on a non-regular basis (there is no concert calendar) from proposals brought by members of the group (didactic concerts at Music Department of the University of São Paulo, cultural centers, schools or spaces dedicated

¹⁶ In fact, participation in this orchestra could become an obstacle to a type of training focused on excellence, rigor and homogenization of an instrumental technique that aims to create musicians who are entirely dedicated to the reproduction of the traditional European repertoire. This is because, as already explained above, in the Orquestra Errante there is no right or wrong, no minimum technical level is required and musicians are encouraged to extrapolate traditional techniques. In OE the instruments – which can be traditional, hybrid, invented, etc. – are like tools of the interactive game of creation in real time and can be regarded as "power plants" of sound, territories of experimentation.

to experimental music) or in events related to the activities of NuSom (series *¿Music?* <http://www2.eca.usp.br/nusom/producoes-musica>). And in this context, each rehearsal has a unique story. In order to enable discussions and conversations about concepts, procedures and dynamics worked some rehearsals are reported by members of the orchestra.

5.6

Here are some examples of written notes about rehearsals produced by members of the orchestra in order to describe the unique events of those specific occasions:

[01/03/18, by Stênio Biazon]

Attended the rehearsal: Mari, Rogério, Stênio, Fábio Manzione, Fábio Martinelli, Caio, Micael, Rafael, Pedro, Cassio. Watched the rehearsal: Yonara, Paola, César. Rogério read a text that he is writing with André Martins. Here are some issues present in the text that we dealt with during the rehearsal: heterochrony (simultaneity of divergent times), Deleuze's definition of music. We talked about uploading recordings to a drive, and then going to Sound Cloud. Rogério will prepare the drive. We agreed to take turns making the reports. Performances: A free one that would be very long, but that was cut in the middle (just because we start conversations...). Post-interval: A free one, with the recommendation of exchanging glances. It did not work very well. Another recommendation: to explore heterochrony, avoid synchronizations (in multiple senses). Free, "with holes" (but looking to exchange glances for, for example, "synchronize entries"; it worked better this time) - I think that heterochrony was not in question in this performance, at least not in the same sense. Question raised by Fábio Martinelli: how to enter and how to leave the silence. Another question, after the performance: do we actually break with linearity? In what ways?

[08/03/18, by Pedro Sollero]

We listened to the first (free) recording of the last rehearsal.

Migue, who brought the recording, talked about the difference in listening at the time of the performance and a week later. He noticed the more self-critical content of the first. We returned to a gesture of Fabio Martinelli in this improvisation, which triggered a considerable transformation in the whole, which quickly organized itself into a new sound form from a series of surprises and expectations. The time of assimilation of these breaks seems to offer other possibilities of listening.

Duos / Trios / Tutti: We made a round of duos that turned into trios and returned to the duos as musicians came in and out in turn. After the last trio we did a Tutti.

Interval

Fabio brought the idea of a musical game in which two teams of 3 musicians each, find themselves in a kind of board of 9 places. The musicians must perform certain movements, coordinated according to rules explained by Fabio, with the intention of forming a line of 3 pieces/musicians in a row. In addition, these people must play while moving and administer a colored string that involves all the musicians of each team. Although the figure with the string became very interesting, there was much talk about the practical difficulties of this aspect of the proposal. We did not get to experience sounds (just tried the movements in the space).

Free? I have the impression that we made a free performance sometime, but I do not remember. This is what happens when you make the report the following week. I apologize /.../ Anyway I have fond memories of this music that I do not remember if we did.

End.

5.7

The dynamics of the rehearsals that have been taking place in the Studio LAMI-USP for some years are more or less the same: the members arrive at the scheduled time (delays of 15 to 30 minutes are normal), they assemble their instruments, accessories and put themselves in the space, while they talk animatedly on diverse subjects, generally not related to the activities of the orchestra. In this initial moment of preparation, my role of coordinator comes into play in a somewhat more systematic way, inasmuch as I try to manage the schedules, the positions of the musicians in space, to facilitate the assembly of electronic instruments and equipment (microphones, cables and boxes). Everything to get ready to start the activities themselves. We usually start with a free improvisation session with no pre-arranged proposal. The "password" for this type of performance is: "let's make a free one"? This initial performance has, in general, a "heating" character. It is when people, through the activity of collective improvisation "open their pores" to the interaction (here, the "permeability" is fundamental), are attuned to their instruments, to others, to the environment, and so on. This performance favors the installation of an atmosphere of concentration and

deep and attentive listening. Soon after, a moment of conversation¹⁷ about the impressions of each one on the performance is established. In some rehearsals, after this warm-up period, some members of the group bring proposals (such as those listed above, in the form of graphic or verbal scores, scripts, games or other kinds of experiments) in general related to their master's or doctoral research or even with some autonomous, non-academic research. Sometimes these proposals take the time of an entire rehearsal (or even, of several rehearsals), sometimes only part of a rehearsal. After the proposals are accomplished, there is always a moment of discussion about their objectives and the results of the experiments.

5.8

It is worth mentioning, as an example, the proposals made during the year 2018 by the PhD student Migue Antar, who is Paraguayan, that relate to his research "on musical creation from the interferences arising from (des) (re) territorialized materials put into play in the context of free improvisation" and which clearly refer to the idea of inside and outside (I/O), involving languages, ethnicities, frontiers and relations between free and idiomatic improvisation. It is a research related to his personal life history insofar as it is based on "elements of cultural identity and musical configurations shared between Paraguay and Brazil, in order to make possible the friction between cultural ingredients and turn them into triggers for free improvisation performances" (texts extracted from his doctoral project).

Attached below is an excerpt from the recording of a performance that used as a trigger a popular Paraguayan song that is part of this research. The process of interference (described in the text above) that involves an

17 It is worth emphasizing the informality and freedom with which these conversations are conducted. In reality there is not really a way of conducting the conversations that are constituted as relaxed and humorous moments of exchange of ideas, sensations and experiences. It can be said, however, that these conversations are a fundamental part of the orchestra's operation and guarantee the dialogical, democratic, non-hierarchical and horizontal character of this environment. See below for the transcription of the recording of an excerpt from a rehearsal conducted in August 2018: Rafael: "...but I do not think so, in making a jazz phrase, I only think of making melodies ..."; Rogério: "... no, no one is criticizing you. You can use your jazz there ... I was just saying that a melodic phrase is sometimes very pregnant ... "; Rafael: "I understood ..."; Rogério: "Speak there, Ines, what did you want to talk about? "; Ines: "no ... it was a giant bullshit"; me: "but it's good, cool, talk there ..."; Ines: "It's just that I listen, and suddenly I feel that these conversations that we have about sound are very similar to these soccer programs (general laughter), it seems that they are not saying anything (more laughter), which is the accumulation of abstraction (many laughs) "; Rogério "yes ... it's like a round table ...".

emotional, rational and corporal experience with the repertoire was prepared by listening to a recording, an explanation of its sociocultural context and an informal reproduction of the song by the group (from listening and reading a score prepared by Migue). Then, we realized several performances in which we should improvise, dialoguing in some way (through the transformed use of rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, formal, etc. elements) with the experience we had with the song. In the link below it is possible to listen to a performance recorded during one of these rehearsals and to perceive the use of musical materials of Paraguayan origin in a new context:

<https://soundcloud.com/rogeriomoraescosta/improvisacao-sobre-cancao-paraguaia>

5.9

There is no, or at least so far, there has never been, a schedule of activities or long-term planning with defined goals. As already explained above, the rehearsals do not aim at preparing for presentations or concerts. Actually, it is in these weekly encounters that the interactive environment is built. In a metaphor for the world of soccer, training (which in our case is as important as the games/presentations) is for players to know each other, improve and rehearse their individual and collective moves. Of course, the presentations and concerts radically change the performance environment. Besides the change of physical space with its acoustic characteristics, the emotional disposition of the members is transformed due to the presence of the public.

6. ORQUESTRA ERRANTE: A MUSICAL PRACTICE DEEPLY ROOTED IN LIFE

But finally, what does it mean to say that the Orquestra Errante's practices are deeply rooted in life? It means to reaffirm that these practices "are temporal and spatially localized in the *here* and *now* being that this *here* is multidirectional and this *now* is an intense present crossed by the energies of the different pasts – of its individual members, of the relationships between them, of the memories of the whole and of its subgroupings – which cross it and compose it, and by the future that it projects; and that one of the results of this practice is an 'impure and relative' music, not absolute, nor universal". It means, therefore, that it is "a musical practice soaked with life, emotion, body and context (personal, cultural, social, etc.); music of listening, seeing and living, in which multiple regimes of listening, not only sonorous, coexist".

Therefore, it can be affirmed that the Orquestra Errante is constituted as a space of subjectification and interaction. In this orchestra, free improvisation establishes a dynamic environment of cooperative and shared exercise of creative powers, of empirical activism through listening, playing and talking. It is a free and unimpeded space that favors the flow of energies, energy exchanges and processes of individuation. Referring to the ideas of Simondon, it can be said that the orchestra in its dimensions of collective interaction resembles a living organism in constant process of individuation:

[...] the living keeps in itself a permanent activity [...] it is not only a result of individuation as the crystal or the molecule, but also theater of individuation. [...] the living is also the being that results from an initial individuation and amplifies this individuation [...] the living solves problems not only adapting itself, that is, modifying its relation with the environment (as a machine can do), but also modifying itself [...]. The living individual is contemporary with himself in all its elements (Simondon, 2003: 104-105).

[...] individuation in the form of a collective makes the individual an individual of group, associated to the group by the pre-individual reality that brings with him/her and that, together with that of others individuals is individuated in collective unity (ibidem: 107).

From a complementary point of view, even though political issues have not been investigated directly or in depth, I believe that the discussion about the concepts underlying the activities and the description of the working environment of the Orquestra Errante implies implicitly several issues that underlie this type of subject. It seems to me that thinking about the creative power of this collective creative environment necessarily points to an absolutely contemporary form of resistance. At a time when, according to Suely Rolnik:

[...] it is the very life that capitalism appropriates; more precisely, of its power of creation and transformation in its birth - that is, its germinative essence - as well as of the cooperation of which such power depends for it to take place in its uniqueness. [...] the resistance today would go through an effort of collective reappropriation of that power in order to construct what these authors (Toni Negri and Michael Hardt) call "the common" (Rolnik, 2018: 32-33).

And later, in the same book, Rolnik relates more incisively this reappropriation, at the same time individual and collective, with a vital ethics, as something that intertwines in life, potentiating its becoming:

[...] it is from the desiring, individual and cooperative reappropriation of the ethical destiny of the vital drive - in synthesis, of its ontological reappropriation - that can result in a collective deviation from its abuse by the regime, towards an ethics of existence. [...] In this transterritoriality, more favorable conditions are created to mobilize the creative power of activist practices, as well as micro politics in artistic practices (Rolnik, 2018: 34-35).

This is what we are talking about when we say that the practices of the Orquestra Errante are deeply rooted in life. As Suely Rolnik would say, it is a continuous resistance against the processes of colonization of the collective unconscious.

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