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## TIMBRE N.1 BY EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTES: ANALYSIS AS A TEACHING TOOL FOR THE PERFORMER

# TIMBRE N.1 DE EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTES: ANÁLISE COMO FERRAMENTA DE ENSINO PARA O INTÉRPRETE

# *TIMBRE N.1 DE EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTES: EL ANÁLISIS COMO HERRAMIENTA DIDÁCTICA PARA EL INTÉRPRETE*

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**ABSTRACT**: The theme of this article is to present an analytical material on Timbre n.1 by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes, whose objective is to place the interpreter in an active position of his interpretive choices bases on the reflection and association of elements directed to the musical performance. The investigation takes place through a qualitative approach based on bibliographical references, semi-structured interview whit the composer and the postulates of Ian Bent (1938). Within the results we have: reflections on de importance of building knowledge for the teaching/learning process; composer's considerations and reconsiderations; reflections on the area of interpretive practices and descriptive analysis of the elements used by the composer as a discovery and teaching toll for the interpreter. It is considered that the data set helps the balance the objective and subjective action of musical interpretive practices.

KEYWORDS: Villani-Côrtes. Timbre n.1. Analysis. Teaching. Interpretative Practices.

**RESUMO**: A temática deste artigo está em apresentar um material analítico sobre o Timbre n.1 de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes, cujo objetivo está em colocar o intérprete na posição ativa de suas escolhas interpretativas, baseadas na reflexão e associação de elementos direcionados para a performance musical. A investigação ocorre através de uma abordagem qualitativa baseada nas referências bibliográficas, entrevista semiestruturada com o compositor e os postulados de Ian Bent (1938). Dentro dos resultados temos: reflexões acerca da importância da construção do conhecimento para o processo de ensino/aprendizado; considerações e reconsiderações do compositor; reflexões sobre a área das práticas interpretativas e análise descritiva dos elementos empregados pelo compositor como ferramenta de descoberta e ensino para o intérprete. Considera-se que o conjunto de dados auxilie o equilíbrio entre a ação objetiva e subjetiva da interpretação musical, fortalecendo o intérprete no cenário da pesquisa acadêmica na área das práticas interpretativas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Villani-Côrtes. Timbre n.1. Análise. Ensino. Práticas Interpretativas.

**RESUMEN**: El tema de este artículo es presentar un material analítico sobre el Timbre n.1 de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes, cuyo objetivo es colocar al intérprete en la posición activa de sus opciones interpretativas basadas en la reflexión y asociación de elementos dirigidos a la interpretación musical. La investigación se lleva a cabo a través de un enfoque cualitativo basado en referencias bibliográficas, entrevista semiestructurada con el compositor y los postulados de Ian Bent (1938). Dentro de los resultados tenemos: reflexiones sobre la importancia en la construcción del conocimiento para el proceso de enseñanza/aprendizaje; consideraciones y reconsideraciones del compositor; Reflexiones sobre el área de las prácticas interpretativas y análisis descriptivo de los elementos empleados por el compositor como herramienta de descubrimiento y enseñanza para el intérprete. Se considera que el conjunto de datos ayuda al equilibrio entre la acción objetiva y subjetiva de la interpretación musical, fortaleciendo al intérprete en el escenario de la investigación académica en el área de las prácticas interpretativas.

**PALABRAS CLAVE**: Villani-Cortés. Timbre n.1. Análisis. Enseñanza. Prácticas Interpretativas.

#### Introduction

This investigation is part of the trajectory of reflections of the author of this paper whose origin is in his Doctoral Thesis entitled "*Timbres e Ritmatas de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Conceito, Análise e Interpretação Pianística*" defended in 2011 by the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) in the area of Interpretive Practices.

The choice of the composer is based on criteria of representativeness, importance, aesthetic boundaries, and a profound transformation in the teaching/learning scenario in the last 60 years, where experimentalism gave way to a learning process based on scientific premises, concretizing the course of academic organization in the area of interpretive practices. Villani-Côrtes represents, within the current process of Brazilian classical music, one of the infinite strands of contemporary music, dialoguing, without barriers, the languages of the erudite and the popular within the highest degree of quality of the national musical literature.

The composer emphasizes his strong inclination for the research of sounds in the instruments, as well as the analytical object in the understanding of the pieces he performed. He describes his will, his taste, his sense of observation allied to the association of daily events as the main references used in his creation process and, as a consequence, a great part of the titles of his extensive musical work are directly related to something that happened in his life.

It is in this context that *Timbre n.1* was chosen for the research process of this work. The creation of this piece happened in mid-1976, within a teaching and learning process experienced by Villani-Côrtes, motivated by the German composer Hans Joachim Koellreutter (1915-2005) in treating the piano not as a harmonic melodic instrument, but as a timbral instrument, ratifying the title of his composition. It is a differential of his intense musical production marked by the dialogue between the erudite and the popular based on tonal relations. It demands from the interpreter an accurate technical development, memorization, and comprehension of a text whose references are totally linked in the universe of sound diversity and deep contrasts, demanding understanding and teaching tools for the construction of selective listening, fundamental to the richness of the timbral relations present in the work. Ratifying considerations by Sá Pereira (1888-1966), an important piano teacher, music educator, writer, composer and pioneer in modern piano teaching based on the sense of attention and reflection, the attainment of selective hearing is the result of an organized set of instructions employed in the act of instrumental performance, strengthening education as a dynamic and consistent process (SÁ PEREIRA, 1964).

The goal is to place the interpreter in the active position of his interpretive choices based on reflection and association of the elements directed to the *performance*.

Thus, the article will be subdivided into sections, informing and guiding the reader about important issues such as: the relevance of the construction of knowledge, describing the action of musical interpretation as a guide to conscious decisions in the continuous exercise of discovery; Villani-Côrtes by Villani-Côrtes through semi-structured interviews, clarifying and contextualizing the musical biography of the composer; reflections on the action of interpretive practices as an area of knowledge; analytical work of *Timbre n.1* by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes as a teaching tool for the interpreter, and final considerations on the contribution of this research.

#### **Methodology and Ethical Code**

The methodology of this research presents a qualitative approach whose data survey is supported by the bibliographic foundation, presenting important references on the construction of knowledge for the area of interpretive practices. Regarding this scientific methodology, Filippo *et al.* (2011, p. 384, our translation) explain:

The answers to these questions generate so-called qualitative data: they cannot be measured directly, and are usually obtained through interviews, documents, or the researcher's own observations of the users' actions.

Minayo (2003, p. 21, our translation) states that qualitative research, works with a reality that cannot be only quantified, "because this reality has a universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes".

Regarding this universe of meanings, ratifying the qualitative importance of contents, a set of semi-structured interviews was recorded with the referred composer, carried out by the author of this article, obtaining originalities about Edmundo Villani-Côrtes' musical biography. The structure of the text brings considerations and reconsiderations of the composer as the main axis, fruit of a series of meetings from 2007 to 2011, allowing the genesis of a secondary text authored by the researcher. The conceptual basis of the semi-structured interview followed the specifications of Skalinski Júnior (2011), through previously prepared questions about musical studies, influences, family life, academic background, professional activities, composition concepts, political and social position, and several considerations about Edmundo Villani-

Côrtes. Contextualizing, for the interpreter, the musical nature and creative thought of the composer.

The theoretical foundations of the analytical work will be supported by the postulates proposed by Ian Bent (1938) in his work "Analysis", where "analysis can serve as a teaching tool for the interpreter, for the listener and often for the composer, but it always retains one particularity: the process of discovery" (BENT, 1988, p. 2, our translation), as well as the proposal to construct musical interpretation according to the Formativity Theory elaborated by philosopher Luigi Pareyson (1928-1991), where "interpretation" (PAREYSON, 1993, p. 172, our translation) is defined as a form of knowledge in which receptivity and activity are inseparable.

The methodological process of the analytical work will be organized from the following focuses: Form (textual organization); Harmony (grammar); Andamento (movement); Dynamics, Timbre and Resonance (sound relations), functionalizing the findings and balancing the objective and subjective actions of musical interpretation in order to enhance knowledge and creativity, important tools in interpretive practices.

The research responds fully to the code of ethics, valuing honesty and integrity of the information, as well as the author's responsibility. Objectivity is the driving force behind the work, weaving the reports with clarity and responsibility. There are no judgments influenced by conflicts of interest, ensuring the rights of all involved: composer, researcher, and journal. The originality through the presence of the composer, the continuous reflections of the researcher, and the full respect for the corrections suggested by the referees point to the scientific conduct in the development and results of the referred work, emphasizing the quality of the reports as a priority criterion. Finally, the author assumes public responsibility for the work, as well as his intellectual contribution.

#### Acquisition: knowledge construction

We started the course of this investigation alerting about the importance of information acquisition for the construction of knowledge, describing the action of musical interpretation as a guide of non-mechanized decisions, that is, the result of a conscious work in the continuous exercise of the discovery process. In this aspect, it is worth emphasizing the interpreter's role in the production and not the reproduction of the musical text, valuing the triad: analysis, discovery and associations. The associative processes are one of the ways of fixing knowledge. It allows the organization of the analyzed material, using the analogies or differences of the musical text.

Contrary to what many inquire as the result of the artistic product, comprehension broadens the creativity of the multiple perceptions of the musical interpretation process. It is a factor of utmost importance for assisted freedom and not libertinism, since it is based on knowledge.

The fact is that musical interpretation, before the pianistic repertoire or that of any other instrument, will never be only an intellectual, rational management. Subjective behavior, based on the exercise of intuition, is a necessary and valuable tool that can be masterfully combined with scientific procedures. The systematization of data related to the cognitive (intellectual), affective (motivation) and motor (movement/body) levels, provided by the action of research, analysis being one of these tools, makes it possible to elaborate a teaching and performance methodology that enables the development of a complex arsenal of potentialities that will allow one to overcome the demands of musical order that the interpretation of the great works of musical literature demands. It is in this sense that pianist Maria Eliza Risarto (2000, apud LIMA, 2005, p. 45, our translation) states

[...] Suddenly, searching for the best touch, the best sound conduction, are phenomena that cannot be verbalized and seem to follow the path of intuition, but, deep down, they presuppose a technical work [...] In this work I understood precisely the logic of musical interpretation and consequently my musical intuition became much stronger.

In the area of interpretive practices, instrumental performance, we come across perceptions and needs that are not built without the action of criticality and the reflective process. As it is a highly artisanal activity through the knowledge of subjective knowledge, since musical phenomena are not objective and arise from daily experimentation under the individual prism, it demands from the individual a critical education, antagonistic to the standardization of behavior.

This ratifies the position of pianist Maria Eliza Risarto about the logic of musical interpretation where, through critical education, it develops reflexive behavior; it values the foundation through handcrafted action; it imprints interest in the course; it carries out the integration process through the set of associations; it emphasizes the individual result in detriment of standardization, valuing the individual feedbacked by curiosity and creativity based on the light of reason and knowledge.

Curiosity as an inquiring restlessness, as an inclination to unveil something, as a verbalized or non-verbalized question, as a search for clarification, as a sign of attention that suggests alertness, is an integral part of the vital phenomenon. There would be no creativity without curiosity that moves us and that makes us patiently impatient before the world we have not made, adding to it something we make (FREIRE, 2011, p. 33, our translation).

It is in this context that we set out to weave curiosities and information about this composer through semi-structured interviews conducted by the author of this work.

#### Villani-Côrtes by Villani-Côrtes

Born on November 8, 1930 in Juiz de Fora (MG), Edmundo Villani-Côrtes merges and confuses his biography with his vast musical production: "I read inside, it's as if I had a library inside of me and that I chose the subjects in a sonorous and chromatic way" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2006, our translation)<sup>2</sup>. In this context, the composer considers himself to be the main source of information and research that an interpreter of his works can obtain, aiming at a satisfactory result.

An interpreter, to achieve a satisfactory result, needs to participate in the human structure of my life. The composer's reference is vital, but many times they despise the information of the living composer. It's a shame, and besides, it's the music that loses. (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2010, our translation)<sup>3</sup>.

By getting to know him through the various semi-structured interviews described in the methodological process of this work, it is possible to affirm that his life and his music are inseparable, one serving as a reading for the other: "I make music for a reason that occurred in my life" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>4</sup>.

Exactly because of the affirmation on the importance of the interpreter to participate in the human structure of the composer's life, the author of this research starts the following reports based on Edmundo Villani-Côrtes' considerations and reconsiderations.

This profile was made with the survey of the beginning of his musical studies, formation and influences, family life, professional activity as pianist, arranger, composer, conductor and teacher, academic background, composition concepts, political and social position, among

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted in his home on August 05, 2006. São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on October 6th, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on October 6th, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

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others. The methodological organization respects the chronological order of his musical life, describing and directing his autobiographical accounts.

We begin by describing that the encounter with music and the action of composing had its origin through the need to describe sensations and memories from his inner world. Thus, Villani-Côrtes states in an interview conducted in 2008 by the author of this article:

> As a boy I liked to climb trees, I saw the trees swaying and wanted to join in. When I felt the wind, I wanted to join it; when I saw the water, I wanted to be the water; when I saw a cloud, I wanted to be a vulture flying above. I felt like describing all of this, childhood memories and feelings. I found in music the tool to make this possible (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2008, our translation).

His musical education did not follow academic criteria and regularity, as the composer himself states: "I think I had no musical education, I had musical information" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2008)<sup>5</sup>. In this way, the sense of observation, intuition, experimentation and sensation were methodological tools that founded his work and are present in all his actions as a pianist, arranger, teacher and composer, as he says: "I have always had difficulty in rigorously following a certain scheme, whether in learning or in composing" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2008, our translation) $^{6}$ .

Villani-Côrtes (2008) has a strong personality and affirms that his trademark was to have maintained his identity, avoiding fads and impositions. "I seek in the instrument what I want to find"<sup>7</sup>.

Although he was a student of Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993) and many relate his music to the Nationalist current, Villani-Côrtes disagrees with this position and reaffirms that his composition is the result of a need for expression.

> I have never studied any folklore. I have never researched anything and I don't consider myself a nationalist. If eventually the resources I use coincide with this school, it is something purely coincidental. Even my relationship with Camargo Guarnieri was very brief. I had only a few months of lessons with him, I had to interrupt my studies to earn a living as a popular music pianist. (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>8</sup>.

The contact with Camargo Guarnieri and Koellreuter (1915-2005) allowed the composer to experience two movements that polarized Brazilian music in the first half of the 20th century: Nationalism and the Dodecaphonic School. The composer ratifies that he has

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on December 13, 2008, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on December 13, 2008, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on December 13, 2008, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

works with these characteristics, but he is not tied to nor does he represent a certain line of composition: "I have, within my collection, music that has these characteristics. But I don't want to be tied to any school, I don't make music with the intention of renewing" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>9</sup>.

He values scientific knowledge, however, without enthusiasm and willpower, he believes that the musical result loses content, expressiveness, and does not flow. With such subjective characteristics, Villani-Côrtes concludes that life and inspiration are fruits of a mysterious result, difficult to be accurately described by scientific means.

To make a composition it is often independent of the fact of having knowledge, having good technique, etc. You can analyze compositions, know music, have knowledge of counterpoint, harmony, etc., but if you don't feel like making music, if you don't have the will or enthusiasm, nothing will come of it. Unless you make some songs like the ones that have been appearing around, in which the person puts together some clichés, some mathematical calculations, uses such-and-such law, multiplies by I don't know what, makes a retrograde in the middle, or the inversion retrograde... I won't say that this is not composition, because it is something imagined, but made in another climate. My climate is different. I go by emotion. This way I come to the conclusion that inspiration is a mystery, life is a mystery (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>10</sup>.

According to Villani-Côrtes, the action of composing is a complex task that implies the sum of inspiration, concentration, and experimentation. "To compose, it is necessary to have a confluence of disposition, the will to do, and ideas" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009)<sup>11</sup>.

The patience, the sound research, the depth in the expressiveness of the text, are tools that characterize Villani-Côrtes as a detailed and perfectionist composer.

A simple chord, a triad, people think I put it there in a minute, but I spent a long time thinking about it. Even when the music is simple, to get to the simple I have tried the complex, the far-fetched. This simple came from a deep sound research with the purpose of expressing the musical text. If the material expressed is simple, it doesn't matter. What matters is the means of expression. Many times, the frivolousness leaves an unclear makeup of the true (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>12</sup>.

Experimentalist and averse to any kind of labeling, Villani-Côrtes (2009, our translation) states that it is difficult to calculate the definitive point in the making of a work and that all his production is done very seriously, always representing a new challenge: "One cannot

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E.: Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP). <sup>10</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP). <sup>11</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

know when a piece has reached its definitive point. Every piece I make is a challenge, I don't take anything lightly, no matter who it is for"<sup>13</sup>.

With a musical style all his own, mixing elements from concert music to urban popular music, Villani-Côrtes (2009, our translation) makes a point of calling his art "simple and unpretentious. Interestingly, perhaps it was precisely this unpretentiousness that ultimately made Villani-Côrtes one of today's most played living Brazilian composers: "I never intended to be a famous composer, of a school, a musical genius. My business has always been to write what I liked and what I found interesting. I liked it, it's here and that's it" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2009, our translation)<sup>14</sup>.

When asked what he would have to say to a music student who showed interest in composition, Villani-Côrtes (2010, our translation)<sup>15</sup> states:

Don't be ashamed to be happy. [If you chose to study music, it's because you like music. So if you like it, that's what you should do. It is your mission, the most pleasant way to leave your message. I have followed this example and have done very well. Although I have several problems along the way, but, precisely because I do what I like, there are always people who share this with me. Taste is related to your need, and the need will drive your desire to create.

The composer emphasizes that "in today's music scene, I put myself in the place where I always have been and always will be: this place is when I am closest to myself" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2010, our translation)<sup>16</sup>.

This self-portrait of the composer makes clear the sensitive side of his personality and the immense need to express himself, using music as a descriptive tool. The naturalness of the origin of his musical information permeated the whole universe of his musical production and professional activity, enhancing his practice and sense of observation.

In the current scenario it is almost impossible to imagine this being possible. Villani-Côrtes is an important piece for us to reflect on and observe the great transformations and the real demands in the process of musical education traced by a diversity of methodologies that are not based on intuition and practice. The mechanism is almost the inverse: through reflective education intuition and creativity are enhanced in a continuous dialogue between theory and practice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on May 3rd, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on December 09, 2009, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on March 17, 2010, São Paulo (SP).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on March 17, 2010, São Paulo (SP).

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Could it be that today, with all the issues imposed in the contemporary world, we would have the possibility of not following a certain scheme about the teaching/learning process? Is there room? Do we allow it?

Villani-Côrtes clearly states that he is not a nationalist, that he has never studied folklore and that his composition is the fruit of a need for expression. However, in current times, perhaps due to specializations and the deepening of knowledge, I observe that the label is an unquestionable necessity: Are you a Nationalist? Contemporary? Innovative? I question how much we gain or lose with such stamps. With all the current perspectives, planning and impositions, do we manage to teach ourselves who we are?

Another factor worth mentioning is man's relationship with time and how this can influence the process of education, teaching, and learning. The composer emphasizes the diversity of his "seasonings" to reach depth in the expressiveness of the musical text: patience, concentration, inspiration, and experimentation.

It would be naive and incongruous not to recognize the technological achievements and the most diverse forms of methodologies that all areas of knowledge, throughout time, have offered to human life. The questioning, not even close, fails to recognize this importance, even because this is the expected and desired result by the scientific community and society as a whole. However, there are numerous reflections about "how" this arsenal is used in order to contribute to an education that really promotes human development and not its regression. In this context, we highlight some questions:

- Is it possible to reflect and retain on the most diverse fields of knowledge offered at the speed of the new media?

- How does this impact the social body, stress being the disease of the century?

- What is the focus of attention of teachers and students when they are connected twentyfour hours a day on social networks, including during their own pedagogical actions?

- How to deal with the possibility of collage and the impossibility of discoveries in the field of science and research?

- The construction of knowledge, through the exercise of reading, respect for time and patience to absorb and reflect on a given subject, in contrast with contemporary life based on the diversity of actions and immediacy?

The validity of these inquiries aims to question whether the individual, in this context, is not placed at the margin of what he produces, of the knowledge necessary for the productive process, of the control of this process, as well as of what results from it. If the purpose is to promote a critical and reflective education, and these conquests are irreversibly consummated, perhaps the best way is to reconcile the use of the various tools of contemporary society through critical awareness, avoiding the standardization of the behavior of human relations, undermining the particularities of the individual and, consequently, building numerous obstacles in the teaching/learning process.

It is impressive that almost close to his 93rd birthday, the composer stresses that the place he places himself in the current music panorama is when he is closest to himself. He is the protagonist of his story, ratifying the position of one of the greatest educators of all times: Paulo Freire (1921-1997).

Education is a response of finitude to infinitude. Education is possible for man because he is unfinished and knows himself to be unfinished. This leads him to his perfection. Education, therefore, implies a search carried out by a subject that is man. Man must be the subject of his own education. He cannot be the object of it (FREIRE, 2011, p. 34, our translation).

The questions provoke reflections about the formation and performance of an important composer of the national scene, opening the way for the continuity of this investigation by transferring to the area of interpretive practices, the universe in which we are inserted, the formation process and the performance of this field of knowledge.

From this perspective, the focus will be on the contemporaneity based on a formative process that portrays the transformation highlighted between Edmundo Villani-Côrtes' formation/performance and the current scenario.

## Interpretive practices: training and performance

The territory of interpretive practices is a universe under construction. When comparing the areas of knowledge in the musical field, this area was the last to be inserted in the exercise of epistemology and assisted practice. The result is the resistance of many instrumentalists and teachers to develop a work based on the action of research. Research is the formalization of reasoning whose seriousness dispenses with poetic arguments. It prides itself on science, on the pleasure of bringing or provoking suggestions based on an objective possibility within subjective territory.

There are still questions as to whether rational knowledge does not bring an artificiality to artistic production. However, real achievements are grounded on epistemological bases through an interdisciplinary look, discussing several phenomena that occur in the human body during the preparation action of instrumental performance: the process.

The area dialogues with its own tools, such as Music History, Harmony, Counterpoint, Music Education, Proprioception, and Motor Education, as well as Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology, Mathematics, Physics, Computer Science, and Education, among others.

Many questions in the field of training and performance of music interpretation occur:

- - How to balance the creative freedom of the interpreter with the fidelity of the written text?
- - Is it possible to measure the interpreter's intervention if we are in the imponderable domain of subjectivity?
- - What about the multiplicity of meanings through the infinite possibilities of reading?
- - How to establish the threshold between the interpreter's impartiality and personality?
- - How to eliminate it if he is one of the tools of this action?
- - How to sustain the idea of fidelity in interpretation?
- - How to define as true the author's/composer's intention?

Perhaps, such issues explain the difficulty of reflection in the area of interpretive practices. However, we have tradition as a starting point. There is a historical legacy that enables the findings and stimulates the movement that never stops. This means that the way of seeing the world is transformed according to the individual's field of vision and that depends on the degree of knowledge acquired and to be acquired in continuous mutation: formation and acting. It is the provocation that builds the intuitive "firstness" to the reflective "thirdness".

The subtraction of the area is a reality of its own history since, for many years, the talent or the reproducing/ trained interpreter was valued. Both construct a faceless, non-existent individual.

However, the 20th century represents a period of important mutations in the valorization of two forces of human nature: rationality and emotional intelligence. As a result, we have: the valorization of the individual in the social body; the elaboration of new teaching methodologies; the look at knowledge for the development of the human being, just as inatism is not the core of the new methodological proposals. The interpreter gains face in the scenario of reflection and construction of knowledge in the area of interpretive practices.

Several fields of science contribute to the enrichment of discoveries about the performing musician:

- - How your brain capacity works through neurology;
- - Problems of emotional disorders arising from public exposure through psychology and psychiatry;
- Study of the problems caused by repetitive motion with orthopedics and traumatology, assisting in the construction of numerous resources such as Alexander technique; body perception; Eutonia; deliberate practice; self-regulation; yoga, etc.
- - Processes of auditory education and vocal education through otorhinolaryngology;
- - Study of acoustic needs through physics;
- - Legacy of history and philosophy for aesthetic understanding;
- - Diversity of proposals for musical analysis: phenomenology; hermeneutics; semiology and semiotics; formativity theory, among others.

The proposal of the analysis is in the search to reconcile composer and interpreter, avoiding the unilateral process that subtracts and unbalances the receptivity and the inherent activity of the cycle of knowledge production, contradicting the human act and operation. It is worth emphasizing that the totality of discoveries is transitory and in constant development, eliminating extremist attitudes: period.

In short, the result is the fruit of a proposal or a possibility, since knowledge is mutable, the body is mutable, perception is mutable, the gaze is mutable, and the work remains alive through the movement of its own interpretation.

It is precisely because of this movement that we will present a proposal for the analysis of *Timbre n.1* by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes based on discoveries that represent a valuable teaching tool for the interpreter.

## Analysis - Timbre N.1: Discovery as a teaching tool for the interpreter

The reflection on Timbre n.1 is the result of analytical work in conjunction with the composer's contributions, valuing the importance of the findings and their functionality for the interpretive practice. The piece belongs to a cycle of four timbres, whose origin occurred in mid-1976, when Villani-Côrtes and a composition class from Academia Paulista de Arte, under

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his guidance, attended some classes by the German composer Hans Joachim Koellreutter (1915-2005).

According to Villani-Côrtes (2010, our translation)<sup>17</sup>:

Koellreutter asked me to make a piece with an atonal and experimental reference, exploring the piano not as a melodic-harmonic instrument, but as a timbral instrument. I thought about creating, as a result of this experimentation, a musical background or a soundtrack for a horror movie.

Using a less conventional musical writing, Villani-Côrtes presents a bull, a convention widely used in contemporary music scores. Its importance lies in the clarification offered by the composer as a guide of indications to be observed during the process of building the performance, creating references and autonomy for the interpreter's decisions.

With diversified interval relations and several types of texture, the composer affirms that the cluster was the main resource used with the objective of obtaining trimbristic effects: "I did not use dodecaphonism because it would be too stuck in the structure of the series, preventing the making of clusters. The work will not show, at any time, the tonalism" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2010, our translation)<sup>18</sup>.

Emphasizing that musical interpretation is the fruit of thought, the more organized it is, the more coherent the interpreter's decisions will be. True, music does not have the power to describe its events with such precision. The elements that constitute the musical result are changeable by the interpreter, the physical space, the instrument, the day, the audience, among other events. However, the suggestion is to propose the construction of a link between the analytical work and the expression, seeking balance between the objective and subjective aspects. In this context, the analytical work will be organized from the following focuses: Form (textual organization); Harmony (grammar); Andamento (movement); Dynamics, Timbre and Resonance (sound relations), elements that are undoubtedly relevant for the understanding of the musical text, generating learning for the interpreter and, consequently, expanding the possibility of expressing oneself with maximum meanings.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on March 16, 2010, São Paulo (SP).
 <sup>18</sup> VILLANI-CÔRTES, E. Interview conducted at his home on March 16, 2010, São Paulo (SP).

### Form

According to Schoenberg (2012, p. 33, our translation): "Form means that a piece is organized, that is, that it consists of elements functioning like those of a living organism." This organicity brings to reflection the fact that each musical element, in its uniqueness, relates to the whole, forming the plurality that results in the macro-structure of the work. The vision of formal structure, representing the power of synthesis that occurs after the understanding of the whole, will help the instrumentalist to deal with the diversity of elements inherent to the practice of instrumental performance, such as: choice of tempos, sound relations, articulations, climaxes, phraseological structures, among others, using as reference the divisions of the parts and their possible analogies and contrasts. The integral taking of the process contributes, significantly, to the performance of the memorization of the work, characterizing the inseparability of the reception and performance in human action, enhancing and enriching the interpreter's creative and expressive process. Chart 1 shows the formal structure of the piece *Timbre n.1* and its respective synthesis.

Sections	Gestures	Compassos	Features
	1st gesture (1st letterhead element)	c.1-4	<ul><li>-Cluster and octaves formed by the intervals of 2ndm, converging to the note E in ff dynamics.</li><li>-Chromatic referential collection.</li></ul>
	Absence of movement	c.5	1"
S E C T	2nd gesture (2nd letterhead element)	c.6-12	-Clusters formed by 2ndm intervals, interspersed in intervals structured in 4thJ movement in f dynamics, converging to the F note. -Chromatic referential collection.
I	Absence of movement	c.13	3"
O N 1	3rd gesture (3rd letterhead element)	c.14-18	<ul> <li>There is no occurrence of clusters.</li> <li>Upper line: melodic movement based on the intervals of 2nds and 4ths.</li> <li>Lower line: intervals of 2ndm, converging to the G note.</li> <li>Chromatic referential collection.</li> </ul>
	Absence of movement	c.19	1"

<b>Chart 1</b> – 7	Timbre n.1	- Formal	Structure
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P O N T E	Bridge	c.20-24	A tension-generating bridge through structures: rhythmic, dynamic, tessitura, contrast play, and chromatic movement.
SECTION 2	"Minus" - continuous sound movement	c.25-42	<ul> <li>-Presents contrasting material with Section 1 concerning rhythm, dynamics, interval relationships, and resonance.</li> <li>-Presents elements that unify both sections: first cluster formation notes and chromatic referential collection.</li> </ul>
C O D A	Coda: Sudden	c.43-46	-Presents and synthesizes a number of compositional resources used in the construction of the work. These resources relate to rhythm, dynamics, tessitura, cluster, contrast play, and interval relationship.

Source: Prepared by the author

The information collected, through the formal structure, helps in the decisions and directs the interpreter regarding the diversity of events, as described above. However, as far as memorization is concerned, it is worth pointing out that the concretization of the fixation will depend on the level of comprehension of the meaning and the manner in which repetitions are performed, attributing great value to the logical memory, the one that responds to a voluntary effort derived from rational comprehension, criticism, and the choice of data. In this way, the logical memory will feed back all the others, visual, auditory and kinesthetic, integrating the perceptual process.

Memory is a set of functions of the psychism that allows us to preserve what has been, in some way, experienced. If it were not for memory, every day we would have to start all over again to learn everything: gestures, actions, the way of reasoning, etc. Memory is, therefore, an essential element in the learning process (KAPLAN, 1987, p. 69, our translation).

Another important factor is that the form presents the interpreter with the clarity of the parts of a work, in this case: two sections connected by a bridge and ending with the coda <sup>19</sup>. It creates an objective look, starting from the macro structure of the text, helping the interpreter in subjective issues such as: planning of sound environments, articulations, contrasts, among other elements that constitute each part, as described in Chart 1.

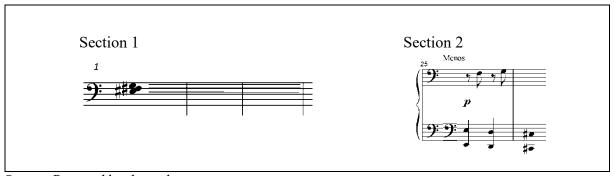
Next, we will proceed to the analysis of the composer's compositional reasoning: Harmony.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Coda – final part of a movement. The purpose is to serve as a finish to the piece. RIAEE – Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação, Araraquara, v. 18, n. 00, e023030, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v18i00.17771

## Harmony

The genesis of Timbre n.1 occurred through the experimental action requested by the composer Koellreutter, exploring the timbral characteristics of the piano in detriment of melodic-harmonic recurrences. Villani-Côrtes states that the cluster<sup>20</sup> was the main resource used to achieve the timbral effects. Observing the initial cluster of Section 1, built with the notes E, F and G, bar 1, we detect the use of the same material for the beginning of Section 2, unifying its compositional reasoning. See Figure 1:

**Figure 1** – Villani-Côrtes, Edmundo – *Timbre n.1*: c.1 (Section1) and c.25 (Section2) – *Cluster* 



Source: Prepared by the author

Knowing that the composer did not use tonalism and dodecaphonism, the idea arose to arrange in sequential order the notes of the gestures (timbral elements) of Sections 1 and 2, resulting in the discovery of chromatic collections. We conclude that, in this work, the cluster and, consequently, the chromatic collections represent the central axis of Villani-Côrtes' grammatical thought.

A fact that deserves to be emphasized is that the timbral elements originate from the chromatic and athematic collections. Thus, the analysis of the interval relations, as an aid in the sound elaboration and in the practice of memorization, becomes essential for the interpreter since "reading with reflection allows the student, at the same time, a better view of the form of the composition of the piece studied" (LEIMER; GIESEKING, 1950, p. 15, our translation).

The discovery of the chromatic collections allowed us to understand the need for the pedalization and ratified the cluster as the flagship of the harmonic structure, i.e., the use of the pedal, adding all the notes of the chromatic collections, provided a similar sound result to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> *Cluster* – group of notes that are sounded together by the hands or forearm.

RIAEE – Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação, Araraquara, v. 18, n. 00, e023030, 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v18i00.17771

cluster. The clarity of this resource enhanced selective listening and contributed to the control of resonances, essential components for the interpretation of this piece.

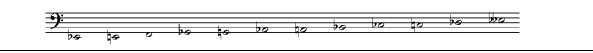
Observe the sequence of the chromatic collections through Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Figure 2 – *Timbre n.1* - chromatic collection stemming from the Section's first letterhead 1 - c.1-4



Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 3 – *Timbre n.1* - chromatic collection arising from the 2nd timbre element of Section1 – c.6-12



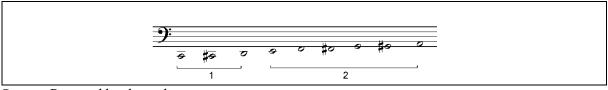
Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 4 – *Timbre n.1* - chromatic collection arising from the 3rd timbre element of Section1 -c.14-18



Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 5 – *Timbre n.1* - chromatic collection arising from Section 2, fragmented in two parts -c.25-42



Source: Prepared by the author

Ratifying the cluster and the chromatic collections as the central axis in the creation process of this work, we observe that the ending notes of the three timbral elements of Section 1 are derived from the chromatic structure that originated the initial cluster. See Figure 6 and Figure 7.

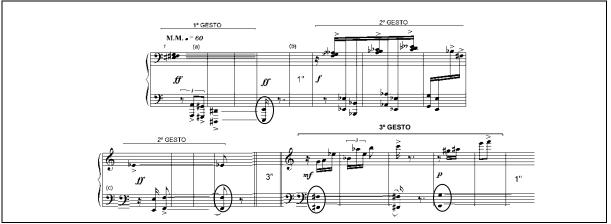
Timbre n.1 by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Analysis as a teaching tool for the performer

Figure 6 – *Timbre n.1* – chromatic structure – c.1-19



Source: Prepared by the author

**Figure 7** – VILLANI-CÔRTES, Edmundo - *Timbre n.1* - presentation of the three gestures and the notes to which they are converging (initial cluster) - c.1-19



Source: Prepared by the author

The understanding of harmony offered light and, consequently, propitiated the conscious use of interpretation tools to validate Villani-Côrtes' reasoning, since the cluster, in a large part of the piece, is implicitly constructed. The audition changes according to the clarity of meanings. Here occurs confirmation of how analytical work serves as a teaching foundation for the interpreter. "Good understanding is born of good intelligence; and intelligence, of reason, derived in turn from good rules, born of experience, which is the mother of all Sciences and all Arts" (DA VINCI, 1632, apud KAPLAN, 1966, p. 5, our translation).

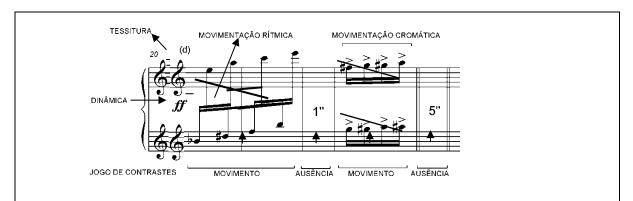
In the sequence, we will analyze the rhythmic construction of the piece, delimiting the tempo and, consequently, the movement of the piece. An important requirement in the interpretative issue with abrupt and intentional changes based on the composer's information: the piece was built under the pretext of being a soundtrack for a horror movie. This information will be developed in the next item and will bring reflections on the fragility of the musical text.

#### **Progress/Movement**

There is a clear division of tempo between Sections 1 and 2, provoking the interpreter to build two distinct planes. Section 1, Tempo I (quarter note = 60), is faster and has in the semiquaver the rhythmic-motor figure. Section 2 is slower for two specific reasons: because of the "minus" indication (c.25) and because it presents, in this section, the quarter note as the rhythm-motor figure. In consonance with Formativity Theory, ratifying the inseparability of receptivity and activity in human acting, these observations help the interpreter to elaborate the choices of tempo/movement based on the logical content. Later the decision, as a matter inherent in the production of the artistic result, gains maturity and, consequently, naturalness.

The bridge, which represents the means of connection between the sections, has as its main objective the generation of tension. It is the only moment in the work that the composer uses a symbol present in the bull: a cut in the brackets, indicating the fastest possible execution. Observe Figure 8.

# **Figure 8** – VILLANI-CÔRTES, Edmundo - *Timbre n.1* – Bridge: tension generator – c.20-24



Source: Prepared by the author

However, the most relevant information about the tempo/movement and rhythmic characteristics for its interpretation was not detected in the score, but, obtained through an interview of the author of this work with the composer: "the rhythmic execution should be interpreted by reading the emotional impact provoked by the objective that originated the work: a soundtrack for a horror movie" (VILLANI-CÔRTES, 2010, our translation)<sup>21</sup>. For this reason, the play is divided into small parts called, in this analysis, gestures or timbristic elements that represent the movement of the scene. Such scenes are separated by silences with the goal of

creating an expectation or suspense for the next event. It is important to stress that the duration of the silence should not be executed with absolute metronomic respect, that is, an objective information that produces a subjective action.

The soundtrack represents the objective information, however, the emotional impact is a subjective action, since it will depend on the intuitive planning of each interpreter and, at the same time, if he/she holds this information not inserted in the score. This problem raises some reflections:

- The score, an indispensable source of information for the performer, does not always provide all the necessary references for the practice of interpretation;

- The real difficulty, in interpretive practices, in reconciling art and science.

Silvio Zamboni (1998), when dealing with the problem of knowledge production in art and science, admits that, as faces of knowledge, they adjust and complement each other in the face of the desire to obtain deep understanding. There is no supplanting of one form to the detriment of the other. There are, rather, complementary forms of knowledge.

> The existence of the rational character in art reveals itself undeniably when one promotes the interposition and comparison between art and science as forms of human knowledge activities. [...] Research is premeditation and this, in turn, is rational. I also understand that one of the fundamental characteristics of research is the degree of awareness and full intellectual control of the author over the object of study and the work process, but with this I do not intend to deny the existence of intuitive and sensitive force contained in any work process, whether in art or science (ZAMBONI, 1998, p. 9-10, our translation).

Although interpretation in music is a work coined by incompleteness, of open nature, the relationship between interpretation and knowledge is being increasingly repositioned under the epistemological bias, causing major changes in the field of interpretive practices in terms of training and performance. In this scenario, analytical study is an important teaching tool in the development of a promising work related to musical interpretation, offering the performer the possibility of codifying the compositional material that will be translated through all the elements pertinent to the action of instrumental performance, balancing objective and subjective actions of human perception.

Beyond what the score reveals, as well as what is obtained through the composer himself, in his statements about the work, considering the insights that come from his own intuition each time he plays, the task of interpreting *Timbre n.1* follows a multiple direction of interpretative procedures that are not exhaustive. This multiplicity characterizes, moreover, the

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great quality of Villani-Côrtes' music with which one can establish increasingly creative levels of interpretation and performance.

It is true that playing the piano or any other instrument will never be a science, nor do we claim that it is, but we do not see important enough reasons to invalidate our claim that instrumental playing and teaching is based on scientific premises (KAPLAN, 1987, p. 13, our translation).

With this purpose, we move on to the last item that represents the relationship of the instrumentalist with his instrument: sonority (dynamics, timbre and resonance).

## **Dynamics, Timbre and Resonance**

We begin this journey by pointing out that, according to the composer himself, all his musical production is the result of a lived experience. The title of the piece is *Timbre n.1.* and represents a response to the request made in the composer H.J. Koellreutter's class: to treat the piano as a timbre instrument and not as a melodic-harmonic one.

The composer uses and abuses of the resources of sound contrasts (FF to ppp), as well as uses all the geographical space of the piano through the treble, middle and bass regions (tessituras) together with a range of articulations (legato, staccato and resonance), creating a diversity of timbral relationships.

It demands from the interpreter technical mastery, differentiated hearing, and cognitive planning that will feed back into the entire creative process.

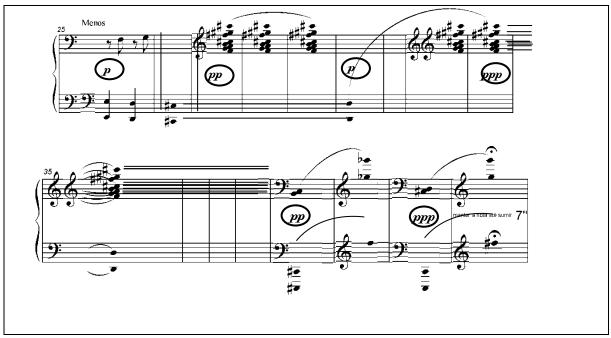
We observe, through an analytical view, that Villani-Côrtes builds a great contrast of sound ambiance between the sections. The sound body of Section 1 is indicated by the dynamics ff, while that of Section 2, at bar 25, is p. The resonance is also a point that differs both sections: Section 1 is structured with the construction of three gestures with sound interruption (suspense), while in Section 2 there is no sound interruption. However, there is one element that unifies the two sessions: the de-intensification of dynamics. Look at Graph1 and Figure 9.

#### **Graph 1** – *Timbre n.1* – Section 1: construction of the three gestures and the deintensification of the dynamics – c.1-19

c.1	c.6	c.14	c.17-19	
(1st gesture)	(2nd gesture)	(3rd go	esture)	
ſſ	f	mf	р	

Source: Prepared by the author

**Figure 9** – VILLANI-CÔRTES, Edmundo - *Timbre n.1* – Section 2: Resonance and deintensification of dynamics c.25-42



Source: Prepared by the author

The bridge, bars 20-24, generates tension and intensifies the dynamics for the ff. This occurs suddenly, causing a great sonic impact, preparing for Section 2. Another timbral effect is in the change of tessitura: a more acute region of the instrument.

Considering that the musical text is developed by creating tension and relaxation, regardless of the historical period, having clarity on how the composer built the relationship

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between these two contrasting elements helps the interpreter in directing and building the sonic potential of the piece. Take a look at Figure 10.

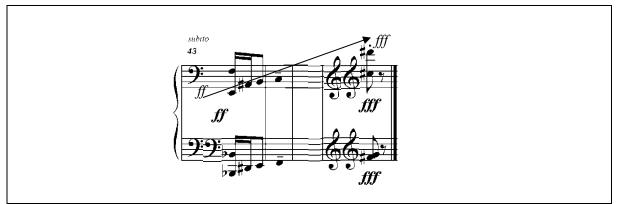


**Figure 10** – VILLANI-CÔRTES, Edmundo - *Timbre n.1* – Bridge: tension generator – c.20-24

Source: Prepared by the author

The Coda resumes the initial atmosphere of the piece. After going through Section 2, with a rarefied sonority, it suddenly goes from ff to fff, emphasizing the generation of tension with the intensification of dynamics, building a sonorous proportionality in the construction of the piece regarding the generation and dilution of tension. Observe Figure 11.

**Figure 11** – VILLANI-CÔRTES, Edmundo - *Timbre n.1* – Coda: intensification of dynamics – c.43-46



Source: Prepared by the author

Chart 2 shows the sense of sound proportionality created by Villani-Côrtes in *Timbre n.1* and ratifies the information about the elaboration of the piece's potential.

Section 1	Tension Dilution
Bridge	Tension Generator
Section 2	Tension Dilution
Coda	Tension Generator

Chart 2 – Sound proportionality of the work as a function of dilution and voltage generation

Source: Prepared by the author

The arsenal of findings, organized by the analytical work, emphasizing Form, Harmony, Andamento/Movement, as well as Dynamics, Timbre and Resonance, enhances the teaching action for the interpreter, materialized by the acquisition of knowledge.

Analytical reflection emphasizes "acquisition" (KAPLAN, 1987, p. 44), the contact with information, as one of the important stages of learning, generating permanent change in the individual through the exercise of observation. The associative processes, generated by the analytical procedure, facilitate attention as one of the most important states of a mind that must always remain ready and available for new reaches. A fact becomes more fixed in our consciousness the greater our availability for the exercise of scrutiny, with attention, which contributes a lot so that the results are not only conditioned to the field of intuition.

Musical performance presupposes, on the part of the performer, the application of cognitive standards that go beyond an inconsequential act. It brings up the very meaning of the Latin verto facere (to create, to choose, to estimate, to be convenient), demanding from the interpreter pre-evaluated choices that will subsidize and legitimize his exposition (LIMA, 2006, p. 11, our translation).

Within the findings about the meaning of the term analysis, we can say:

- - It is the exercise of translation;
- - It is music continued through other means;
- - It is the search for principles that codify and amplify the perceptive potential of the interpreter, composer and listener;
- - It is a set of values, in art, suggested by the analyst's objective;
- - It is the direct meaning of the answer to the question: how does this work?
- - It is a branch of musicology that seeks to understand and explain the structure of a musical work.

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There are countless questions that permeate the area of interpretive practices. Is it possible to build or find a common denominator that helps the countless demands that this action requires?

Art and art science, quantitative research and qualitative research, tradition and historical performance, historicity and contemporaneity are scientific concerns that occupy a good part of today's music researchers and do not find a uniform solution in positivist-based research. Perhaps transdisciplinary epistemological criteria could lead the performance to discuss its contradictions with more propriety? Under this view, interpretative uniformity and diversity, interpretative fidelity and freedom, objectivity and subjectivity could perhaps find a common denominator (LIMA, 2006, p. 21, our translation).

#### **Final remarks**

The historical trajectory of the figure of the instrumental interpreter presents a real subtraction derived from two extremist positions: he is either an enlightened being, talented and endowed with divine forces; or he is an inactive musician, trained and subservient to the fidelity of the musical text.

The result of "All or Nothing" marks an interpreter with no face, no personality, and no recognition of his training, position, and activity.

However, the field of interpretive practices, as the expression itself clarifies, demands from the instrumentalist practice (technique) and knowledge (interpretation). It is in this context that the investigation of this work outlines its main objective: to place the interpreter in the active position of his interpretive choices based on reflection and association of elements directed towards performance, using the analytical gaze as a teaching tool.

In this qualitative research, the breadth of the word "analysis" offers the reader a diversity of reflections that encompass the following items: the importance of acquiring knowledge, strengthening the action of musical interpretation within a continuous process of discovery; Edmundo Villani-Côrtes' autobiography and the profound transformations in the training scenario; contextualizes the area of interpretive practices in the exercise of science and, finally, presents the analysis of *Timbre n.1* as a teaching tool for the interpreter, enhancing his active participation in technical-interpretative choices based on teaching, education, and knowledge.

The clarification, built by the action of the research, transforms the vision of the interpreter musician potentiating a conscious choice legitimated by reflective action, promoting

the real meaning of the word "education" and, consequently, experiencing the freedom and creativity that the fruit of learning allows.

However, the resistance for research in the area of interpretive practices is an undeniable reality: it was the last musical area to enter the research scenario; there is a conservative view of its formative process; academia does not recognize the practice as a product of reflection, not to mention the countless questions that encompass the concepts of uniformity and diversity in interpretation, fidelity and freedom, objectivity and subjectivity, reason and intuition, among others.

As a performing musician, I recognize the real difference between actions directed towards the practice of instrumental performance and research on the practice of instrumental performance. Both go through processes of deep awareness and reflection, but with absolutely different tools. The sum of the two activities, which, despite having common objectives, are different in countless procedures, increases the perceptive and educational scope of the performing musician and places the area of interpretive practices in the scenario of scientific research. It reconciles practical and theoretical purposes, does not subtract creativity and technique, as well as strengthening the area. It is in this scenario that the final result of this work is to potentiate the exercise of science and stimulate other interpreters to contribute with their important reflections, discussing, observing and outlining considerations with greater appropriation even in the face of the difficulty in reconciling the countless procedures of interpretive practices. An area is built on the authority of education and knowledge, and this becomes possible through the habit of the practice of science, fed back by the continuous process of questioning.

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