

THE FORMS OF SILENCE IN MUSIC: RECOVER ITS VALUE

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We call "silence" situations those that have very different meanings and effects. It is therefore difficult to try to trace an expository order in a subject that appears to be so synergistic, broad and with a thousand identities. Yet I try, trying to reflect on the current fields of action as well as potential frontiers with enthusiasm and open-mindedness.

We know the silence-assent in the halls of the law, the silence-concentration of every respite before a storm, the meditative or contemplative silence, typical of those activities that want to join body and mind, the religious silence, an obligatory stage of all cult places, the silence-strike or complaint that challenges a system, the silence-punitive in interpersonal relationships that are now running out of time and then the silence-communication, the silence-symbol, the silence-music, the silence-listening , the silence.. silence.

"Everything has already been said, but since no one listens, we always have to start again." This article was born from this very powerful aphorism by André Gide. In fact, some silences do not seem to resist the challenges of the present.

Let's take for example new musical productions, those who are easy to listen to the radio; approximately three minutes of song when possible, with very typical characteristics: vocal part present from the beginning to the end almost as if to cover the musical arrangement, filters that process the sounds, zero pauses or suspensions, few evolutions or dynamic

variations. Same thing on the mass media responsible for disseminating current music: anticipatory jingles, invasive advertising, very high volumes, no moment of silent waiting, pre-recorded noise of thunderous applause, increasingly pressing prosody of the presenter's voices, without time modulation and with pauses of non-existent rhythm in speech. Chaos!

And what about music subject time ? It is increasingly an hour of words, representations, theories that marginalize ear and listening. So, what difference will it make compared to lessons in other subjects?

In a reality in which even the minute of silence dedicated to the sacredness of mourning is replaced with a minute of great and loud noises simulated by pots and musical instruments, every story loses his depth and even death catches its profound meaning.

If we then delve into the world of communication, listening "shout for help". Because we listen to respond and not to truly understand. And while the sender speaks, the recipient dominates him with his words, the ears are busy and the silence, instead of acting as a bridge in this exchange, is absent.

It seems that we can no longer experience opportunities for deep interactions or breaths, pauses, peace, idleness. We are bombarded with instructions and advice, bombed with information, abandoned purposely to confusion and non-reactive. It's as we are scared of free choice, and so lights are turned on where shadows would be needed. Silence is a weapon that brings freedom, individual personality and critical analysis.

But if silence has lost its place it is because the word has stolen it from it, in turn losing its significance at the moment of its momentum. The world of words is built on the world of silence like that of sound, therefore there would be no word if there was no silence. The transparent, suspended nature of silence in turn also makes the word transparent and suspended, sometimes in marriage, other times in

conscious rupture.

For the word, silence is nature, rest, primitiveness. In silence, the word is strengthened, it purifies itself of impiety to which it gave rise. In silence, language holds its breath and purifies itself. Even when it is always the same, the word always manages to appear new as soon as it emerges from the silence. Together with the spirit it can give emotions to the word. Perfection is achieved when the originality of natural silence and that of the spirit meet in the same person and unite. This gives words their security, their trust and even their sublimity. Like a sleepwalker, the word retraces the movements that preceded it.

"When you speak, the sound flows from your mouth like a wave overflowing from an overfilled basin. It imbues your body and spreads there. Every syllabic wave pours and spreads over you. Your body can feel its diffusion over its entire surface thanks to the sensitivity of the skin whose control mechanism works like a keyboard sensitive to acoustic pressure." Ah if only Tomatis were still there!

If Tomatis were still there, our teaching practices would also include a lesser presence of verbal language in favour of gestures and active listening. After all, the mission of our role as teachers is to facilitate the process of understanding, personalizing the tools in order to edify awareness of criteria of beauty and ease, monitoring the entire circuit. Here silence would become a true act of love because teaching means putting oneself aside.

IN THE EXHIBITION

There are a lot of guides and rituals to improve the body-mind relationship to support a conscious performance. Being projected into the present, feeling it, relaxing your breathing, relaxing tensions, spreading vibrations and focusing on your senses are part of this preparative journey to the

performance. Regardless of different beliefs and directings, I believe that each of us can seek and therefore find a unique moment before the performance to connect with ourselves, trying to focus the energy necessary to best enjoy that extraordinary moment that is the stage . How many times do we perceive dissatisfaction in our students immediately after the performance? And how many others are unable to witness a happy agreement between enjoyment and technique? These two conditions, so wide and delicate, could find harmony and response in silence as a total detachment from the rest of reality as well as concentration on oneself in the most practical sense of the term, that is, placing oneself at the center.

IN THE INTERPRETATION

Singing is a communicative act, telling a message is its purpose. From this starting point, silence can become style if you choose "less is more" instead of aesthetic excess, when you want to underline one word of the text rather than another, when the musical arrangement disappears for a moment or the curtain comes down. Instead of increasing notes and volumes, we add silence. Learning to step aside, I know, is very difficult, as is simplifying, removing instead of adding. Let's help each other. Even silence could have a space and a sign on our crumpled lyrics as on our scores. If the effect is the surrogate of art, breathing is an opportunity for truth and identity. I dream of a world in which virtuosity gives way to the power of authenticity.

RETURNING TO VOICE TEACHING

Silence is also a vocal hygiene subject, in maintaining or recovering muscle tone or simply to relax the body; silence means re-establishing the sense of hearing as primary when we talk about the body that plays and the body that vibrates, listening to oneself aspires to its maximum expansion without the word; silence is an active part of vocal

preparing also in the warm-up, especially in phono-resonant proprioception. So that, in a perspective in which the gesture accompanies the word and body-sound are a single inseparable entity, silence becomes the beginning from which everything is originates.

IS THE CREATIVE ACT A SILENT ACT?

We could talk about the creative moment for years... behind the conception of a new artistic production nests confusion and knotted doubts. It's a question of inspiration and packaging. The creative act is often compared to the maternal birth: the moment of conception, the decision and the long and courageous phases of waiting with its control steps and then the unpredictability of "giving birth". You might say that "some things are learned from bother". This sentence, a little crude but realistic, could authentically describe the obligatory process to complete each type of birth, which in today's uncertainty could be any "new consciousness". A common denominator for the study of technique, for the creative act, as for vocal identity. Behind every choice of artistic direction there is silence, next to every proof confirmation of a rhyming lyric there is silence, inside every state of creative immersion there is silence, almost as if wanting to divide ordinary life from uniqueness of art. As if having to separate chaos from order. Or almost to connect the stage with the full essence of real life. Next to every word there is an empty space that is silence, to make a sound special there is the lowest volume to support and enjoy it and emotion feeds on silence to leave a mark. Let's recover it, consider it by always giving new meanings, let's make space for it, let's not occupy it. Now its time has come... here it is.