

Title:

Musical gestures and topics in Jorge Peixinho's guitar music: Analysis and performance.

Abstract:

The present communication proposal is inserted in the scope of the Investigation Project "Jorge Peixinho and the guitar". Jorge Peixinho (1940-1995) was a Portuguese composer who played a pivotal role during the second half of the twentieth century, being at the forefront of the portuguese avant-garde musical movement. Having studied with composers such as Luigi Nono, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez, Jorge Peixinho learned and was responsible for the introduction in Portugal, of the most recent and vanguardian techniques and aesthetics at the time.

Over a period of 24 years (1971 to 1994), Peixinho composed 21 guitar pieces (some with several versions). Peixinho's only solo guitar piece is L'Oiseau-Lyre. The remainder of his guitar works were composed for diverse instrumental formations that include the classical guitar (chamber music and orchestral music). Guitar pieces represent roughly 15% of his known compositions.

The project consists on the framework of Peixinho's works with guitar, the identification of the specificities of the composer's writing for the guitar and the exploration of technical and musical implications in performance.

This communication stems from the investigative problem that underlines the following question: How to interpret Peixinho's guitar works? Peixinho's music is often characterized by the sequence and/or overlap of gestures. Then, the search for a meaning for each gesture (semantics) as well as an understanding of the way the gestures are organized and relate to each other (syntactics) seem to be relevant to the construction of an interpretation of Peixinho's work.

The aim is to create interpretation proposals grounded on the identification and analysis of gestures in Peixinho's guitar works. By utilizing constructs and tools from Musical Semiotics and Topic Theory to guide the analysis, namely the concept of musical gesture as proposed by Hatten (2004), there were found and analysed reoccurring gestures and topics from Peixinho's guitar works original manuscripts. Through this analysis, a taxonomy of gestures and topics is created, under which a consultation could interest all performers that want to have an understanding of Jorge Peixinho's lifework, as a tool of reference, contextualization and/or fertilization of the performance.

The communication will include a reproduction of recordings (video) of interpretative proposals on the guitar.

Key-words:

Jorge Peixinho; Guitar; Musical Semiotics; Topic Theory; Musical Gesture.