

Abstract

Stage management and the didactical art in the XXI century

The art of the 21st century is currently facing a challenging period. It is up to us, those who have been trained and matured in the higher academic environment, to look after the values of history and to observe the dialogue established between the accelerated changes imposed by the present society and the insight with which we have learned to approach the academic research and therefore the high quality performance.

To an artist who has reached his full professional development, the research work achieved in 26 years of performing and 22 years of teaching experience constitutes a natural approach to a development showcased by the outcomes of an intense and sustained activity.

Moreover, the research into the extensive theoretical fields made available by the scientific literature, which an artist resorts both to perfecting the musical interpretation and in order to increase the solidity of the educational process, transforms this pioneering initiative into a solid argument for the new contemporary sciences available to students, by encompassing, besides the historically proven values, the modern techniques of today.

The present thesis aims to draw attention to the of contemporary vocal pedagogy, which refuses to turn to traditions and is subject to a system of education specific for the 21st digitized era in which the scientific information is changing its configuration and requires a different type of approach. The author emphasizes that the changes of approaching the vocal phenomenon from the interpretation and formative point of view require dissociation from the artificial refinements of the pedagogy of the 21st century and a new approach towards tradition from the perspective of the information made available by the digital age.

The first part of the paper advances a new direction in the current vocal training approach, highlighting the correspondences between tradition and innovation, and emphasizing the importance of preserving some work methods produced by the major singing schools, which must constitute for the young singers valuable reference points for their professional training. Thus, the rationale arguing for a modern methodology in mastering the art of singing refers to such major landmarks in the history of singing as the birth of the *bel canto* style, the period of

verismo, the modern singing techniques acquired through the Western tradition, and so on.

The notion of physical engagement in professional singing is a scant element today, as the development of the contemporary mindset towards an over-protection of the performing student fosters apprehensive attitudes towards all processes that by definition imply a muscular effort. The author chronicles the evolution of the vocal technique up to the outstanding performances achieved by the middle of the 20th century. The vocal coaching methods developed during antiquity attempted to approach the usage of the phonatory apparatus in a scientific manner and they constituted, together with the rational dimension, a fundamental element in the art of oratory in ancient Greece. This aspect of the physiological training running parallel to the musical component has been undertaken and developed by the vocal professionals of the subsequent periods in order to enhance performance in large spaces. Nowadays this component in the training and physiological formation of the singer is neglected and sometimes it is even replaced by electronic amplifiers.

The spawning and widespread expansion of the record industry has caused a decrease in the capacity to appreciate values and a misappropriation of the public's taste, which has gradually altered the aesthetic requirements that distinguish and define each individual voice. The exceptional quality that the audio/ video technology has attained in sound recording and reproduction can prompt an artificial sense of perfection by delivering records that create a false idea of a high quality performance, which the listener will deem as a standard that they will actually never encounter in the performance hall.

In order to meet these new standards, singers have accepted the change of priorities in their professional training, ignoring the athletic aspect of the phenomenon of powerful singing on major opera stages. Voices that feature athletic qualities are no longer emerging on a regular basis from singing schools, and as their occurrence is a matter of chance they are now regarded as exceptions to the rule in the 21st century. The author considers that a reconsideration of the professional vocal phenomenon approach to solving this problem does not stem from reinventing vocal pedagogy but from a rational approach of the traditions of the great old schools of singing and from enhancing the quality of the training process with the help of the technologies provided by the science of the 21st century.

The second part of the thesis substantiates that the stages in the formation of a valuable teacher must be complemented by a performing activity in all stylistic areas suitable for the artist's voice. The examples provided, beginning with the approach of chamber music, vocal-symphonic and opera repertoires, and continuing with aspects underlying the actual performances on stage (aspects pertaining to such activities as stage direction, management, radio and television features, recordings) enrich the overall account with on point reasoning which young artists can use as a model for managing their own artistic careers.

The author is undoubtedly one of the most prolific Romanian artists and voice teachers in the field. His artistic and teaching activity is presented as a complex element for his development as a professional artist and as a teacher. The data provided in the abstract and the tables rendered create a comprehensive picture of the complexity of his work. The author mentions high profile collaborators such as Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Vladimir Jurowski.

The paper ends by launching a topic of reflection on the idea of holistic pedagogy from the perspective of a methodical modernization based on interdisciplinary in order to ensure the shifting from the primary empirical methodologies to the up-to-date scientifically based ones.