

BEYOND THE VOICE....

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Foreword

In a world aiming to reach the holistic understanding of its basic phenomena through a multidisciplinary approach, Culture expresses itself through projects. "Beyond the Voice" seeks to reveal some possible multidisciplinary explanations to the outstanding popularity reached by few voices that seems to run out of time. Herein studies are focused on revealing and rejuvenating the tremendous heritage of these unique voices, partly preserved on audio/video archives, beginning with those of Amália Rodrigues and Maria Tanase. Independent preliminary lab studies, conducted in Europe, USA and Japan, have confirmed the premises of the theoretical model described in the project. Audio and video materials used on the lab experiments were selected from private archives (France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Portugal, Germany, Israel, Belgium, Brazil, Argentina, Japan, USA and Italy) or from open sources. The analytical models briefly described on "Beyond the Voice" project will be extended through an active collaboration with cultural institutions and media partners that did not entirely explored their archives on the study's issues (Portuguese TV, Romanian Television, Russian Television, French Television, etc.) and by promoting the project's outcomes through updated technological means (virtual exhibition/ conference, a website to express and explain intercultural relations in a still untapped manner, workshops, etc.).

CULTURAL BASIS

Having the support of relevant Portuguese cultural institutions this project seeks to go beyond the obvious intercultural exchanges occurred for more than five centuries of supremacy through geographical discoveries, looking briefly for fundamental folk themes, possibly congruent ones,



Folk dance –Portugal



Folk theme-Romania (Maria Tanase)



Folk dance -Portugal

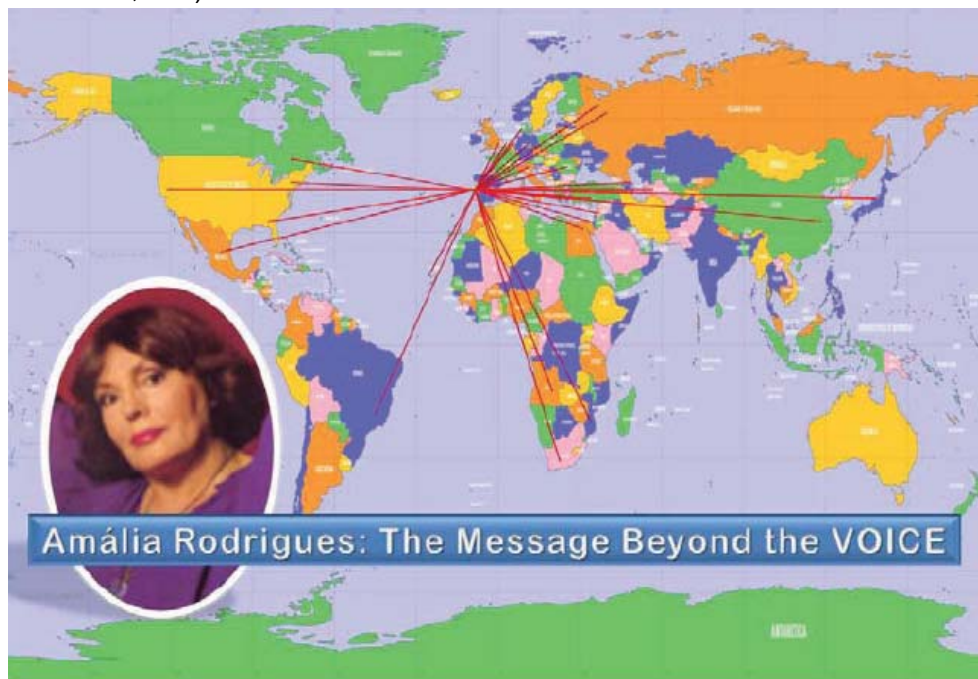


Reel (folk) dance from Oas, Romania

able to merge on a common archetypal matrix (revealing the Portuguese folk themes over the geographical area of the colonies or trade routes but also positioning the Portuguese folklore into the European context). It thus creates the premises for potential openings to a common basic message, such as merging roots of European area (e.g. similar approach on basic folklore themes pre-Christian, likely of Celtic origin -with examples from Romanian, Portuguese and Irish folklore: dances, sung themes, Doina ,etc) or by a message developed on common harmonics (e.g. on Portuguese basis: Malhão, Malhão in Portugal, Germany, Goa, Japan, USA).

SOCIO-POLITICAL FEATURES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

This part of the project will include a summary of the social and cultural policies of the 20th century in order to create an adequate picture on the range of the means of expression, and on the specific ranking procedures of the artistic values of that time. Ranking the voice of Amália Rodrigues, on the early 60's Larrouse edition, among the first five voices of the twentieth century next Edith Piaf, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Maria Callas, and including references about this artist and "Fado" in all world's encyclopedias since then, naturally leads to the question: "What makes specially the artistic approach of Amália Rodrigues?" Based on relevant parts of the published biography of Amália Rodrigues the studies aim to include the artist's creation on the socio-cultural trends of the époque but also to place it next other benchmarking voices that rise on the same time in almost similar social conditions across Europe and USA (e.g. Edith Piaf, Maria Tanase, Maria Callas, Frank Sinatra, etc.)



"Phenomenon Amalia Rodrigues" → expansion 1950-1990

Even if for the Lusophone area the unprecedented popularity of Amália Rodrigues can be partially explained through the linguistic and cultural accessibility of the message, for "Amália Rodrigues phenomenon" which included one by one France, USA, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Japan, Russia and many other countries, the cultural and linguistic unity is no longer a proper explanation. There is a distinguished, unique Fado interpretative manner as well as there is a specific approach on the Portuguese, Spanish, Mexican and Italian folklore that have become over five decades of artistic career a distinctive mark of Amália Rodrigues, transforming her name into a real brand. What particularize them? What transforms a relative limited number of songs into an almost inexhaustible repertoire?



Malhão, Malhão - Portugal



Malhão, Malhão – Germany



Malhão, Malhão – Bailkal



Malhão, Malhão – Goa



Malhão, Malhão - USA



Malhão, Malhão ---Amália Rodrigues



Portugal- Amália Rodrigues



Portugal- Amália Rodrigues

The answer could lay on the different successive approaches on the same vocal themes, on a continuously creative manner. The same song registered on two performances sounds slightly different, on a tentative of harmonization with the audience.

Over the years, through her interviews, Amália Rodrigues explained in a simple and intuitive manner her relationship with the worldwide audience, repeatedly underlying on the key role of the communion with the public as a living vector of energy and not just as simple spectators.

A statistical investigation over her performances' repertoire throughout the years may explain the vivacity of this relationship in terms of a carefully balanced Folk & Fado equation. Her memorable performances from USA at Lincoln Center, New York in 1966 -with a full Philharmonic orchestra conducted by A. Kosterlitz -Milan Opera, Italy or Olympia, Paris have been invariably based on Portuguese folklore. Fado's promotion or the interpretation of other musical genres has been invariably preceded by an empathic link created through folklore.

SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

FOH001442_130

Coimbra (April in Portugal)

TRACK ARTIST: Amália Rodrigues
COUNTRY(S): France; Portugal
CULTURE GROUP(S): Portuguese
GENRE(S): World music
INSTRUMENT(S): Guitar; Vocals
DURATION: 2:33

Portugal's Great Amália Rodrigues Live at the Olympia Theatre in Paris

Amália Rodrigues FOLH001442

COUNTRY(S): France; Portugal
CULTURE GROUP(S): Portuguese
KEYWORD(S): World music
INSTRUMENT(S): Guitar; Vocals
YEAR OF RELEASE: 1956
RECORD LABEL: Simoes Records
SOURCE ARCHIVE: Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage
CREDIT: Artist Amália Rodrigues



Netherland



Brasil



Italy

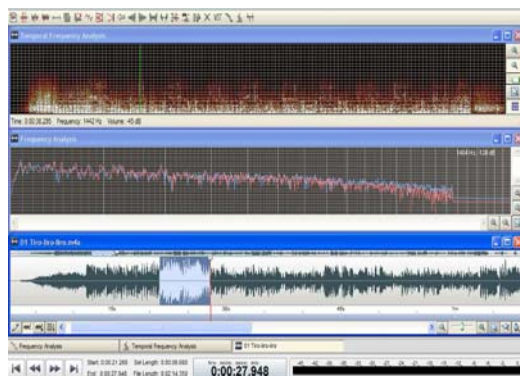


Japan

The project aims to identify through analytic means applied on the musical themes, the common folk tones or harmonics that can generate the benchmarking tonalities able to open the attendance to the sounds, regardless the language of lyrics. A complementary approach is to identify quantifiable differences between the interpretation of the same songs in Portuguese and their French, Italian, Spanish or English versions.

ENERGY OF THE VOICE

The last decades allowed significant progresses on spectral and biometric studies of the Voice, so now it can be shown by analytical means the uniqueness of each individual's "voice signature". Beyond this property the preliminary spectral analysis performed on the registered voices of Amália Rodrigues and Maria Tanase revealed the existence of some certain features. For example, on both cases there are notable differences between the measured values of the characteristic parameters of the same songs recorded in the studio or during live performances. Especially, for Amália Rodrigues the presence of an active audience (established dialogue through applauses /sings or shared language) or of a less reactive one leads to significant changes on her performing, these changes being quantifiable through the registered parameters of the voice.

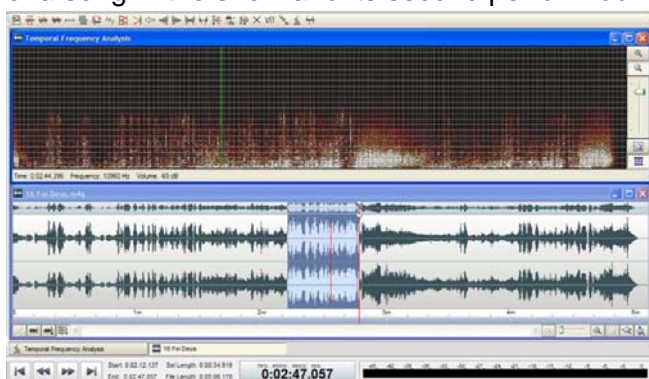


Live performance: frequencies, intensities, harmonics-Amália Rodrigues



Frequencies, intensities, harmonics-Amália Rodrigues

Some of the available recordings from private collections were digitized, analyzed and quantified for modeling with dedicated voice analysis software. Analysis of the preliminary data shows the existence of an energy exchange between the artist and the public over the performances. The intensity of this exchange can be determined (for the performances integrally recorded of Amália Rodrigues) through the rate of the frequency's increase on the audio signal of the same type of songs or more obvious through the increases on the frequency level between the first interpretation of a song in the show and its second perform during encores.



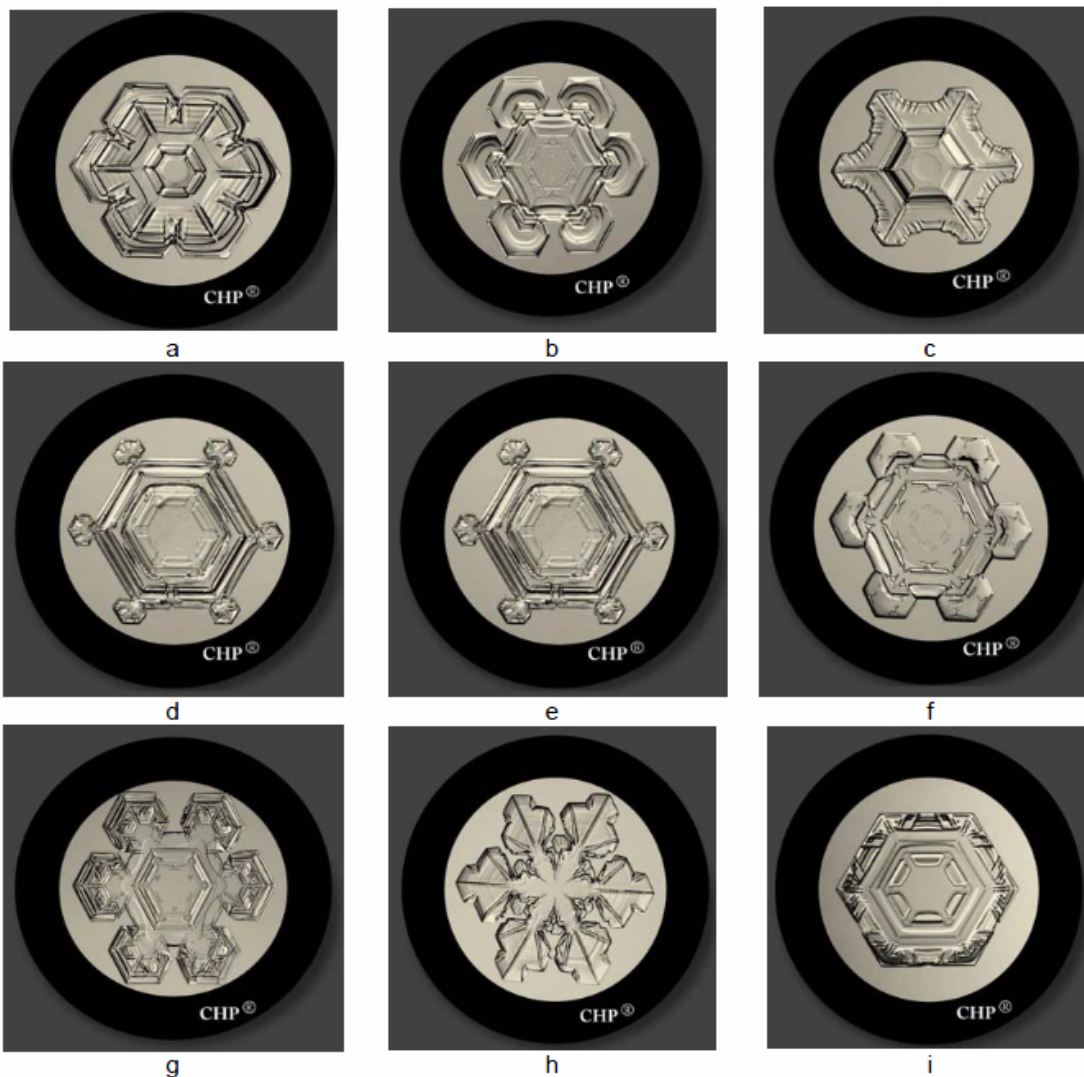
Song from the middle of the performance



Song at the end of the performance

The preliminary conducted experiments were focused also on a special type of Spectral Electron Microscopy and cryogenic analysis with the use of a support substance able to act as an interface for both for organic and inorganic environments. The interface is able to vibrate and its modes and their harmonics can be measured and analyzed by Optical Microscopy and Spectral Electronic Microscopy techniques. Experimental studies carried on independently on different research centers, using the same experimental protocol during double-blind experiment approaches, states the existence of some specific patterns of the analyzed material. Through this part of the project the microscopic image of the acoustic energy effects upon the interface substance is presented on a previously unexplored approach. The vibration characteristics were determined according to the experimental matrix. Thus, the study aims to determine the characteristic spectral images of each basic harmonic type from the folkloric area of interest of the project in order to identify some objective basis for the audience's affinity to certain acoustic forms (energy patterns).

Meanwhile, the microscopic images/spectra obtained on the activated interface for similar values of acoustic parameters, will be compared through the vibrations originated on sound tracks of Amália Rodrigues records from different periods of her artistic career, seeking to identify the parameters that determine the spatial arrangement on 3D models.



***Microscopic images of the interface substance response
under signal excitation from audio / video sources***

Also, quantifying the energy's rise as a function of the vibration frequencies modes and harmonics may provide a theoretical and experimental basis for the clinical observations previously carried out in Argentina, France, Netherlands and Israel. In some medical centers from these countries the patients have been offered musical recordings of Amália Rodrigues prior consultations, having noticeable effects.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on relevant multidisciplinary collaboration, using analytical tools and specific promoting techniques, according to the technological standards of nowadays, this project may reveal new ways to fruitfully use the tremendous potential of the 20th century voices archives stored worldwide. The core study case of this project, Amália Rodrigues, is a model that was selected based on the unlimited popularity of this artist throughout her career, in all social environments.

Her Voice established bridges between audiences of countries with different political orientations and religious faiths during some of the most tensed moments of the 20th century's history.

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