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Author(s): Ivan Moody

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Ivan Moody

Mensagens: Portuguese Music in the 20th Century

O mar salgado, quanto do teu sal
São lágrimas de Portugal!
(O salty sea, how much of your salt
is tears of Portugal!)

These lines of Fernando Pessoa (1888–1935), the great poet of Portuguese modernism, may seem at first sight to invoke the principal element of *fado*, Portugal's national music: the element represented by that famously untranslatable word *saudades*, implying longing, nostalgia, homesickness . . . However, they hide far deeper resonances. *Mensagem* (Message), the poetic sequence from which they come, is a profound exploration of Portugal's history, a modern counterpart to Camoens's great 16th-century epic *The Lusíads*. It is connected to the nationalist Integralismo Lusitano movement, and to Sebastianism.¹ Other poets, particularly Mário Sá-Carneiro (1890–1916), and plastic artists, notably Amadeo de Sousa Cardoso (1887–1918) and José de Almada Negreiros (1893–1970), similarly reflect the strength of these patriotic and mystical ideas in Portugal during the country's deepening social crisis in the early part of the century. But Pessoa, who famously split himself into several persons, each with their own name, style and poetic output, may also stand as a symbol of the different currents Portuguese composers have ridden in search of their national identity.

The composer Luis de Freitas Branco (1890–1955) took part in the Integralismo Lusitano movement from 1915 onwards. Already, in a newspaper interview given in 1911, he declared:

I have, believe me, the greatest interest in proving to my country that I am, fundamentally, in my art, Portuguese. Yesterday, as you heard, José Júlio Rodrigues, alluding to my musical ancestry, mentioned Mussorgsky and Debussy. It is true that the procedures of these two great musicians have inspired me very much – it could hardly be otherwise – in making me

part of my own time. But it is a fact that unconsciously, and as my friend has observed, there exists in my work a deep Mediterranean character which does not come from those two masters – it is in my blood.²

In this very consciously nationalistic attitude, Freitas Branco differed from such older composers as Oscar da Silva (1870–1958), Alfredo Keil (1850–1907) and Augusto Machado (1845–1924), whose music was very closely built on French and German models. A significant transitional figure was the pianist-composer and conductor José Vianna da Motta (1868–1948), an acclaimed pupil and editor of Liszt and later a friend of Busoni, who was director of the Lisbon conservatory 1918–38. He too began very much within the central German tradition, but moved towards something more Portuguese, especially through his interest in folklore, evident in such piano pieces as his sets of *Cenas portuguesas*. The most substantial testimony to this interest, however, is Vianna da Motta's symphony inspired by Camoens, *A Pátria* (The Fatherland), written in 1895.

Freitas Branco himself studied in Germany (with Humperdinck) and also with the Belgian Désiré Pâque; but he saw a new musical world open before him when he attended a performance of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1910. The influence of César Franck, evident in the music he had written up to that point, was henceforth joined by those of Debussy and Ravel. One of his finest works dates from that same year: *Paraisos artificiais* (Artificial paradises), a symphonic poem inspired by the opium-filled writings of Thomas de Quincey, which scandalized the Lisbon public

² *Novidades*, 17 March 1911:2, quoted in Rui Vieira Nery and Paulo Ferreira de Castro: *História da Música* (Lisbon, 1991), p.159 (author's translation). In this context, it may be worth pointing out that Portuguese music in the 20th century, even when seen as having a distinctly Mediterranean orientation, can in no sense be regarded as a 'sub-department' of Spanish music: there are parallels, but so there are with many other countries, and culturally Portugal has a quite distinct identity. It should perhaps also be said that the natural connexions between Portugal and Brazil are not, in general, manifested in reciprocal cultural influences. Though Pessoa's influence may be felt in the work of a number of Brazilian poets (and indeed, his importance was early appreciated in Brazil) one would look in vain in Portugal for followers of Villa-Lobos or Claudio Santoro.

¹ This was (and is) a patriotic and mystical movement related to the death of King Sebastian at the Battle of Alcácer-Kibir in Morocco in 1578, and the legend that he would return. The myth has had an influence throughout the history of Portuguese art, from the time of the Spanish occupation following the king's death to the present day (for example, the work of the painter Lima de Freitas).



Luis de Freitas Branco

at its 1913 première under Pedro Blanch. This work's veiled harmonic world is very different from Vianna da Motta, who remains essentially Germanic even at his most Portuguese.

The following year saw Freitas Branco consciously assuming a nationalist attitude. The first works to show this are the oratorio *As Tentações de S. Frei Gil* (1911) and a symphonic poem *Viriato* (1916; inspired by Viriathus, the Celtic leader of Lusitania's resistance to Roman conquest in the second century BC). Apart from two *Suites Alentejanas* (1919 and 1927) Freitas Branco – again unlike Vianna da Motta – had little to do with Portuguese folk music, and indeed was deeply suspicious of the propaganda uses to which it could be put.³ His nationalism was of a more literary kind, frequently inspired by poetry: the titles of the symphonic poems *Depois duma leitura de Quental*, *Depois duma leitura de Júlio Dinis*, and *Depois duma leitura de Guerra Junqueiro* are precisely analogous to Liszt's *Après une lecture de Dante*. This literary interest was counterbalanced by a continuing concern with clear-cut symphonic procedures. As the musicologist Paulo Ferreira de Castro has put it:

'Germanism' and 'Latinism', as well as the tension generated by these two attitudes of mind, would be . . . the polarizing nuclei of Freitas Branco's artistic creation.⁴

³ See the extract from the letter he wrote to Vianna da Motta quoted in Nery and Ferreira de Castro, *op. cit.*, pp.161-162.

⁴ Notes to recordings of the Sonata for cello and piano and 10 *Madrigais Camoneanos*, EMI-Valentim de Carvalho 7544962, 1991.

This tension is nowhere more evident than in the contrast between the Violin Concerto of 1916, with its backward glances to Beethoven and cyclic structure (features even more apparent in the four Franckian, if not D'Indy-esque symphonies, the first of which dates from 1924) and the shimmering textures of *Paraisos artificiais*, composed six years earlier – or the astonishing *Vathek* of 1913. This latter, a set of symphonic variations, based on the novel by William Beckford (who spent some of his most creative years in Portugal), is remarkable particularly for its third variation: a fugato for strings in 59 parts that foreshadows Ligetian 'micropolyphony'. It should be clear from the foregoing account that Freitas Branco falls into no convenient category, yet he is one of the most accomplished and influential Portuguese composers of the century.

The military revolt of 28 May 1926 brought about a dramatic change in the cultural life of Portugal. The dictatorship which came into being lasted almost half a century, until 25 April 1974; and the gates of cultural exchange with other countries, which had characterized the first decades of the century, were effectively closed. Some prominent figures left to seek stimulus elsewhere: particularly prominent was Maria Helen Vieira da Silva (1908-1992), who supported many Portuguese artists in Paris. Nevertheless there were a number of important cultural initiatives, notably the foundation in 1940 of the Verde Gaio ballet group, and in 1934 of the Emissora Nacional (National Radio), which had its own Symphony Orchestra. Particularly vital were the concert series run from 1927 at the Tivoli Theatre by Pedro de Freitas Branco (1896-1963; brother of the composer) and by the Spaniard Pedro Blanch (1883-1946) with the Orquestra Sinfónica Portuguesa at the Teatro da República. Blanch's series had been running since 1911: the development of the professional symphony orchestra in Portugal was in large part due to his work – there was no such organization when he first arrived in the country.⁵ Thus it was that between 1914 and 1916, for example, he gave the Portuguese premières of Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italiano* and Fifth Symphony, Liszt's Piano Concerto No.1 and *Mazeppa*, Saint-Saëns's Symphony No.3 and Piano Concerto No.5, Brahms's Second Symphony, excerpts from Wagner operas, and symphonies as venerable as Mozart's Fortieth, Beethoven's Second and Haydn's Thirteenth! He also gave the first performances of many Portuguese works, notably Luis de Freitas

⁵ See Maria Antonieta de Lima Cruz: *História da Música Portuguesa* (Lisbon, 1955), pp.252-253, and Isaura Pavia de Magalhães Lisboa: *Recordações* (Lisbon, 1995), *passim*.

Branco's *Paraísos Artificiais*, as already mentioned, and *Viriato* in 1917. Pedro de Freitas Branco also conducted a large number of premières of Portuguese composers with the Emissora Nacional. The work of the Orquestra Filarmónica de Lisboa under Ivo Cruz was also significant, though intermittent.

Almost alone among Portuguese composers of the time, Fernando Lopes-Graça (1906-1994) made an open stand against the regime; at one point he was even imprisoned for his political views. A pupil of both Freitas Branco and Vianna da Motta (whom he described as a 'Goethean artist') as well as the influential priest-teacher Tomás Borba, Lopes-Graça went to Paris in 1937 to study, at his own expense, with Charles Koechlin. His mature voice had already begun to appear as early as the *Variações sobre um tema popular português* of 1927; by the time he returned to Portugal in 1939, his work was characterized by percussive rhythmic writing, frequent use of polyrhythm, and a species of diatonic dissonance reminiscent of Bartók. Lopes-Graça's highly unsentimental orientation towards Portuguese popular music was also much in evidence. Amongst the most significant works of this hugely prolific (and inevitably uneven) composer are the *História trágico-marítima* (1942) for voice and orchestra on poems by Miguel Torga (1907-95), and the deeply impressive *Requiem pelas últimas do fascismo em Portugal*.⁶ The influences of Stravinsky, and in particular of Bartók, are often in evidence – for example in the *Quatro Bosquejos* for string orchestra (1965), whose sound-world recalls Bartók's *Divertimento* and *Music for*

Freitas Branco – and later, Joly Braga Santos – he was striving, in his own very personal manner, after a genuinely Latin modernism. There is an originality in Lopes-Graça's harmonic thinking and in his melodic procedures, fed by popular music, that finds some affinity with neo-realist movements in the other arts of Portugal: for example, the work of the painter Júlio Pomar (b.1926), as well as Torga's poetry.

Other composers of the time, such as Armando José Fernandes (1906-83) and Jorge Croner de Vasconcellos (1910-74) pursued a more conventional neoclassical path, albeit with great finesse. Both of them studied with Nadia Boulanger; they were called, together with Lopes-Graça and Pedro do Prado, the 'Grupo de Quatro', but they had nothing in common except friendship. More individual, and more uneven, is the work of Frederico de Freitas (1902-80). He wrote in almost every genre, and displayed great stylistic variety.⁷ His most famous works are probably *A dança da menina tonta* (1940) – a ballet for the Verde Gaio, influenced by popular music – and the pastiche *Suite Mediaeval* (1959). His best scores, on the other hand, include the *Quarteto Concertante* for 2 violins, 2 cellos and string orchestra (1945) and the *Flute Concerto* of 1954. The former work, exulting as it does in the physical sound of the solo group and the orchestra, is a modern recreation of the concerto grosso form, and makes an interesting comparison with Martinů's *String Quartet and Orchestra* of 1931. Example 1, a duet for the two cello soloists, perhaps illustrates the deep vein of nostalgia in de Freitas's highly melodic work:

Ex. 1) Freitas: *Quarteto Concertante*

The image displays a musical score for two violins. The first system consists of two staves, vcl. 1 and vcl. 2, in a 4/4 time signature. The music is marked 'mf molto espress.' and features several triplet markings. The second system continues the piece, marked 'f' and 'etc.', with further triplet markings. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and dynamic markings.

strings, percussion and celeste; Lopes-Graça even composed a cycle of seven piano suites with the overall title *In Memoriam Béla Bartók*. Yet like

⁶ For the most complete list of works, see *Fernando Lopes-Graça, 75 Aniversário*, 1981.

Outstanding among the composers of the next generation was Joly Braga Santos (1924-88). He was Luis de Freitas Branco's favourite pupil, and

⁷ See the bibliographical index in *Canto Gregoriano* no.94, Instituto Gregoriano de Lisboa, Jan/Mar 1980.

studied further in Italy with Virgilio Mortari, Giachino Pasqualini, Alceo Galliera and Hermann Scherchen, attending Scherchen's conducting course along with Luigi Nono and Bruno Maderna at the Venice Biennale of 1948, the year in which he wrote his orchestral *Elegia a Vianna da Motta*. Braga Santos's first works were much influenced by folk music and 16th-century polyphony. A modal harmonic language is evident in his first four symphonies (No.1 dates from 1947), three orchestral overtures, the Concerto in D and the radio opera *Viver ou Morrer*. Though some Portuguese critics tend to dismiss the obvious comparisons with Sibelius, Walton and Vaughan Williams – whose music was fairly frequently performed in Portugal during Braga Santos's formative years – it is no injustice to name such composers as his peers. The Third Symphony in particular calls Vaughan Williams to mind, and the changes which took place between Braga Santos's Third and Fifth Symphonies make a fascinating comparison with Vaughan Williams's progress from his Third to Sixth. Like the English composer, Braga Santos had a breadth of utterance which belied a simple 'nationalist' label. In any case his nationalism (like that of Lopes Graça) was tempered by the neoclassical inheritance of Freitas Branco, and his language and techniques continued to develop. Later works brought a move towards free chromaticism: the Viola Concerto (1960) and the orchestral *Divertimento* from the same year provide clear evidence of this shift. The Concerto is a richly melodic work, cyclical in structure, based on the motif shown in Ex.2.



Joly Braga Santos

Claudio Carneiro (1895-1963), whose reputation is now beginning to revive after a period of neglect, was the leading composer in Portugal's second city of Oporto. He was extremely prolific; though a generation older than Braga Santos – he studied in Paris with Widor and Dukas – he moved on from these initially French influences to dodecaphonic techniques in his *Khroma* (1954) for violin and piano.⁸ A number of other composers born in the 1920s and 30s took part with Braga Santos and Carneiro in the change from a predominantly neoclassical approach to one more aware of the radical modernism of the 1940s and 50s. These include Vitor Macedo Pinto (1917-64), Fernando Corrêa de Oliveira (b.1921), Maria de Lurdes Martins (b.1926), Filipe de Sousa (b.1927) and Filipe Pires (b.1934). Pires's

Ex. 2) Braga Santos: Viola Concerto





Jorge Peixinho in 1995 (photo: Eduardo Saraiva, courtesy of Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian)

with Boulez and Stockhausen in Basle and Nono in Venice: a classic trajectory for someone destined to be the prophet of the avant-garde in Portugal. Peixinho becomes the dominant figure in Portuguese contemporary music at this period, beginning with a succession of serially-constructed works such as the orchestral pieces *Pólitico 1960* and *Sobreposições* (both 1960), and *Sucessões Simétricas I* for piano (1961). Later he moved from strict serialism to an idiom incorporating elements of aleatoricism and improvisation – and in certain works of the 1970s a political element reminiscent of Nono. Various of Peixinho's works make somewhat surprising references to (rather than mere quotations from) other composers. For example *Concerto de Outono* for oboe and orchestra (1983) makes direct reference to Lutoslawski, Stravinsky and the Spanish composer Tomás Marco; *Leves véus velam* (1980) incorporates material from Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*; while *A Idade do Ouro* (1973) is suffused with quotations from a popular Spanish song, Beethoven's String Quartet op.127, Webern's *Geistliche Lieder* op.15, and fragments of *Parsifal*.

Quite as important as Peixinho's compositional activity⁹ was his work as a teacher and the foundation in 1970 of the Grupo de Música de Contemporânea de Lisboa, which has premiered an enormous number of works by Portuguese and foreign composers. In Oporto, the group Oficina

⁹ See list of works and various essays in homage to Peixinho in the Programme Book for the 20th Encontros Gulbenkian de Música Contemporânea, Lisbon 1996.

Musical, directed by Alvaro Salazar, has played a similar role; both ensembles regularly appear at the Gulbenkian Foundation's annual 'Encontros de Música Contemporânea'.

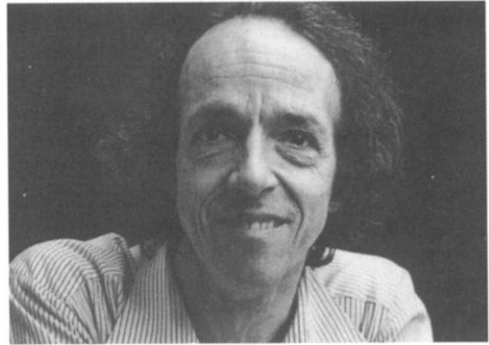
Emanuel Nunes (b.1941) has also had considerable influence as a teacher, though he has lived outside Portugal since 1964. He, too, studied with Boulez and Stockhausen, as well as with Pousseur. His approach to composition is rigorously intellectual, much in the manner of Boulez (whose *Penser la Musique Aujourd'hui* Nunes studied in depth) but in sound closer to the Stockhausen of *Momento* (according to Nunes, the composer's own analysis of this work in 1965-7 was of the greatest significance for his own future work). Nunes, who has taught in Freiburg and is currently professor of composition at the CNSM of Paris, has a far more prominent international profile than that of any other living Portuguese composer, and has worked on several projects at IRCAM. Among recent major works, *Quodlibet* for six percussion, 28 instruments and orchestra, premiered in Lisbon in 1991 – a spatial composition in which the players constantly change position within the auditorium, and which features quotations or transformational 'mementos' of many of his earlier pieces – has been particularly successful, and was performed at last year's Edinburgh International Festival. (This year Edinburgh hosted the UK premiere of *Ruf* for orchestra and tape, first heard in Royan in 1977.) Owing to a number of commercial recordings, including a Nunes series currently underway on

Auvidis Montaigne, several of his works have become particularly well-known, such as *Degrés* (1965) for string trio and *Litanies du feu et de la mer* for piano (1969-71).

Nunes has regularly returned to his native country to give composition courses. Thus it is that many younger composers – such as João Pedro Oliveira, Virgílio Melo and Sérgio Azevedo – have studied with him. The twin influence of Peixinho and Nunes was an inevitable and important consequence of the reaction to the somewhat stifling neoclassicism prevalent before the Darmstadt years; but it is only relatively recently that it has been possible for composers to place this development in historical perspective, to look further afield and to become open to other influences.

Cândido Lima (b.1939) stands outside the Boulez-Stockhausen axis; his music has more to do with Xenakis. He has been much concerned with the relation of music to other disciplines (philosophy and anthropology) and has worked with other artists to create multi-media works: *Bleu-Rouge (Regards)* (1992), for example, was a collaboration with the sculptor Luisa Gonçalves and the painter Carlos Reis. Another, even more independent figure of the same generation was Constança Capdeville (1937-1992). She was born in Barcelona, but lived in Portugal from an early

Clotilde Rosa (photo: Eduardo Saraiva, courtesy of Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian)



Emmanuel Nunes (photo: Guy Vivien)

age. Her interest in music theatre led her to an exploration of sound which had little to do with Darmstadt and which often had a direct and open relationship to the music of the past. *Libera me* of 1977 is an impressive example of this tendency. It employs extremes of register and vocal and instrumental timbres of great delicacy (the score calls, for example, for the use of crystal glass and an ocarina). These are used in an apparently abstract way, but the music includes quotations and is a gradual invention of a new universe of sound. It ends with a series of Amens: from Monteverdi's *Vespers*, Victoria's *Missa pro defunctis*, Machaut's *Messe de Notre Dame*, Mozart's and Fauré's *Requiems*, etc. This is an extraordinarily original work, quite unlike anything else written in Portugal at this time.¹⁰ One of Capdeville's later works, for instrumental ensemble, *Di Lontan Fa Specchio Il Mare – Joly Braga Santos in Memoriam* (1989), takes the intimate sound-world of *Libera me* even further, in a beautifully delicate elegy.

Of Clotilde Rosa (b.1930), the musicologist Manuel Pedro Ferreira has written: 'Hers was one of the first voices in Portugal, at the beginning of the 1980s, to evidence the overthrow of the avant-garde aesthetic which had come to dominate contemporary thinking'.¹¹ She came to composition late, having concentrated initially on the harp (she is a member of the Grupo de Música Contemporânea de Lisboa): perhaps it is this distance from the compositional act which has enabled her to produce works which have more in common with a composer like Wolfgang Rihm than with Boulez. Though uncompromising, her highly successful orchestral work *Ricercare* (1984) has a dramatic spontaneity, as well as a melodic lyricism, that provides a sharp contrast with Nunes.

¹⁰ An analysis of this work by Gil Miranda appears in *Dez Compositores Portugueses . . .* (see note 8).

¹¹ Note to the recording 'Three Portuguese Women Composers', EMI-Valentim de Carvalho 7243 5 55352 2 1, 1994; Ferreira also analyses this work in *Dez Compositores Portugueses . . .* (see note 8).

Amílcar Vásques Dias (b.1945) also stands apart from the Darmstadt line; he studied with Cândido Lima and subsequently in Holland, with Louis Andreissen, Peter Schat, Jan van Vlijmen and others. Vásques Dias remained in the Netherlands for 14 years, teaching and performing as well as composing. His works show clear traces of his encounters with Dutch composers – especially those written for De Volharding, such as *Balada do Amor Militante* (1979–80) and *Pranto* (1986–88), and also *Ser-rana* (1989–90) for the Ensemble D'Accord. The dense polyphonic fluidity and rich, often abrasive sound confers upon them a quality quite unlike anything else in recent Portuguese music. (Cf. Ex.3, from *Ser-rana*.) More recent works by Vásques Dias – such as *Tojo* for trumpet and piano (1992) and the theatre

Salazar; but he went on to Holland to work with Klaas de Vries, and subsequently attended workshops given by Ligeti and Donatoni. This broad range of influences is complemented by his career as one of Portugal's best-known jazz musicians. He has his own jazz group, and has played with such musicians as Kenny Wheeler and Arild Andersen. Jazz shows through in his work in various ways, though none of his fully-notated 'serious' works is as improvised-sounding as any of his six jazz discs. In *Mirrors* for piano (1988–9), the first section employs a 12-note series – 'but', the composer notes, 'with what a lack of discipline!'¹² – the second the *color* and *talea* of mediaeval isorhythm, and the third Ligetian polyrhythm and octatonic scales ('which I knew well from jazz'¹³: see Ex.4)

Ex.3.

The image shows a musical score for Ex.3, consisting of ten staves. The staves are labeled as follows: ac. 1.5, ac. 2.6, ac. 3.7, ac. 4.8, B. ac., vib., vl. 1, vl. 2, vla, and vlc. The score is written in a complex, polyphonic style with many notes and rests across all staves, indicating a dense texture. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

songs of 1994 – reveal an increasingly lyrical character, and a continuing interest in electro-acoustic work.

Of the composers born in the next decade, two who studied with Constança Capdeville – Paulo Brandão (b.1950) and António Sousa Dias (b.1959) – have continued her experimental attitude. João Pedro Oliveira (b.1959), who is an accomplished organist as well as a composer, was a pupil of Nunes and also studied in the USA. He has written a series of works of religious inspiration, the most recent of which is *Visão* (1992) for soprano, orchestra, tape and live electronics.

Perhaps the most original composer of the 1950s generation, however, is António Pinho Vargas (b.1951). He studied first with Cândido Lima, and then with Nunes, Peixinho and Alvaro

In this work, as in others dating from the years Pinho Vargas spent in Holland, there is a sense of discovering a musical landscape completely anew.

Well, after I heard the German composer Wolfgang Rihm say in Brussels in 1990 'When I begin a piece I do not know how many parts it will have, how long it will last, in how many sections it will be divided', and suchlike things, I entered a state of indescribable paralysis. I understood later that I had swallowed a time bomb.¹⁴

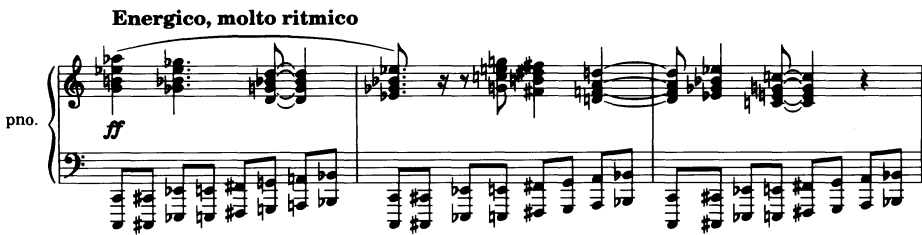
The time bomb exploded later in such pieces as *Monodia – Quasi una Requiem* (1993) for string quartet. While there is something of a (Dutch?)

¹² Notes to the recording 'Monodia', EMI-Valentim de Carvalho 7243 5 55354 2 9, 1994.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Ex. 4) Pinho Vargas: Mirrors, movt. 3



austerity and obsessiveness about this work, it represents the liberation of a more instinctive melodic way of writing.

A number of composers born in the 1960s are now coming into prominence. These include João Rafael (b.1960), Isabel Soveral (b.1961, a pupil of Peixinho and Braga Santos), Virgílio Melo (b.1961; in addition to his studies with Nunes he has studied with Yoshihisa Taira in Paris), Sérgio Azevedo (b.1969), Eurico Carrapatoso (b.1962) and Alexandre Delgado (b.1965). These last two have little directly to do with the Darmstadt inheritance, but of course such freedom was not so easily available to the previous generation. Carrapatoso's work is closely linked to the French tradition, in particular Poulenc and Fauré. His beautiful *In Paradisum* is a remarkable achievement, a synthesis which is not afraid to allow the ghosts of these composers – and also of Stravinsky – to make their appearance quite openly. 'I continue to believe', writes Carrapatoso, 'in the *causa pulchritudinis*'¹⁵ – not a 'brave old world', exactly, but this kind of 'postmodern' attitude to composition is still rare in Portugal.¹⁶ (See Ex.5.) Similarly French-orientated is the music of Vasco Azevedo (b.1961), who founded and directs the Lisbon Sinfonietta and who conducted the première of *In Paradisum*.

One of the most striking composers of this latest generation is Alexandre Delgado. He was a pupil of Joly Braga Santos, as his sumptuous

Versate (1980) and *Preludio* (1982) for string orchestra reveal. Later works, written while he was studying in France with Jacques Charpentier, reveal a change of direction. They are more acerbic, increasingly polyphonic, though often with surprisingly strong neoclassical references: for example *Os nosso dias* for wind quartet (1987) might perhaps remind one of a *Choros* by Villa-Lobos. *Turbilhão* (1987), a setting of a poem by Sá-Carneiro, is even more polyphonic, and the voice is treated in a recitative-like manner, clearly prefiguring Delgado's later opera *O Doido e a Morte*. The most substantial work of this period is his Flute Concerto (1988), a lively, freely dissonant piece, exploring texture and colour in combination with polyphonic techniques and – still – showing the legacy of Braga Santos in some ostinati, in Baroque figurations, and particularly the lyrical section which closes the second movement, and the giocose third.

Delgado has also written a series of works for solo instruments – *Antagonia* for cello (1990), *The Panic Flirt* for flute and *Lagará* for clarinet (both 1992) which consolidate his more recent melodic style with the influence of jazzy rhythms and walking bass, features which may also be found in the String Quartet of 1991, and particularly in the genial *Quarteto para Contrabaixos* (Quartet for double-basses) of the same year: see Ex.6a.

The culmination of all these tendencies is the one-act chamber opera of 1993 *O Doido e a Morte* (Death and the Madman), based on a story by Raul Brando. This is a work full of black humour, astonishing stage presence and not a little technical difficulty. The influence of the jazz walking bass is pervasive, the melodic style dry and recitative-like, often changing into speech and back again: Ex.6b.

Delgado is now planning two further operas, to form a 'trilogy of Madness'. One will be on the theme of King Sebastian, that recurrent symbol so important to Portuguese culture. There is, I feel sure, hope in such madness.

¹⁵ Composer's note on *In Paradisum*.

¹⁶ Interestingly, Carrapatoso studied with Capdeville and Peixinho and now himself teaches composition at the Lisbon Conservatoire and Escola Superior de Música; Azevedo similarly studied with Capdeville, and also with Christopher Bochmann (b.1950), a British composer long resident in Lisbon who has been extremely active as teacher and a conductor. There are two other British composers resident in or near Lisbon: Nicholas McNair (b.1951), who has worked principally as a pianist and teacher, and the author of this article (b.1964).

Ex. 5) Carrapatoso: In Paradisum

The score for Carrapatoso's 'In Paradisum' is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal quartet (T, B, B, T) and string ensemble (solo vln., str.). The vocal parts are marked 'solo vocal quartet' and the strings are marked 'con sord. sul tasto' and 'mp'. The second system shows the vocal quartet and string ensemble with lyrics. The vocal parts are marked 'mp', 'mf', 'mp', 'f', 'sub.p', and 'niente'. The string parts are marked 'mp', 'mf', 'mp', 'f', and 'sub.p'. The lyrics are: 'Ag-nus De - i, qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di;'. The score includes dynamic markings and articulation symbols throughout.

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Music examples 1 and 2 are from the full scores available from the Sociedade Portuguesa de Autores, other examples are reproduced by permission of the composers.

Ex. 6a) Delgado: Quarteto para Contrabaixos

The score for Delgado's 'Quarteto para Contrabaixos' is a single system for pizzicato (pizz.) double bass. It is marked 'Animato' and features dynamic markings of 'mp', 'mf', and 'f'. The score includes articulation symbols and ends with 'etc.'.

Ex. 6b) Delgado: O Doido

The score for Delgado's 'O Doido' is a two-system score for Sr. Milhões (voice) and Cb. (pizz.) (double bass). The vocal part is marked '(sound as low as possible)' and the double bass part is marked '(pizz.)'. The lyrics are: 'trás a - qui - é mui - to gra - ve.'. The score includes dynamic markings of 'f' and ends with 'etc.'.