Report of an experience of performance as creation: Exploring Chant de Linos symbology

Mafalda Carvalho

Abstract: "Chant de Linos" was composed by Andre Jolivet in 1944 for the Paris Conservatoire's competition. Next to the title, there is the indication "The song of linos was, in ancient Greece, a variety of threne: a mournful lament, a lament interspersed with shouts and dances" suggest a implicit relation with the myth of Linos.

For the creation of the performance that I present in video, I have chosen, among the several different versions of Linos within Greek mythology, the one in which Linos is the son of Apolo and Psâmate is the daughter of Crothopus, king of Argos. This version goes like this: "The child was abandoned at birth and devoured by the king's dogs, but Crothopus eventually came to know, and, furious, had Psâmate killed. Apollo took revenge by sending a plague upon the city and ordered, through his Delphic oracle, dogs to be sacrificed in his honour and funeral songs to be chanted which were subsequently ritually repeated by the people." (Martínez & Galiano & Melero, 1997).

This performance was created in a laboratorial work of experimentation in which I approached this piece trying to embody the character of Apollo in search of moments of lamentation, exaltation, but also moments of dance that were performed through tap dance, alluding to the rituals that the people would perform as suggested in the myth. The characterization of the different parts of the piece was expanded to all dimensions of the performance using gestures, movement, lights and scene. This laboratory work was refined with the feedback from a restricted audience. The present submission consists of the presentation of the video of Jolivet's performance of "Chant de Linos" and an oral presentation that will focus on the creative process, the performative options and the relevance of this artistic research in the process of learning and teaching musical performance as meaning making.