

Merry-Go-Round Forum

"Merry Go Round" by Sarah McCoy, Live in New Orleans in June 2013

<http://vimeo.com/76397084>

Proposal and moderator : Enrique Pardo

The question :

What are your critical¹ thoughts on listening and watching Sarah McCoy - regarding her performance, and especially her “voice performance”?

Note : The articles in this document were gathered before January 6th 2014.

More than half are in Spanish because this document coincided with the 2014 *Pantheatre Chile* project. We hope to complete translations (Spanish and French).

A forum open to comments and exchanges is set up on

PanBlog / Forum :

<http://pantheatre.com/pan-blog/>

¹ Criticism : see my remarks on the notion of *KRISIS* and the link between *cri / crise / critique*. PanBlog http://pantheatre.com/pan-blog/?page_id=538

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"Merry Go Round" by Sarah McCoy, Live in New Orleans in June 2013

<http://vimeo.com/76397084>

Paris, December 2nd 2013

Dear Friends,

You receive this email with an invitation because you are an active members of the circle of artists / teachers / friends of PANTHEATRE, engaged in *voice performance* which, as you know, includes the voice practice and philosophy of Roy Hart².

I received an email from Marion Rampal³ drawing our attention to a video: "Merry Go Round" by Sarah McCoy, Live in New Orleans in June 2013, on <http://vimeo.com/76397084> . Have a look at it .

My answer (Mon, 12/02/2013) :

Ah ... !

Here I propose that ALL of Pantheatre's circle of artists, including international ones and especially Pantheatre Chile⁴, write an in depth critical review, one full page (if needed with audio or video links.) I will prepare the question and ask for replies (email in private, without Cc or Bcc) for December 28, for publication on *PanBlog* - and then make a Forum with the material.

Super thank you, Marion (I do not include your comments as not to influence answers. But I look forwards to your essay developing what you say !)

Big kiss

Enrique

The question :

What are your critical⁵ thoughts on listening and watching Sarah McCoy - regarding her performance, and especially her "voice performance"?

² Linda Wise 1998 Presentation Letter – <http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-acts-gb.html>

³ Marion Rampal: singer, Pantheatre collaborator and singing teacher. She has presented concerts at the *Myth and Theatre Festival*, including *Lost Art Songs* with Pierre-François Blanchard, which will be presented live on Radio France Musique early March 2014 (during the *Voice Performance and Music* workshop in Paris. We are all going to the Maison de Radio France!)

⁴ Pantheatre Chile - see www.pantheatre.com/5-chile.html

⁵ Criticism : see my remarks on the notion of *KRISIS* and the link between *cri / crise / critique*. PanBlog http://pantheatre.com/pan-blog/?page_id=538

INVITATION

I invite you therefore :

- To send PANTHEATRE pan@pantheatre.com a critical one-page essay, minimum 500 words (maximum 1500 words, please) PC compatible format, preferably .doc.
- You can include internet links to other documents or audio or video examples to illustrate or explicit your point of view.
- For publication on *PanBlog* <http://pantheatre.com/pan-blog/> and to be part of a forum - and maybe a paper publication.
- To send on December 28 - or before - I will not consult these emails before. Deadline – since we leave for Chile shortly after.
- To send it with a short biography (maximum 60 words), plus links to your web page or blog, MySpace, etc.

Here are some remarks on the background of this invitation and some references:

- The Roy Hart voice work is best known , sometimes sensationally, sometimes ‘sulfurously’ (i.e. the devil...), for what is called (some euphemism!): “extended voice registers”. The *Roy Hart Theatre* was known in the late 60s as the *Theatre of the Scream* ! It is said that when Roy Hart was asked if he was not afraid of breaking his voice, he replied : “I break my voice every day.” Well worth lending a philosophical ear! (I can bear witness to it...)
- From 2005 to 2008 the *Myth and Theatre Festival* was dedicated to *Myths of the Voice*, including the 2006 Festival, whose theme was *Broken Sounds* - see logo, and check : http://www.pantheatre.com/archives/pages/MV06_homepage_fr.htm
- The 2001 and 2003 festivals took place in New Orleans.
- I have often commented on the myth of Marsyas: Apollo’s ruthless attitude, the rigged contest that ensued, the position of King Midas (who ends up with donkey’s ears!) and especially the punishment of Marsyas, flayed alive! (Flayed voices?)
- Nick Hobbs, a great *connoisseur* in this field, gave a series of lectures for Pantheatre : it was he who coined the title *Bel Canto & Hell Canto*. He was also the one who found Marsyas’ contemporary incarnation: Howling Wolf. Take a look at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILFjY2mbarg> (It is said that the Rolling Stones refused to participate in the most popular US TV program if Howling Wolf was not invited. In 1965 black artists were not seen on white TV!)
- See also the reflections on the concept of SOUL and the merger between Protestant and Afro-American singing traditions, between blues and gospel singing . A 2005 article : http://www.pantheatre.com/archives/pages/forum_MV05_french_prophets.



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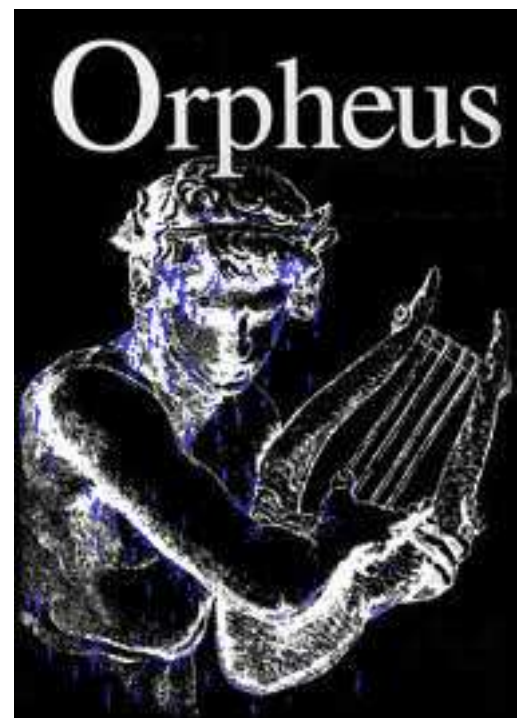
- To teach the voice in this legacy, and *a fortiori* to claim one is a 'Roy Hart' voice teacher requires study and experience, not only pedagogical, psychological and physiological, but also cultural, philosophical and even political.
- Our collaborators in Chile, including especially Annie Murath, are organizing a masters in experimental vocal pedagogy within the framework of Universidad de Chile. There is a wide circle of professionals interested in experimental voice work . There is also, like in the United States, 'phonological' resistance to vocal experimentation, particularly concerned with what is called "vocal hygiene". In many respects and mythologically speaking, the voice is a virgin. I will try to put some order in the access to Pantheatre's online archives. There are lots of documents in these areas. Not to mention Nick Hobbs' lectures (not all recorded or documented - including one titled: *Women's voices of the negative kind* !)
- The 2014 *Myth and Theatre Festival* will be dedicated to *DREAM (s)*. First presentation is on <http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-MT14-gb.html>. I have studied recently with interest a book by French ethnopsychiatrist Tobie Nathan, *A New Interpretation of Dreams*. Two quotes :
 - "The interpretation of dreams is a model of socially responsible relationships." A great phrase, and it closes his book. I would apply it to a critical practice and "interpretation" of voice performance - and especially of choreographic theatre...
 - As part of a "philosophy of prediction" that he proposes, a very generous and demanding one, Tobie Nathan specifies : "An explanation is not an interpretation, it only ruminates causes." Congratulations, especially for someone whom I would describe also as an ethnosociologist! And there are plenty of ethnosociological things to say (that must be said) about Sarah McCoy's *Merry Go Round*!

The spirit of this invitation includes something I find extremely important and which I call "sentimental sophistication."

Sophistication: sophistic refinement (where the art and the manner are as important, if not more, than the content). *Sentimental*: the intelligence of the heart, or the heart in intelligence. Tolerant lucidity, insightful wisdom, ethical skepticism that dares venture to the boundaries of the human. This is what I meant by "making Orpheus sweat".

Read about *Orpheus drenched in sweat* on <http://www.pantheatre.com/gb/2-MT13-gb.html> .

Merry Christmas !
Enrique



Enrique Pardo

The question :

What are your critical⁶ thoughts on listening and watching Sarah McCoy - regarding her performance, and especially her “voice performance”?

"Merry Go Round" by Sarah McCoy, Live in New Orleans in June 2013

<http://vimeo.com/76397084>

My reaction first: this is a terrible video and the fact of making it public is, in my view, and literally, a “negative” move: distressing and self-destructive. I can not ‘redeem’ it as a radical artistic or vocal move, like *via negativa*, or *trash* or *punk-destroy*, *poor art* or *art brut (raw pathology)* – crucial as all these artistic takes can be. I did watch another video, “Will You Roll?” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laRaPOTsw3o>, where Sarah MacCoy is touching and (but?) much more restrained (even shy and ‘coy’).

My thoughts – and why did I call on comments on a “performance” I seem not to value?

First, the video was sent to me by Marion Rampal, a close friend collaborator, and a superb singer. Here, I would venture (I hope she does not mind): “an artist wanting to confront darkness in her performance.” This is the second time Marion “baits the devil”. The first was a horrific working text, extracted from a letter of a psychopath (a marine after the USA 1900 Shanghai expedition) to the mother of a child he had murdered and cannibalized. We dealt with it ritualistically. The text did not make onto the stage.

This video is very different; with Sarah MacCoy, there is unquestionably heart – albeit here, a bloated one, in danger of heart-attack. This particular video has worrying asthmatic-like short-breath and, to me, worrying throaty vocal blasts. I can see an endearing and even a seductive Aphrodite, but for me it is not framed and *performed* enough to justify the video. What there is, is huge pathos: a Merry-Go-Round of drink and heart-break (explicit in the words). A pathos that alternates honks of bullyish raw, “flayed” rebellion with whines and wheezing moans of girlish regression. The whole piece drowns in ‘Dionysian’ beer, sweat and peripheral humour – i.e. northern-celtic dionysian, of the inflated and fermentation kind.

In my invitation I mentioned Marsyas and Howling Wolf. And we are in New Orleans, the hearth of black african-american soul and blues which offers both a refuge and a model for a white woman singer like Sarah MacCoy to “let go”. Bourbon street is one of the biggest letting-off-steam tourist haunts in the US. The Gods are mostly black – Dionysian of the vodou kind, even in their tourist act. And the ethos is, or has been, mostly masculine, so that criticism of Sarah MacCoy’s performance can raises strong (feminist) concerns (why can black men do it and not a white woman?) Another problem nowadays, in the US especially, are critical comments linked with the esthetics of overweight and obesity; with its excesses and sentimental claims, and its need to break the conventions of so-called feminine decorum (voice).

⁶ Criticism : see my remarks on the notion of *KRISIS* and the link between *cri / crise / critique*. PanBlog http://pantheatre.com/pan-blog/?page_id=538

My question turns into: how to perform the shadow of our Western voices, what we (Roy Hart-influenced artists) call generically (and philosophically) *the broken voice*? How do we consider, today, the links between such a New Orleans female white Marsyas and Roy Hart's idea of breaking the voice?

My take today (I repeat and underline) has to do with artistic *iconoclasm* (breaking the icons), which has to do with both *performative capability* and *cultural sophistication*. One important update: today, "breaking the voice" is no longer a one-way 'royal road' as it was in the 60s, to do with attacking and breaking white-marble apollonian *bel canto*. The "hell canto" worship of Marsyas has become just as iconic after the great vocal liberation of the 60s and 70s. Interestingly, I am not thinking only of the children of black *soul*, James Brown, Janis Joplin, Captain Beefheart, to name but three, but also of the crucial importance of *the philosophical voice*, and what the young French philosopher Mehdi Belhaj Kacem calls "the three hysterical philosophers" (of the voice, precisely): Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault ! Roy Hart was exactly contemporary with these events. Whether and how he was part of them, and where do "we" stand (and perform and teach) today, is central to my concern here.

Back to the question. I wrote that "I saw the answer" in a recent solo by François Chignaud. You could not get a more opposite spectacle: hyper-manneristic, precious, camp transvestite, impeccably crafty dance and singing (mostly counter-tenor baroque feminine), with full-out vaudeville costumes (a stuffed pheasant in the head-piece!) With very refined irony and quotations. (One of my early artistic mentor was painter Robert Rauschenberg – but it took me years before I could articulate why! Camp and gay studies were only just beginning when I was at art school.) Chignaud's was *performance* as I enjoy it in theatre⁷:

- intimate (an audience of 50) - and mostly solo. I admit to my current strong displeasure with almost all "ensemble" work I see, because it sacrifices individuality to pious chorus. Hence my insistence on "iconoclasm" in choreographic theatre (where there can be big numbers at work...) In a nutshell: "*Rules are made to confirm exceptions*" - not the other way round. And rules are cultural/psychological references – more below.
- *Performative capability* – Roy Hart posited: "you are what you can voice". Important. But here I want to turn to another strong bias of mine. My conception of *voice performance* can rarely be realized by singing a song. There are exceptions – and Annie Murath's version of "El Gavilán" was one. What I hear (and see) predominantly in songs is a rendering, an interpretation, like in all score-based music : vertical recital or music-hall quotations. Performance, for me, starts when the actor touches the floor. When the body enters fiction, and breaks away from the vertical voice... Touching the floor involves descent (*nekeiya*) into the underworld of cultural references (of broken voices.)
- *Cultural sophistication* – Another motto: "*The more references, the better.*" Voice performance (of the broken-voice kind) breaks open references, per-forms the break-throughs, "sees through" cultural forms, and sees them through, all the way to speculative enactments. The genius of Roy Hart's take on the broken voice was (again, "for me") his (e)valuation of vocal acting out. His credo, like most of his time's, was Self-centered – unlike the "hysterical philosophers", especially Deleuze – a very important and unexplored historical parallel. Roy Hart's key notion, his 'god-term', was consciousness, in terms of self knowledge, and especially in terms of awareness of shadow (the voice as "audible shadow".)

Some last words on *sophistication* and something I value enormously: *sentimental sophistication*. Allow me a joke: I hear "sophism" in sophistication like I hear "Cuba" in cubism: Cuba takes me (via voodoo) to the soul of

⁷ I will not get here into the relations between performance art and theatre – though it is a crucial topic here too. Maybe later.

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the cubist enterprise – certainly Picasso's. Sophist philosophers have been accused throughout Western history of being mannerists and demagogues - often denied the qualification of philosophers – because of their emphasis on form and *per-form*, apparently caring for manner at the expense of content and refusing the superiority of what is nowadays termed “phalo(go)centrism” (the superiority of the phalus / logos tandem). The voice was (is) possibly the main concern in the history of sophism and of its sophistication, their form of loving *Sophia: philo-sophia*.

The agreement of the Merry-Go-Round Forum being that participants do not concert or consult with each other, I have not read any responses to this day. In future I will only add footnotes and url links to facilitate access to references and ideas.

Enrique Pardo – Santiago de Chile, Sunday January 5, 2014.

LINDA WISE

A video that is sent to me by a singer I love and admire - I take the time to listen.....falling into a despairing rejection of a memory of a sordid Bourbon Street on a Saturday night. Steamy summer New Orleans at its most revolting. I leave the video for almost three weeks and decide to listen without the visual image.

The amateur recording – the coughing – the clinking glasses with non-listening clients the honky- tonky piano and then she begins – a lamenting wail. A dark a capella accompanied by one note on a dying piano – as she enters into a rhythmic section she bangs a desperate repetitive right hand on the top of the piano in counter point with the dead note – anguish builds into the first hard broken sound screeched right in her throat – difficult to hear the lyrics at this “breakpoint” – maybe something like “They don’t break it down now” before she chants the refrain – “This is the way that Merrygoround” – again the lyrics disappear but one hears something about him leaving and another full throated wrenching screech

“This is my problem” From here she increasingly falls deeper into her story – repetitively more and more vulgar, violent and a “fuck you” attitude that lets go more and more all poetry, nuance.and yet she’s there, concentrated, staying with her crude music that transforms her right hand and her voice into a pathetic journey that sees no end. She sounds breathless and one wonders whether her voice is going to last.

The last chord – she shakes out her right hand as if she had a cramp – coughs and warmly, touchingly says “thank you” to a space that hardly seems to listen more in spite of a few sodden claps.

And then the visual image – obesity, badly dyed platinum hair with traces of dreadlocks – chipped nail varnish on surprisingly small pudgy fingers – the lost cigarette, large quantities of beer and a non-listening unconcerned public . I feel Sarah McCoy whoever she is, drowned in a pathology built from her environment.....and her voice and artistic and musical gifts plunged by this pathology. There is such an identification with the broken, the lost, the loser with all her incompatible facilities that one feels that whatever she might sing her voice would fall into a broken screech that denies all beauty – and all hope. In this song she lets go all dignity and yet she, Sarah McCoy gives this very gracious – “Thank you”.

She has “performed the song”. She is not the song – at least not yet – because her identification is strong and the patina and pathology of her voice seem fast becoming as differentiated as an operatic baritone. Hers is not music I want to listen to more than a few times – it is not a vibration that inspires me but there is something terribly – and I mean terribly – human....and touching. A voice that could be the voice of the permanent community of homeless that live in the Paris metros – the voice that gives voice to the margins of our society where spirit is sustained by alcohol...and the ethos of an underworld with its own codes....here a merry go round is not a romantic carousel but a never-ending spiral fall. OR maybe,who knows, as my daughter wrote to me at Christmas:

“Birds make great sky-circles of their freedom. How do they learn it? They fall and falling, they’re given wings” Rumi

I hope so for Sarah McCoy.

NICK HOBBS

The video strapline is 'The Incredible Sarah McCoy'. That's a bad start. My first reaction is 'mmm...' which is an expression of bemusement, which might mean what's the big deal, or is there a big deal here, or am I missing something?

There's a plump (in that unashamed North American way) woman dressed in a dull coffee-brown swimsuit seated at a piano in a club playing with some musicians (the Oopsie Daisies) whom the camera – and perhaps the ear – disregards as entirely secondary to the focus – the singer-pianist. She wears a golden medallion which I find a bit distracting. Before she starts, she smokes a fag and drinks a beer, two signifiers of authenticity, ones which fit with her look. I take these to be part of the performance, and her way of saying 'hey guys and gals, I'm a rebel and I'm for real' and maybe 'I'm no softy girlie, I can hold my own with any guy'; maybe of course she just likes smoking and drinking but both are a bit self-conscious so I think there's more to it than that.

Which begs questions about authenticity – that main myth of blues, soul music and rock 'n' roll. Questions like is the performer authentic because she's assumed the proletarian trappings of authenticity (a life lived hard) – booze, fags and burgers – or is she really the bearer of the voice of an echte prole whose solution to being trapped at the bottom of the pile is to thumb their nose at the snots and say I'm gonna have a good time and live my life the way I want? And should we care? Writ a bit larger, that's the myth which did Janis Joplin and Amy Winehouse in (amongst a great many others), so not a myth to fuck with perhaps. Which maybe is why she gives the impression of dabbling with it rather than fucking with it, so to speak.

The performance - at first I'm interested, because she has a clunky piano technique along with a belter's voice which rolls freely through a raw bluesy singing style, which sometimes shows signs of wear and forcing rather than a completely relaxed vocal technique, but that's okay because mostly her technique is pretty good. And watching the video, one sees her wobbly mouth and wobbly body engage with her wobbly voice in a way which is kind of free, and that's a pleasure to watch.

This song has a Leadbelly-bluesy intro which is pretty nice and promising but it doesn't last long, and halfway through this short video I start getting bored. And I ask myself why?

First problem is the song – 'Merry-go-round'. McCoy wrote it but it doesn't give the impression that she spent too much time writing the lyric, because most of the song is the chorus line 'This is the way that merry-go-round' repeated ad nauseam. And it may well be that the image of a merry-go-round is terribly significant of the trials of a life lived hard (it's about a guy who leaves his woman) but poetically it doesn't do it for me, it's just not sufficient. The chorus is repeated too often and too similarly.

Which brings me to the next problem, which is the tune, or rather the lack of a good tune. There is a kind of a tune though it's basic, even childish, and conventional, and it doesn't bear much repetition, and also it doesn't develop during the song; the second half of the song is kind of the same as the first half only a bit more tired.

And then there is the third problem, which is that her piano playing isn't up to much, in fact once past the intro, it's kind of unlistenable. It's primitive but not primitive in a way that you'd go wow this is from the deep undersoul, it's rather just primitive in the way of someone who started to play the piano a few weeks ago. It's also not clear what the other musicians are there for, they're not adding any counterpoint, they're just filling out the sound a bit.

At the end of the song she says 'thankyou' before the audience claps which is a professional way of inviting clapping. We all do it. There's nothing wrong with self-satisfaction (though it's not to be trusted). And she has another beer and looks for her fags. If it's a long set, she's going to be plastered by the end.

So just to summarise, I'd say that if I came upon Sarah McCoy in a club, I'd probably be entertained and interested, and I wish her no harm, but I'm not about to make a trip to check her out, and I'm not about to buy her records, though if someone sends me one, I'll listen.

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IAN MAGILTON

Dear Enrique,

I am not so very good at this kind of critique, I am too subjective. If I love it, i'm usually incoherent and if I don't, I'm not interested enough to think about it - a sort of personal Catch 22.

I was impressed by Sarah McCoy (no microphone?) and enjoyed that southern black blues. heavy honk in the deep phrases. I also enjoyed the relaxed broken sounds. I wished that she had allowed herself to play with those delicate high sounds that sometimes popped up at the end of phrases.

I was a little put off by what the the Norwegians call 'traktor lesbe' presentation with the beer, the shorts, the cigarette in the piano, it seemed forced, even preachy. It was difficult to get a feeling of who she was.

Try [Big Mama Thornton](#)

Your Ian

NOR HALL

up your alley dear Pan

dear Enrique, an appreciative letter rather than an essay:

Fantastic juxtaposition of those two: François Chaignaud and Sarah McCoy. McCoy presented her body at the piano with such promise. The 'holy' cigarette was unfortunate, and the big flat pendant a clue to a one dimensional voice. I am not a voice person! (for anyone else reading this... Enrique & Linda know) but after keeping company with you all and Ellen H. for years my first thought was regret that McCoy hadn't had the benefit of some kind of training that would call her voice up from a niche or cavity below her neck. There was that huge instrument and only one small key on the body-trumpet presst! In the background I imagined the black momma who sang it originally with pun intended: Mary go round, when your man is gone... mourning, ala Magdalena, the loss of Love. McCoy's avenues to a vast compelling sound were cut off by something tough--an obstacle to the growling tenderness the song deserves. I don't imagine Maenads as dykes, by the way. Where is the Sarah McCoy type woman in the Pantheon? Maybe in a pathological subcult of Athena or Artemis? They're all divine pathologies (the gods) so I don't mean to curse a type, but am curious about where the tough, fat form belongs. It must be faced, as you say, through ethno or socio searches of some kind. If it/she had an embodied voice, it would be a formidable one from which I would shrink.

Chaignaud, on the other hand--<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmMX8F9QYNY>--is pure Dionysian performance-- utterly engaging, disturbing, riveting seduction. I did see him live at the Walker last year in this Mimosa piece and felt totally stunned. Even now I am not sure whether the extraordinary singing voice was 'his' or another of the 3 performers who were also 'him'. But the sounds and whispers and range of vocal expression coming out of him compelled the listening body toward him in every moment. It made me feel like I was (as in a Redon drawing) a disembodied large ear and a large eye straining toward a dark protean flower. Very opposite to the feeling in McCoy's vocal and physical presence. Please inform me about Chaignaud when you get a chance.

Thanks for the opportunity to consider these vocal images. I look forward to other takes..

xNor

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RALF PETERS

Dear Enrique,

sorry for answering so late to your e-mail! I started to write a response earlier but didn't get to an end: Here the first attempt:

Thank you very much for the invitation! Although I don't feel ready to contribute with critical comment to this very voice performance, it was very inspiring to read your thoughts and follow the different links. I like the article from Victor Mair about the chinese meaning of crisis. I know him as the one and only translator of Zhuang Ze, a book that I like very much and use sometimes in my "chinese" inquiries.

Yes, we do have a conference in February, but what I mean with "voice and performance art" would not cover the video of Sarah McCoy. We want to explore the question if and how the voice can be used outside the "classical" realms of singing and acting (music and theatre). I am trying to find my way into the voice performance art through my "Dao Series" and my research with old chinese thinking. Anyway, bridging our interests sound very good to me. I don't know yet how but I am sure there will be a good way.

Now - after your e-mails from yesterday and today - I decided to write a word or two about my impression of Sarah McCoys singing "merry go round":

I like her presence, the "earth" in her body and in her voice. There is some kind of selfdestruction as a tendency in her, or better I sense something like that. Selfdestruction or violence? I am more attracted by her deep voice than by the broken sounds she does. (Although I like broken sounds) One question that comes into my mind is: Is she driven or does she drive? It seems to change.

A rough energy, impressing but...I wonder if she tells me a story with this song and her voice or if my impression of her voice would be the same with every other song? I don't get a Dionysos feeling listening to her although there is beer and cigarettes included.

I would very much like to know if she could sing in a different way. In the end there is just the question: Who or what is acting here?

best wishes from Cologne and until soon!

Ralf

GASTON ARTURO NEIRA ZARATE

¿Comentarios “críticos” al “ver y escuchar” a Sarah McCoy con respecto a su performance y sobre todo respecto a su performance vocal?

Viendo y escuchando a Sarah McCoy desde la ilusión de estar en una posición libre de pre juicios, estimo que la performance en sí misma es digna de ser vista y apreciada ya que, entre otras cosas, muestra una amplia, rica y poderosa gama de sonidos vocales; registro donde, según la referencia al concepto crisis, se manifiesta el “cri” como grito, en una probablemente ya largamente temperada exposición que es, sin duda, intensa y dinámica llevada a cabo con un esfuerzo en cierta forma natural, propio, en donde también está presente la armonía del conjunto (xilofono, contrabajo) que acompaña y contiene sutilmente las variadas inflexiones de Sarah. En esta interpretación es posible reconocer vocalizaciones que oscilan entre el bell y del hell canto primando este último, en donde la interprete esta fuertemente comprometida, con una expresión pregnante de afectos, particularmente en lo que a ejecución vocal se refiere, muchas veces en el límite, como si quisiera ir más allá, con muchas ganas y brío; en eso utiliza en concordancia su cuerpo y también el piano como elemento a percudir marcando un pulso inicial. Ciertamente es posible apreciar “sofisticación sentimental” armónica al conjunto.

...Claro Orfeo estaría allí sudando sobrecogido

CHRISTIANE DIAZ

En las escuelas de teatro nos enseñan que quien se dedique al arte escénico debe cuidar su aparato de trabajo: su cuerpo, y con ello, su voz. Se nos dice que no debíamos fumar ni beber antes de una presentación, y mucho menos durante. Eso es lo primero que sorprende al ver el video de Sarah McCoy. Sin embargo, cuando comienza a cantar, uno puede notar la mucha experiencia que tiene.

Pareciera que su voz es grande pero brusca a ratos, aunque que no tiene miedo a “dañar” su voz durante su performance. Es como si hubiera algo muy dentro de ella que quiere sacar a través de su voz, y que necesita de una gran potencia para lograrlo, con pasión y entrega total. Ella usa ese poder de la voz, esa energía vocal poderosa para expresar lo que tiene dentro, sin importar realmente si daña o no su aparato sonoro. Sarah requiere de ese permiso de romper con el cuidado para poder cantar a todo pulmón lo que desea comunicar desde su más profundo interior.

Su voz tiene algo que recuerda mucho al estilo de Adele⁸. Ambas tienen una voz llena, grande, que transmite grandes emociones. Es posible reconocer a ratos armónicos, parecidos a sonidos del canto armónico o multifónico. Se podría pensar que quizás es porque ambas son mujeres de ancho cuerpo. Sin embargo, algo parecido sucede con Amy Winehouse⁹, quien en cambio es muy delgada. Winehouse tiene una voz poderosa pues sus canciones tienen mucho que comunicar. Julia Valey¹⁰ dice: “mi voz es entera, o sea segura, precisa y decidida, cuando reacciona y tiene un motivo para expandirse en el espacio” (65).

Las tres voces tienen algo de nasal en su voz, que de alguna u otra manera se relaciona con una especie de sufrimiento que viven las cantantes al momento de su performance. Cuando digo sufrimiento no me refiero a un sufrimiento al realizar el acto de cantar, sino un sufrimiento interno que contienen las letras, que necesitan ser dichas – o cantadas, en este caso – pues algo realmente intenso les producen.

Algo parecido sucede con los afroamericanos¹¹. Debido a su cuerpo y su historia, su voz es inmensamente poderosa. Se dan el lujo de jugar con su voz como más les guste durante el momento en el que cantan. Parecen disfrutar de cada uno de sus momentos, pues gozaban con su voz, y producen esa misma sensación en quienes escuchaban.

Con Sarah McCoy y su performance de “Merry Go Round” sucede algo similar. Aunque no entienda la letra de la canción, entiendo que es algo intenso. De hecho, antes de comenzar a cantar, Sarah debe tomarse unos segundos para decidirse, tomar impulso. Y aunque me transmite una sensación de algo grande, fuerte y poderoso, disfruto de su voz armónica. Logro gozar del momento de oírla pues también se da la libertad de jugar con su voz. Y eso es algo que dan ganas de imitar: lanzarse a jugar; gozar con la voz propia, única y personal.

⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JT9OH4cccLc>. “Don’t you remember”, Adele. Concierto en Paris (2011).

⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WohouY9LO6I>. “Back to black”, Amy Winehouse. En vivo desde Londres (2008).

¹⁰ Valey, Julia. *Piedras de agua: cuaderno de una actriz del Odin Teatret*. Chile: Ripio Ediciones, 2012.

¹¹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CyVuYAHiZb8>. “Hit the road Jack”, Ray Charles. En vivo

GABRIELA RODRIGUEZ

Antes de Sarah McCoy había escuchado solo a una mujer blanca cantar así: Janis Joplin, ídola de mi juventud, icono de mi época. Es que el rock de los 70's estaba incorporando ese sonido negro en voces blancas, imitando un timbre desgarrador que era la identidad y el privilegio de los negros relegados en sus getthos.

Comienzo así mi comentario porque fueron los rock stars que se habían inspirado en esos músicos negros los que marcaron mi juventud y quienes posteriormente me llevarían a conocer y amar el blues, el jazz, el scatt y esas voces que tienen mucho de lo que ustedes llaman la voz rota, que para mí siempre fue la voz de los negros: maravillosa e incomparable.

Cito a algunos de estos inspiradores (los que he escuchado habitualmente) contemporáneos de Howlin Wolf: Bukka White, Little Walter, Muddy Waters, Big Joe Williams, Sonny Boy Williamson, Willie Dixon, Fats Waller que también serían de la voz rota, (misteriosamente todos se apellidan con W!!) y, posteriormente uno más conocido, Louis Armstrong.

Por otra parte, en lo que aparentemente estaría en contraste con la expresión del sonido en el blues y en el rock, En otra de mis búsquedas espirituales, he escuchado 'resonar' y cantar a algunos monjes tibetanos.

Especialmente a un antiguo maestro que dirigía un retiro de 10 días para meditar en total silencio: Su voz grave, ultratúmbica resonaba en la enorme sala haciendo vibrar todo el cuerpo de los que estábamos allí empujándonos a las profundidades del alma. Esa voz era como muchas voces juntas por su potencia y por su efecto. Venía de otra dimensión y me alentaba a sostener disciplinadamente las largas horas en posición del loto.

La voz de Sarah McCoy me remite a estas experiencias y me lleva a pensar que la voz rota sería algo así como romper el límite de la voz personal que nos separa de la totalidad para que la garganta sea el umbral por donde surgen muchas voces de esta y de otras dimensiones.

Esto es lo que me parece la performance vocal de Sarah McCoy que ella, como el blusero o el místico entra en un trance donde es posible reproducir sonidos de muchos colores y dimensiones. Donde su voz es la voz que canta a muchas otras, movilizandolas en los que la escuchamos algo profundo y sorprendente.

Ref. de Cantos de los monjes:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxK4pOgVvfg>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpXFzhjBUUo>



Estudié Diseño Teatral en la Universidad de Chile y varios años después en 1985, cuando mi tercer hijo venía al mundo comencé apasionadamente a estudiar Tarot, Astrología y Análisis de los Sueños. Se abrió el mundo mágico simbólico y mítico que me llevaría a desarrollar mi fundamental interés por la sanación. Estudié y trabajé con la reconocida sanadora Adriana Manríquez en Chile. Viajé a investigar la Santería y formas de curación a Cuba. Luego en Perú trabajé con el chamán Alejandro Jahuanchi, en la zona del Manú de la selva peruana y también en México y Venezuela compartí con varios curanderos. La síntesis definitiva de mi recorrido de este camino ocurrió cuando en 1990 conocí a Alejandro Jodorowsky con quién aprendí Psicogenealogía y Psicomagia. Desde esa época hasta ahora he seguido desarrollando e integrando la experiencia con la Psicomagia, el

Tarot y todo el mundo simbólico a través de la realización de talleres grupales y consultas personales en Chile, Latinoamérica y ahora en Italia.

Acabo de terminar el tercer semestre del Club de Teatro de la Academia de Fernando González.

Ver www.psicomagia.cl

PIERRE-FRANCOIS BLANCHARD

En préambule, je souhaite formuler que la seule façon que j'ai trouvé de répondre à la question, est de moi-même en poser d'autres. ! I ! - Regarder la vidéo! Avant tout, c'est le regard « vidéo » qui se pose sur cette femme qui m'a fasciné.!

En premier lieu, mes yeux se sont posés sur elle plutôt que mes oreilles.!

La physicalité de cette femme, ses attitudes, son corps, m'ont beaucoup *affecté*. Elle me donne l'envie de questionner ce que je vois. Qui est-elle ? Pourquoi elle ? Quoi ? En tant que pianiste, j'ai toujours été fasciné par l'attitude physique des différents interprètes que j'ai pu rencontrer, ou venir écouter. Les regarder jouer en dit (parfois) beaucoup (plus) sur leur personnalité, leurs musicalité, leur choix musicaux, éthiques. ! I - La première question que je me pose est donc culturelle : quelle serait ma / (notre ?) perception

de sa « performance vocale » s'il n'y avait pas la vidéo ? Derrière cette question simple, s'en cache une multitude d'autres.!

Par exemple, en ayant à notre disposition uniquement l'audio, nous demanderions nous si Sarah McCoy est-elle blanche ou noire ? Il y a à cet endroit quelque chose de troublant, du point de vue culturel. Sarah McCoy - blanche - est-elle « légitime » culturellement pour chanter cette musique « noire-américaine » ? A partir d'où et quand pouvons nous parler de « légitimité », « d'appartenance » à un style de musique attribué à telle ou telle communauté ? Est-il même éthique de se poser une telle question ?!

Il me semble que l'aspect culturel d'une performance vocale, est centrale. Malgré nous. Quelque chose auquel nous ne pouvons échapper. !

Je suis fasciné - à travers le travail que je fais avec Marion - par cette question des allers-retours d'un même « style » musical entre différents continents, différentes cultures. !

Par exemple : les chemins du blues entre le continent européen et américain, entre l'anglais et le français sont réellement fascinants. Ou encore de la fusion entre le chant protestant et afroaméricain pour donner ce que l'on appelle « Soul Music », évoqué par Enrique Pardo. !

Ce que l'on voit et ce que l'on entend dans la vidéo de Sarah McCoy en est pour moi un exemple flagrant de ces allers-retours culturels, et du trouble que cela créé. ! 2 - Sur la fin de la vidéo. Il est fascinant de regarder l'attitude de cette femme lorsqu'elle se ressert

une (énorme) bière. Cela montre pour moi, que ce que l'on « est » dans la vie, peut (parfois) paraître très différent de ce que l'on exprime, de ce que l'on « met en jeu » en « performance vocale ».!

Ce qui me fait faire le lien avec la deuxième partie, c'est justement l'écoute de sa voix parlée, qui contraste fortement avec sa voix chantée, et qui - encore une fois - pour moi est presque plus importante à écouter, pour comprendre les « enjeux » psychologiques de sa performance. !

! I - Le Son! Si j'en viens à l'écoute proprement dite de sa voix, - passé le « trouble culturel » évoqué ci-dessus, je dirai par moment que je ressens une violence qui ne me semble pas complètement *placée* au bon endroit. Il y a quelque chose d'un peu « forcé » en ce qui me concerne. Comme si un élément névrotique venait troubler *l'enjeu* de sa performance un tout petit peu trop fort.!

En évoquant l'aspect « forcé », je ne fais évidemment pas référence aux sons cassés, mais à la performance vocale prise dans sa globalité. ! En conclusion, sur cette fascinante vidéo de Sarah McCoy, magnifique et touchante « femmepirate-

névrosée », je me pose cette question : l'art est-il médecine ? Lorsque cette femme monte sur scène, quelle est sa préoccupation première ? Se faire du bien à elle-même et pour elle-même avant tout, où tenter de se (re)-mettre en jeu, vers son public ?

PAULA MENDOZA

Actriz, cantante y logopeda, actualmente compagina sus estudios de canto lírico y música con sus trabajos como actriz, eventualmente imparte clases de canto. Estudio Logopedia y Arte Dramático, en 2009 participó en el Taller de Octubre/Noviembre Pantheatre en Paris, y después continuó explorando en el ámbito teatral con propuestas como *Femenino Singular Grita* de Ghetto 13/26.

Merry go round / Glitter and be gay

Desde el punto de vista de alguien que se dedica al bel canto, al canto “técnicamente perfecto, bello, medido...”, ésta performance de Sarah MacCoy podría parecerle: fea, extrema, desgarrada, insolente, e incluso hiriente. Eso es exactamente lo más interesante de esta interpretación, que es: **extrema** en la expresión; **fea**, en el sentido de no buscar una perfección en el sonido y la imagen del intérprete, sino una expresión de la entraña; **desgarrada**, en la voz y en el cuerpo de la intérprete; **insolente** pues invade el espacio sonoro y vital de los “espectadores” sin permiso, sin preparación, sin previo aviso... e **hiriente** porque el espectador (y seguramente en directo esta sensación es mucho más palpable) siente que presencia una especie de transformación visceral, de catarsis, de desahogo... un expresión, a pesar de la aparente brusquedad, muy íntima, auténtica.

El espectador no preparado, el espectador sin esperar serlo, está en un bar (no en un teatro o un auditorio, no, en algo tan cotidiano como un bar, un espacio familiar) y sin previo aviso se encuentra invadido por el canto profundo de una mujer “búfala-herida”, es carnal, hay sudor, hay humo, hay alcohol... nos alejamos completamente de esa figura del cantante-intérprete perfecto, de imagen medida, subido en su escenario, con sus focos, su maquillaje... y estamos tú a tú con la búfala herida. Hay riesgo, parece que todo está descontrolado (aunque no sea así), y el espectador no es alguien pasivo sentado en una butaca, si no alguien que se encuentra por sorpresa con esto y que tiene la opción de ignorar, de mirar, de mancharse o de huir.

Hay riesgo, un espectador preparado sabe lo que va a presenciar, o tiene una ligera idea, tiene buena disposición, se sienta en la butaca a recibir algo que en muchos casos ha pagado por recibir. Y el intérprete ya está sin hacer nada aún en una posición de expectativa. En el bel canto, ésta jerarquía es muy clara, y muy marcada. Se coloca al intérprete alejado de los espectadores y de sí mismo sobre un escenario donde debe intentar ser perfecto. Cuesta mucho aprender que no se puede subir a un escenario con tanta presión, y que incluso lo que tenemos que tratar es todo lo contrario, dejarnos ser imperfectos, para ser auténticos. Pero claro, muchos años de técnica, ejercicios, estudio... en el fondo eso no es lo que nos interesa ver, todo eso se debe olvidar en el aquí y ahora del hecho artístico pues nos interesa ver una expresión auténtica. El video *Merry go round* está lleno de aquí y ahora, de “imperfección” y de autenticidad, y al mismo tiempo hay maestría en la interpretación. Es una voz libre, conectada, expresiva y que deja lugar al grito, al desgarrar, con un registro para cantar, cercano al habla con un uso claro del resonador nasal, combinado con el hablar/gritar el texto; y los músicos que la acompañan crean una atmósfera como de cuento infantil de terror que contrasta... y resulta inquietante.

Busqué un ejemplo de una intérprete de canto lírico que opino que sabe muy bien lo que significa ser auténtica en el escenario y al mismo tiempo disponer de la técnica específica que se requiere en esta disciplina.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oByViX0t-IE>

Algo totalmente opuesto al video de Sarah MacCoy. Estamos en un auditorio, con un público atento y preparado que sabe lo que va a escuchar e incluso que puede que haya escuchado esta Aria de la ópera *Candide* muchas otras veces. Hay una gran orquesta y una intérprete Diana Damrau que ante todo esto y llevando en “la mochila” su preparación, su técnica y su experiencia, es capaz de hacer una performance auténtica y conectar esa exigencia musical y vocal con el sentimiento del personaje al que da vida en esos minutos. Está aquí y ahora; y atrás quedan los ensayos previos y todos los años de técnica. En mi opinión Diana, “rompe” en varias ocasiones esa perfección de su voz lírica liberándola así, para ponerla al servicio de la expresión auténtica. Al igual que Sarah, Diana inicia su performance antes incluso de cantar, con su forma de entrar en el auditorio, y también continúa después de la última nota. ¿Quizás podría ser más extrema en su performance vocal? Puede que sea así, pero estaría fuera del estilo. Diana usa prácticamente todo el margen del que dispone. Algo que los cantantes líricos vamos aprendiendo con los años es que

las canciones que interpretamos por regla general están tan estrictamente escritas: melodía, dinámica, tempo... que es nuestra obligación aprovechar todo el margen que queda a la improvisación e interpretación personal; en casi todas las ocasiones hay que perderle el respeto al compositor para dar vida a su obra.

Son diferentes voces, una más en el bel canto, y otra más en el canto “del infierno”; una “búfala-herida” y una “gallina sofisticada”, lo feo y lo bonito, el bar lleno de humo y el gran auditorio que huele a perfume caro... Pero en mi humilde opinión comparten algo, que es en definitiva la verdad de estar y ser en el momento presente. Algo que aunque parezca fácil no lo es, pero resulta imprescindible.

SOL INZUNZA

Hola Enrique, cómo estás!

Esta es mi primera reflexión sobre el video de Sarah McCoy. Creo que es un comienzo, una puerta para tratar algunos temas que me parecen interesantes y que surgen al observar y escuchar. Dime qué te parece y si puedo seguir desarrollando más ideas:

Metamorfosis de Sarah

Evidenciar el trastorno de personalidad del clásico instrumento, transformándose en una extensión corporal/vocal y visual del mismo suscita la inversión de intérprete y objeto: Piano toca mc coy, distorsionando el imaginario tradicional. Piano sólo mueve sus dedos-teclas de manera “compuesta” (aunque siempre hemos sabido que habitan en él seres monstruosos) y mc coy es “pulsada” y, por tanto, liberada. Por eso ex-presa vivencia pura que entraña rock: transfiguración sincrónica y discordante a la vez.

Un abrazo con alas en vez de brazos...

Sol

Ezra Faroque Khan

The Merry Go Round-The calling of voices to song.

I began with an initial response that met the voice of silence. Why I thought? Me, I want to sing and howl and jump and growl. But hey, the silence had something to say. So I let the feelings look to the full moon inside and swirl with their own business.

The initial response:

“...‘This is the way the merry go round’ ...I like her. I sing along with her. Miss my cigarette too. She strikes a dirty chord and rasps in breath. Makes me grow hair and look for my closed piercings and scars. She’d drink us all under the table and further down still...”

She begins. Sarah MacCoy begins. We see her suck on a broken cigarette, slug a pint and speak in an almost innocent, teenage, Red Riding Hood wonder that belies her full body, attire, actions and years.

The dirty chord strikes.

The call to God, or Gods, or Goddesses and spirits...and perhaps the Devil too. It’s New Orleans. The howling of the she wolf. The Jekyll and Hyde. The ingesting of liquid, smoke and breath to produce voice/s. The moon you feel is shining full. And Death gets ready to clap and dance along to the ‘merry’ sounds of the go round.

Sarah M’s song begins...to the best of my knowledge and hearing:

“ Yay, ay, ay, ee, ee, ee ee, ee....

Yay, ay, ay, ay, ee, ee, ee, ee....

Woah, woah, oh, ooo, ooo, ooo....

Woah, oh, oh, ooo, ooo, ooo, ooo....

These are the songs that come from under bridges

From the bushes, to the ditches

These are the songs that come from under tunnels

Sitting in puddles, every night that rains

These are the songs nobody needs heard

I’m covered in dirt, they don’t hear the words

But these are the songs nobody needs heard

Cause they don’t know the things

And they don’t wanna break it down

The way I do...”

During the voice performance:

She huffs and she puffs,

She howls and she growls

She closes her eyes to look within

She plays the piano with caresses of sin

She rages at times like Hecate’s wind

She bellows with heart wishing to sing

Her face captures all but her body is elsewhere

Grounded with lead and drowning in beer

But at moments we see and feel the spell

Touching our desires to scream and yell

And tell mine and your world...go to hell

(Ezra Khan)

ENGLISH VERSION Updated : 10/01/2014 22:46

URL = www.pantheatre.com/pdf/6-forum-Merry-Go-Round-gb.pdf

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I understand a little better my initial response. I've listened a little closer to the words of the song at the beginning before the piano and melodies kick in. For me, it's an underworld song, a were-song. One that, given Sarah M's build up of rawness and 'fuck you', 'fuck them' 'fuck it' attitude, which grows, and in a strange way, like a teenager at full mast or a soul at edge of a cliff, gives rise to the kind of bravado you'd expect from the motley crew of underworld daemons, with messages that 'God' needs heard...cause they need to be heard...at any cost or the right cost.

She calls upon and captures in her voice performance and song, in her struggle for breath, in her play and playing, for me, a transformation that we all seek, where by, the 'were', 'the animal' and the soul in us, desires to be expressed, if only we can find the necessary find to free the voices and maybe, to allow for the break-down and break-up that allows for the break-through.

Sarah M, in that context, transforms...here in voice to voices and becomes possessed. Possession. Who possesses who? At times you feel Sarah controls the voices, at times, that they express themselves through her, framed by the music and atmosphere. But, innately, we feel...everything can go much further down or up...or across. But where are we going to? Maybe Jim Morrison of the Doors, or Janis Joplin or Jimi Hendrix or Otis Reading or many others we can mention, perhaps Roy Hart too, can tell us...

Given that, I still get a sense that new age spiritual seekers would have a field day with Sarah MacCoy. "Give up smoke Sarah, and drink, and lose weight and looks for the light inside and open your mind and heart. " And I can see her take all her clothes off and in her Red Riding Hood voice, say..."Which one of you mother fuckers is first? I'm gonna swallow you whole and spit you out in dirt!"

Maybe we buy into her and the song because she looks like she has lived the song.

I find her most engaging at the very beginning of the song with chord, a cappella, with the thump beat. I love her calling and then trance inducing singing/recitation of world I feel she understands and digs deep to share. And though we see Sarah, stationary at the piano tinkling away a Wurlitzer melody, with almost delicate, detached hands, in my imagination, I'd love to see her dance her voice...

Julia Pascali

São Paulo , 28 de diciembre de 2013.

Presencia ! La verdad en el escenario !

Durante años persigo un sentido de " exposición", de oferta a los dioses, para experimentar la vida en nombre de la especie, como héroes , y la experiencia de búsqueda de y por la presencia en el escenario . Este estado de testificar en sí mismo y delante de los otros las experiencias de y por la especie se ha cultivado , deseado , preparado, diseminada y buscado tanto que incluso acabamos por creer que todo el mundo juega de esta manera y punto de vista.

Como los ritos de paso , donde la vida es la muerte y la plenitud se manifiesta , Sarah vive y expone un mensaje de los dioses al mundo humano . Desde lo alto de "sin nombre" ella ofrece a sí misma para que defrontemos a nosotros con la maravilla terrible de la creación.

Comparo la verdad traducida por Sarah McCoy, en junio de 2013 a la de Ida Felipeg, filmada por mí en 1996 (<http://cameraweb.ccuec.unicamp.br/video/cw17210427/>) * .

En la abertura del vídeo se puede leer :

"Ida Felipeg , aproximadamente 80 años de edad. vive en Topolo nel valle Del Río Natisone , provincia de Udine , Italia.

...

Nada se ha establecido en la grabación del video.

Ida habló , naturalmente, sin la intención de mostrarse a la cámara. Y así se convirtió en una actriz , y en su extrema naturalidad (lease ingenuidad) revela el máximo grado de representación , de arte, de sagrado.

¿Qué tan profundo y natural debe ser el trabajo del actor para ser convincente ? La técnica debe integrarse e tornarse invisible para alcanzar el máximo de la representación.

La ingenuidad es la madre del arte sólo comparable con el máximo grado de representación " .

* Vide 1:36 minuto y ademas donde ella cuenta del milagro, y especialmente cuando canta !

Daniela Molina Castro

De performance vocal
"PIRATE WOMAN"
"La piratería vocal"

"Ella canta con las tripas!"- fue mi primera expresión.

Pero... Que es cantar con las tripas?

Con las venas rojas.

En que punto se conectan

el dolor y los sonidos rotos?

El dolor y la música?

La técnica y el alma?

"Cantar con el alma" y cómo la expresión del alma, se transforma en estilo, como en el caso de la Soul music.

Muchas veces cuando cantamos con en alma, no todo lo que sale es limpio y puro.

Salen a flote nuestros ánimos y humores.

Ella canta sabiendo que nadie la mira?

El canto de esta mujer me parece una pesadilla llena de ánimos... hecha soul.

Es también un canto derrotado.

Desde el punto de vista del espectador, qué es lo que nos toca, la técnica o el alma? Como puede ser la técnica una herramienta para expresar el alma?

Para mi ella es un personaje dionisiaco, de bacanal. Es el exceso. El alcohol. Ella es básicamente un exceso: físico, energético, emocional.

Me interesa ese cantar desde el exceso, a través del exceso.

Pero hay algo que me falta.

Podríamos decir que le falta equilibrar con sofisticación? Sutileza?

Necesita este tipo de canto/llanto/grito del alma de esa sofisticación?

Susana Quaresma
simple words on Sarah McCoy's performance.

It's interesting to notice the "modesty" of the title introducing the Incredible Sarah.

It's undisputed that this woman has an enormous power on her voice and we can observe that from the moment she opens her mouth and as long as the performance goes on.

I feel that she could use the theatrical aspect much more. She could do some kind of exploration of different vocal environments and dynamics. It begins with *forte* and angry and the entire song keeps the same mood.

On the other hand the musical environment is very amusing and contradictory with the use of the glockenspiel, which gives us the sound of fairy tales. Also those changes of character with the profound and guttural voice are absolutely beautiful.

Love this schizophrenic use of sound and text.

Gaëtan Emeraud
30 décembre 2013

Chanter à en mourir pour réveiller les morts...

Une franche goulée de bière, une belle soif, une femme boit et fume.

Les premières images laissent entrevoir une ambiance de café concert à demi désert. Tout au fond des hommes jouent au billard, un contre bassiste attend, un homme tiens un archet, un métallophone cache en partie une femme.

Au premier plan une femme fume. Elle fume une cigarette, porte un body noir, sa mèche décolorée tombe sur son front, elle est énorme. La bière flotte sur le piano, la femme à des piercings dans le nez, elle incarne la démesure.

Cette femme offre sa chair au public, elle va jouer sa peau sur cette chanson.

Dans une autre vidéo du même concert, la caméra est à contre champ (love bug –c.f you tube), on voit l'assistance clairsemé, le public ne semble pas spécialement venu pour l'écouter.

Des premières notes tintent sur le métallophone, Sarah tape sur le piano, elle se racle la gorge, boit une nouvelle gorgé de bière, elle est prête.

Une note dans les basses, elle lance son appel. A qui s'adresse cet appel ? Au public ? Aux musiciens ? Aux esprits ?

Le souffle traverse des cordes vocales imprégnées de tabac, de nuits blanches, d'alcool, de solitude, de vie.

Le début du son est très nasale, devant le masque, la bouche est grande ouverte.

L'appel se module le son [ou] vient habiter sa généreuse poitrine, le son est moins violent, plus doux pour elle.

L'appel à retentit comme une sirène, un champ de muezzin, il va falloir partir au turbin, le rythme débute comme une machine qui se met en route.

Elle frappe le piano, régulière comme un pilon, sa voix porte le rythme and blues, le flot, les saccades de quelque chose qui avance.

Ca avance comme quelque chose de lent, de résolu, de puissant, une locomotive, un bateau avec une roue à aube.

Tout son corps est possédé par la musique, plus rien n'existe autour, on pense que rien ne pourra l'arrêter.

La voix a gardé l'accroche nasale du début de l'appel et l'amplitude poitrinaire de la fin de l'appel.

Elle a les yeux fermés, la mise en route se termine par un cri, elle semble perdu l'espace d'une seconde, ouvre les yeux et commence une série d'accord.

La machine repart de plus belle, elle crisse, siffle, le souffle est haletant, le corps chante comme un bateau qui craque.

Elle remet du charbon dans la chaudière, elle éructe, interpelle, elle chante sa révolte, elle est sauvage.

C'est un chant de résistance, elle nage contre le courant.

Quand elle s'essouffle, sa colère se fait désespoir, elle se reprend, elle court devant la mort. Sur quelques mesures ses doigts se fond léger, son corps semble moins lourd quand le piano s'envole.

S'était une ruse pour tromper l'ennemi, elle revient sorcière dionysiaque pour hurler son sabbat. C'est un combat, la scie musicale comme un ange regarde se débattre la chanteuse, elle se bat avec le piano, avec son souffle, elle donne tout ce qu'elle a.

La fin de la chanson sonne comme un gong. Assoiffée elle s'empresse de se servir une nouvelle bière, le match va reprendre.

On sent qu'elle chantera toutes les chansons de son concert, qu'elle fera tous les concerts de la semaine, et qu'elle tiendra toutes les semaines qu'elle pourra. Elle chante à en mourir pour réveiller les morts.

Audrey Pernell

Taking in Sarah McCoy's performance of "Merry go round", I ask myself what exactly is so worthy of a critical essay? Don't get me wrong, I think her performance is wonderful. The raw emotion behind her scream, the delicate precision of the piano, her beer drinking–cigarette smoking–scantily clad, fat, sweaty self onstage is all very engaging and entertaining. I appreciate her ballsy attitude, vocal abandon, and technical skill as a musician. I think she is a very talented artist. And yet, I don't really find this performance particularly innovative or special when I consider the legacy of blues, gospel, soul, rock, metal, etc, etc, artists who have been part of Western history and popular culture for decades. I enjoyed the performance, I think she's fantastic, just as she is, but I feel really no inspiration to analyze it. It doesn't stir anything in me that I haven't already felt when listening to the greats: Koko Taylor and Janis Joplin to name a few.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ybNulPIo-k>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVfoT1r8Ay4>

And then I started thinking that maybe my attitude is what is interesting, worth writing about. The fact that now, in 2013, I can witness Sarah McCoy and think so little of it. Not to be-little her, but to take it in and not be sooooo impressed or shocked or offended as I once was, before I started studying with Roy Hart teachers. Ten years ago, her screams would have inspired serious questions about vocal health; her physical appearance would have disgusted me; her whiteness would have put me off. Now I can say, "Do your thing. More power to ya." I can appreciate from experience what it feels like to "break my beautiful voice", on and off stage. As a teacher, I have had the privilege of hearing so many different voices, of witnessing all kinds of strange and unique artistic processes. My Roy Hart training has taught me to be more generous with my listening. It's hard *not* to find value in most voices I hear.

Over the past few years of teaching, I've also been impressed with how much faster my students learn. They seem to suffer from less vocal and artistic prejudice than I experienced and harbored when I first started down this creative path. I've seen students scream the blues in the course of one semester, often in just a few classes – something that took me years to muster the courage even to try. I don't think it has to do with my capacity as a teacher; the fact is, the next generation has enjoyed a musical and vocal diversity that once was kept hidden within specific cultural contexts. I think that today's students aren't as burdened with the same social baggage that I carried for so long. For many, screaming just isn't that big a deal anymore. Not that there isn't work to be done. We all have our shadows to face. But I'm observing that for many students, the big discoveries often happen in more subtle kinds of work. It's less about the thrill of screaming, of showing your big fat and ugly. The *ah-ha!* moments seem to come when people let go of their expectations of a specific end-result and start to intuit where their voices want to travel and what they uniquely have to express, in any given moment, be it a scream, a sigh or a whisper (A thought... for me this is the essence of singing the blues, part of the tradition's history that I feel has escaped popular convention...another essay perhaps?).

To sum up, I was impressed with McCoy's voice performance, but not so inspired considering the bluesy context. At first blush, I feel that the raw screams and provocative way of being onstage have long been accepted and expected in blues performance. Perhaps I would think differently if I heard her voice in some other musical context. What would happen if she took the scream out of the blues, or the blues out of the scream? Would it fall on deaf ears?

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Marion Rampal

31 Decembre 2013

Sarah McCoy,
Big Easy & the Hobo Bayou Walkyrie
Fragments de courte vue

C'est moi qui ai forwardé la vidéo de "Merry Go Round" à Enrique, Linda et d'autres amis de Panthéâtre.

Un ami nous avait fait suivre à Martin et moi ce lien car un copain à lui commençait à manager la carrière de Sarah McCoy. Notre ami pensais reconnaître dans "Merry go round" un air connu, et doutait donc qu'il pût être une composition de McCoy, c'est pourquoi il nous a demandé ce qu'on en pensait.

Merrygoround

comme

la plupart des compositions de Sarah McCoy et de son groupe, les

OOpsie Daisies évoque

d'autres ritournelles bluesy ou folk, ou encore de chansons de

marins. On reconnaît facilement dans le style de la demoiselle et de son groupe une certaine alternative folk américaine, accro au vintage, à l'unplugged,

aux images d'Epinal de la *hoborie*

(j'invente le mot, les Hobos sont ces travailleurs vagabond durant la grande Depression. Il y a plus sournois que la *hoborie* c'est la *hoboborie*, exercée elle par des gosses de riches surdiplomés

qui jouent du Bluegrass habillés en guenilles)

On est d'emblée dans une esthétique dégliguée, chère à Tom Waits, de cabaret pirate et de chiens à trois pattes qui hurlent à la lune.

Le blues blanc,

alcoolique par principe,

buriné par essence,

romantique de surcroit.

New Orleans est son port d'attache, ville pirate aux milles douceurs et noirceurs, berceau toujours vivant d'une tradition musicale riche et complexe, et surtout, paradis des musiciens alternatifs qui peuvent jouer tous les jours aux quatre coins de la ville, entre les parties privées, la manche dans les rues piétonnes, et surtout des gigs plus ou moins officiels dans tout ce que *Big Easy* compte de rades et clubs à concerts, des plus improbables aux plus mythiques. Sarah McCoy se revendique également d'une forme de théâtralité, puisque ses concerts se veulent décalés, voire acrobatiques, qu'elle chante à l'envers, la tête dans une bassine de zinc, ou qu'elle martèle un blues à l'aide d'une chaise inlassablement fracassée au sol.

Une mince enquête révèle que McCoy porte aux nues deux influences majeures que d'aucun pouvait déceler dans sa voix: Tom Waits, donc, et plus étonnant, Fiona Apple.

J'aurai du mal à produire une critique de la chanteuse et de la songwriter

qu'est McCoy.

Avant tout parce qu'à mon sens, elle ne se place pas dans une catégorie d'artistes dont il faudrait critiquer la musique et la voix. J'aurai du mal à la placer dans le territoire des voix bluesy extraordinaires d'aujourd'hui que sont Trixie Whitley, Shemekiah Copeland, même Fiona Apple... Et j'estime qu'elle est plus, comme d'ailleurs elle le prétend, à la recherche d'un son "à la Tom Waits", qu'ancrée dans la tradition vocale blues, si variée, qu'on pu distiller avec génie Big

Sarah Quintana

Sarah McCoy's *Merry Go Round* and Lost-Soul Singing

For a religion to be a religion it has to descend on you, descend and descend and descend and knock you to the ground and make you believe whether you want to or not. Something that you hate because it's going to kill you but you can't stop. That is the only religion that is convincing. The only one.

– David Plante, “*The Accident*”

Sarah begins with a thirsty swig of beer, sucking on a cigarette. But the beer runs dry, the cigarette has a hole in it and the piano is out of tune. Rock ‘n’ roll. She pounds on the frame and during a deliciously sordid performance of “*Merry Go Round*,” her cigarette rolls inside of the piano and gets lost. Blessed it was broken, only Sarah’s singing voice bursts in to flames. It is nice to see someone so graciously go to hell.

Sarah’s singing is anything but virginal and completely pure at the same time. It is honest as sin. It is not soul singing it is “lost-soul” singing for she embraces bacchanalia. She makes you think of James Brown, Screaming Jay Hawkins and the shouting vocals of early punk rock/hardcore, all consequences of early ecstatic vocalizing and the merger of African and protestant traditions.

(http://www.pantheatre.com/archives/pages/forum_MV05_french_prophets.) And there is religious fervor and conviction in her drunkenness.

The broken voices of blues-men, the crazed wailings of evangelicals, and the reckless promises of politicians: these are familiar songs in the South. While, the intro to “*Merry Go Round*,” takes us temporarily to the East and Sarah’s accent is anything but Southern, she fits right in. She situates herself vocally and actually below the Bible belt— a New Orleans dive bar, the anus or vagina of North America, where we are all fucked and in need of salvation. This is a voice that gives birth (and shits) and exemplifies the model of “born-again” therapies like primal screaming and rebirthing.

In Lost-soul singing there is an annunciation— the conception of a new idea from a mystical or mysterious origin (Gablik/Plante, *Conversations before the end of Time*). Here, Holy Spirit descends in diabolical screams. “*These are the songs that come from under bridges! I am covered in dirt . . . in a Barroom full of Slobs!*” With her band, a gypsy, gutter-punk circus, the tune turns sea-shanty and rages into a performance as dramatic as an opera. But in opera, there is no shouting and screaming. Murder and broken hearts herald no blood-curdling cries such as these (Wikipedia).

Sarah takes us to church, but not just any church: an ecstatic hell-fire and brimstone cult where the cries of the possessed are more likely to make you believe in Satan than in Jesus. This performance of “*Merry go Round*” makes me believe in Satan. Sarah is the reverend of lost-soul singing—preaching vice, the underbelly of bacchanalia and the thick sweetness of “I’d do it again” damnation.

New Orleans Singer-Songwriter Sarah Quintana began her musical studies in high school at New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. She attended Loyola University New Orleans, earning a bachelor’s degree in English Literature and French while continuing her musical education. With a background rich in jazz, roots music, and folk, Quintana plays locally in New Orleans and tours in France alongside saxophonist Raphael Imbert and La Companie Nine Spirit.

For more information, visit www.sarahquintana.com

David Goldsworthy

Vocal performance,

So who is this woman Sarah Macoy who belligerently attacks vocal art in this way?

I'm reminded of early RHT public performances, entirely pre-verbal. "Language is dead, long live the voice" - the battle cry of the late 60's in Roy Hart History" - and "le théâtre du Cri - l'écho des origines" - headlines of an article written by Catherine Clement for the "Quotidien de Paris" after an RHT performance at "l'Odéon" during the "Theatre des Nations" theatre festival created by Jean louis Barrault. 66

For the most part our utterances were extravagant, extreme, guttural, hideous, (Audio extract "Mama mammal" by Vivian Young, "Halleluyah" Chorus, with Nadine Georges as soloist, the magic chord etc largely un consumable by the "average theatre-goer" (often those who remained at the end of the "show" were potential candidates to become part of "the group"!)⁴⁵

but fascinating evocations of those ancient and inhuman energies lurking in the depths of the human soul. These vital and creative energies, become dangerous time bombs under the weight of layers of judeao-christian culture

The Roy Hart method was to dig into the mind and body (by whatever means) to bring this archetypal vocal energy to the surface, in part, to free the individual from his historical chains, but also to re-create antique ritual and reconnect the "person" to a collective unconscious,

This was the phase of the work in the London studio where it was more or less unconceivable to sing a song without tearing it apart, ripping it's guts out, stripping off the layers of veneer and politesse, and showing total unconcern for the iconoclastic dictatorship of "pure" sound"⁴⁸

Some autobiography : what brought me to " voice work" in the beginning was not the charismatic presence of Roy Hart. (I met him some time after beginning to take voice lessons)³¹

I was troubled - I had a lot of life energy "blocked". My intuition told me that there was a way to deal with this outside of "normal" clinical therapeutic practice. Artistic expression seemed to be the way, but I wasn't inspired by any of the traditional art forms I came across and subsequent readings of the modern anglo-saxon existentialists took me towards the Jungian theory of archetypes - a very helpful model to explain personal "problems"

"secret theatre - not for everybody" In Herman Hesse's cult book "Steppenwolf", Harry Haller, in search of himself came upon this mysterious sign, which often disappeared. It led him to a process of "self work" to be (in some ways) "reborn". A process of self confrontation leading towards deliverance from a history of academic culture, and the imprisonment of his senses.⁶⁰

The "RHT" was at that time (it no longer is) a sort of Magic Theatre, not for everybody.¹⁸

My first voice lessons consisted of ne hour of going to the limits of my voice in depth and height, and to the point of physical exhaustion (you see signs of this in Sarah Maccoy's performance)

Usually vey hoarse afterwards, I was freed (for a while!) from the incessant internal dialogue I was used to.

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I felt more "permeable", alive, and more sensitive to colours , perfumes, sounds ,connected to a more "real" self.

What inspires Sarah to give her kind of performance?

Is she a "furnace" of wonderful, wild, wounded energy, living on the edge, one foot in heaven and the other in hell, neglecting her look and her health, seeming to be oriented towards slow suicide?

Vocal performance for me today contains this explosive energy, but moderated by a form of conscious control, and the development of the voice over a large harmonic scale which makes me feel now more like an "improviser / composer".

PS : here is a comment on Sarah's performance from an American friend living in Berne

"yah sara mcoy is good, the energy takes her over...interesting she sings blues but plays a kind of sweet classical piano she found the -mask- which allows art »

Sharon Feder

Response to *Merry Go Round* Sarah McCoy
in preparation for the 2014 Pantheatre Forums on “Dreams”

I am writing this after weeks of having first seen and reflected on the video sent of Sarah McCoy singing *Merry Go Round*. Rather than reviewing it and attempting a thorough analysis of any kind I will, instead, reminisce a little – offering up some of my own associations, feelings and fantasies. Which have hovered over and around the stimuli, both the video of her performance and Enrique’s invitation to write for and participate in the Pantheatre Forums on “Dreams,” which bring back the myth of Marsyas and Nick’s Hell Canto, that dominated much of the period when my presence was constant during the series of Myth and Theatre Festivals for “Myths of the Voice” between 2004-2006.

First, on *Merry Go Round*, and “The Incredible Sarah McCoy.” Upon hearing the song, especially the chorus and her rendition, I was reminded of the song “Misery is the River of the World” from Rober Wilson’s *Woyzeck*, with music by Tom Waits. Interestingly, the singer is an impressive, large, and voluptuous female with a deep and charred voice, creating a whirlwind around which, nearing the end of the play, all the characters revolve in a circular dance/ritual/sacrifice. I remember little else about this Wilson piece. The message and realization of this one song had a significant impact, like a nightmare pulling all the pieces of the story, including my own place in the audience—off to the side and up in a balcony seat, my view partially barred by a column, a begrudged fault of the architecture at l’Opera de Paris—down, deep into a vortex of red light and shadow, rhythm and darkness, a celebration of suffering, a way of laughing at and sending suffering to Hell ... and going down with it.

Sarah McCoy’s *Merry Go Round* offers a smaller glimpse of this centripetal downward pull in the rhythm of the song, its mood and her rendition, with her body, her side-remarks, her rough voice and face reddened and sweaty. In contrast, the title image, of a merry-go-round, offers a centrifugal dynamic, suggesting the things will fly off from the center if they don’t hold on, as well as its associations to childhood, its nostalgia for merriment, or is it Maryment? As in the Virgin Mary? Could it be nostalgia for virginity? “This is the way the merry go round when your man leaves you and you don’t want him back.” Here I step back a moment and remember her off-song actions, attitudes and speech (including her relationship to both the camera and the other musicians) and how these contribute as much to the meanings carried by her “voice” as does the quality of her sung voice. While her sung voice takes me down one path, the impressions of her performance from the beginning of the video to the end, take me down another— the two meeting and intertwining in interesting ways.

A few images and impression from the video of the performance of *Merry Go Round*: A hand held camera settled on or near the piano gives us a close and near frontal view of large and voluptuous women dressed in a fitted and very revealing black (shorts and tank top ... or is it a negligée?) pierced through the nose, her long died blond/brown hair dreaded and held back... dreaded and held back ... Hmmm. Her cigarette, lit, is sucked and unsatisfactory, and she wonders if there is a hole in it, before she places it on the piano and takes a swig of beer. I, watching, am admittedly impressed by her confidence to display herself in this manner (I tend to diet before a performance ... a theme I will come back to later.) At the same time, I am also repelled by what, at first, strikes me as aggression even arrogance, and hardened heartedness. I begin to read her attitude as a kind of cover, or cover up, distancing myself from her both as audience and as an artist, keenly aware that I have been managing similar qualities and dynamics, albeit in different ways, in my own current work on destruction. On a later viewing this repulsion is not as severe, and I can listen more to the lyrics and singing. I believe this is because of how she ends the song.

Before continuing to describe the end of her performance, and all that occurs after she has finished singing, when her actions and speech offer a different angle and insight into the prism of her character, my mind jumps to pioneer feminist film theorist, Laura Mulvey and her lesser known article titled *Pandora: Topographies of the Mask and Curiosity* in “Sexuality and Space” where she states her intention to “use the story of Pandora to illustrate how the topography of seductive surface and concealed threat make up the iconography of the femme fatale.”¹² My term, ‘cover up’ in the previous paragraph, like Mulvey’s term ‘make up’ in this quote, both play on the inside and outside topography of the feminine mask and dynamics of masquerade. While the term ‘make up’ also refers to the coming together of two (lovers or friends) after a break up, it differs from my term, ‘cover up’ which aside from being foundation (the skin colored cream used to hide unseemly pigments and spots) connotes criminality just under its surface. Clearly, Sarah McCoy has a seductive style and appearance that contrast radically to Ingrid Bergman’s, the heroine of *Notorious*, analyzed by Mulvey for her article, though her allure is not altogether different.

In order to prevent from going too much on a tangent, and because I wish to remain writing associatively and not (too) analytically, I will continue by inserting some excerpts of my own writing for a chapter of my masters thesis, “Destruction e.t.c”, on the subject of Pandora and Mulvey’s reading of the myth as it pertains to voice performance —which I feel are relevant both here and to the theme of the Forum.¹³ This can allow me to continue through to other impressions and associations.

I continue now with the final quote from the footnote, an axiom, “The wonderful war between words and the voice,” which is taken from a lecture Enrique gave at Abersytwyth at the Centre for Performance Research’s,

¹² Page 57 Laura Mulvey, “Pandora: Topographies of the Mask and Curiosity,” *Sexuality and Space* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992, p. 54

¹³ Page 44/45 Sharon Feder, “Destruction e.t.c” Thesis, Masters in Advanced Studies in Scenography.

“Mulvey adds that the anxieties occasioned by the figure of a woman caught within the inside/outside polarity can be identified iconographically with Pandora’s, due to the proximity of her infamous box, ‘a small box (or jar) ... that contained all the evil of the world.’ Box and jar are related metonymically. Both are containers and both carry, in the story, ‘a forbidden secret locked away.’ As ‘motifs associated with the female body,’ moreover, both are similarly ‘subjected to the dialectics of inside and outside.’ Following the same logic, Mulvey continues, ... the box has a spatial structure that relates back to the topography of Pandora herself: her exterior mask of beauty concealing an interior of combined mystery and danger. The mask and the box each conceal a secret that is dangerous to man’ (*Topographies*, pp. 62-63) ...

“For our purposes, it is important to note that the motif of the womb (hysterium), the box within the box in the female body, ‘is not subject to the same taboos as the female genitalia.’ Instead, as Mulvey notes, the latter is linked both topographically and metonymically to the female voice, her mouth being the box from where it springs. Mulvey’s assertion that ‘the secrecy associated with female bodies is sexual and linked to the multiple associations between women and privacy,’ further cements this association. (*Topographies*, p. 66). For the voice is not only the vehicle whereby secrets are kept or disclosed, the passageway joining our inner and outer worlds, but also an important source of power, private and public.”

“... The work done with voice in the Wolfson/Hart tradition claimed as early as the 1950’s that men and women are able to cross gendered lines leading to the development of extended range vocal technique. At the onset, the ideal to strive for became known as the ‘Eight Octave Voice’. Even more profoundly however, is the approach whereby ‘voice work’ itself functions like the creative process wherein one listens to the internalized sound-image, embodying it before and while expressing it externally, often without knowing what it will become when finally sounded/heard/developed. In the early stages of a vocal composition the voice is as yet undefined and grows gradually by means of its own recognition. Consequently, if the voice is the muscle of the soul, as is commonly held, then the curiosity to know oneself can be said to be fueled by the materiality of the voice itself.”

“If the voice both provides the content and is the vehicle whereby the self can be heard and potentially communicated, then the mask of fully formed words and melody can be said to stand in opposition to the voice like the ego does to the sexual instinct. Working with unformed and ‘broken sounds’ is then an invitation to the audible process of transformation. The Wolfson/Hart traditions calls this ‘the singing process.’ It is described at length by Alfred Wolfson in his unpublished writing, pertinently titled *Orpheus, the Way to a Mask*. In the developing stages of voice-based performance, the struggle between pre-formed, ‘pure’ vocal sound, recognizable melody and speech becomes paramount. Enrique Pardo, heir to the Wolfson/Hart tradition of voice work and my mentor, calls this ‘the fabulous war between words and the voice.’ Like the ego in the transformative process... in the singing process the mask falls apart as it reconstitutes itself in an endless dance of the struggle for signification.”

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“Giving Voice Festival” 2004, as an introduction to the new theme for that year’s upcoming “Myth and Theatre Festival” *Myths of the Voice*. The axiom was, as far as I know, not repeated again, at least not when I attended the series of festivals in the subsequent years. Still, my interpretation of it is largely a result of the research that took place there as well as my own experience with RoyHart/Pantheatre voice work and specifically with broken sounds the sub-topic of *Myths of the Voice* 2006.

The specific term “war” that Enrique employs in the quote reminds me now of the first book that I read by James Hillman, titled “A Terrible Love of War,” lent to me at Malerargues by our beloved Liza Meyer from her “incredible” library. Without the book in hand, I can only share from memory how Hillman’s talks of the blood the earth swallows ... demands ... as sacrifice in war, as well as our heightened senses and incomparable engagement in life and living during war that, despite or maybe because of the suffering, leaves normal life seeming dull. While there may be obvious associations here to the song “Misery is the River of the World” in a play like *Woyzeck*—which “deals with the dehumanizing effects of doctors and the military on a young man’s life,” (Wikipedia)—reflecting both the plot and Wilson’s choice of Music Director (I think all of us are familiar with Tom Waits and his voice), its application to Sarah McCoy’s *Merry Go Round* is less literal and more in the lines of my interpretation with regards to voice performance and broken sounds in the footnote. That is, until, at the end of her song, McCoy offers her first acknowledgement of and address to the musicians (otherwise left out of focus at the back and periphery of the camera’s frame and hers), when she shares her fantasy of the piano, her own instrument and primary support, bursting into flames as she sings—ignited by her own cigarette. While Tom Waits’ piano gets drunk (“the piano has been drinking”), McCoy’s is held at the edge of explosion. She, too, drinks, of course, from an impressively large pitcher of beer that sweats, as she does, in the heat of ... where are we again? New Orleans? Destruction indeed.

I now want to skip a stone and name a few other female singers, songwriters, pianists, whose “voices” have impressed me over the years. First, a song discovered during my latest residency and investigation into the Goddess Persephone, “Queen over the dead souls ... who’s name means bringer of destruction” (J.Hillman, *Myth of Analysis*). The song is by Tory Amos—overlooked, to my memory, by Nick Hobbes’ in his presentation of female singers of Hell Canto (or am I wrong?)—and is titled *Pandora’s Aquarium*, with the lyrics “... She dives for shells / With her nautical nuns / And thoughts you thought / I am not asking you to believe in me, Boy / I think you’re confused I’m not Persephone...” These lyrics helped me understand the place that Pandora took in my research before I began to look at Persephone and her role, along side her sister Aphrodite’s, in Psyche’s decent to the underworld—the focus of my current work and latest performance.

Persephone’s part of this story, too, speaks of a box with perilous contents and the dangers of curiosity and vanity. Her voice, like Pandora’s, has similar implications. Finally, I can address McCoy’s style and particularly her body, its largeness, and the way she carries herself. I will do this with a quote by Enrique, from a recent correspondence about Persephone where he states, “I think she was a premature - only 14, as we know (some say even 13) - full of character, probably anorexic (I could be going against Ovid here - who says she was playing in the narcissus field with “the big breasted daughters of Okeanos” - though I think Ovid saw her as she was...) - an impossible (certainly for her mother) dark-mooded, negative genius (reckless, rebellious, anti-motherhood..).” I would go with Ovid here myself. Though anorexia is probably the opposite end of the same stick and far more (self)destructive. It makes me think of the tragedy of Karen Carpenter whose anorexia completely explains her rendition and the lyrics “Im on top of the world looking down on creation and the only explanation I can find...” is that I haven’t eaten in days!!! No, Persephone is definitely not light headed from self-imposed starvation, no matter how ‘anti-motherhood’ you imagine her to be. Even Psyche, who does soar those heights, does so pregnant with her daughter Voluptas (meaning pleasure). No, Persephone needed quite a lot of strength to tear the narcissus flower with its deep and stubborn roots out of the ground and open up the earth for Hades to come and take her.

Having gotten that out of the way, I can return to McCoy's sung voice, for which I need to refer, again, to a subject of discussion from the years of *Myths of the Voice*. This time, to the figure of Janis Joplin who's allure to some Pantheatre students, as far as I recall, instigated Nick Hobbes' inquiry into female singers of Hell Canto. Nick's critique of Joplin's voice is in sync with my first impressions of McCoy's. If I recall correctly, Nick argues that Joplin's musicality was far too limited by its genre and as a consequence, the manner in which Joplin breaks her sounds is limited too. So I am curious to hear what he thinks of McCoy. While I do respect and enjoy Joplin's singing, and have even spent girls nights out offering rather entertaining impersonations, my adolescent crushes were on two different female singers, Annie Lennox and Nina Simone. I'm sure I was admitted into the B.F.A. Acting Program at U.B.C. thanks to my rendition of "My Baby Just Cares for Me." Having completely botched my second monologue for the audition, one of the faculty leaned forward and asked "Can you sing?" to whom I replied "Just a little," indicating the space of a centimeter between my thumb and forefinger. After the song, my future acting teacher, Neil Freeman, extended his arms out to the sides and said, "I think you can sing this much." Even though I may have sung the songs of my two diva idols, I was never fully able to match the voice of either: Annie Lennox for her sharp peaks and Nina Simone for her deep suffering. At the age of 16, when I had told my mother I wanted to be able to sing like Nina Simone, I received the reply, "I hope you never do." Implying, I hope you never suffer so much, and only suffering produces a voice like hers.

In 2004, Regardless of Nick's critique, Joplin remained an important figure for Pantheatre's female voice students, and became one of the core subjects of Enrique's lecture at "Festival Improbable," a three day festival of improvisation I curated in Paris (February 2005), based on the theme of demolition that took place in a site scheduled for immanent demolition (which sowed the seeds for my own research on the theme of destruction for years to come.) Significantly, the title of Enrique's lecture at Festival Improbable, "Demolition of Dreams," is in striking synchronicity with his chosen theme for the upcoming forums, and an important twist to my response to his invitation. You can view bits of his lecture online, at minute 3 of the 4-minute edited video of the 3-day festival:

http://sharonafeder-projects.blogspot.ch/p/festival-improbable_04.html

If there is interest in viewing the lecture in entirety, I can make it available online.

To paraphrase in part, Enrique, states "If there is a Goddess who will descend to defend Janis Joplin, in my opinion, it's Demeter" (Translation from French – mine), attributing Joplin's voice, her star status and her following to the cult of Demeter. Demeter is Persephone's mother. Goddess of the Harvest and the Earth, she is desperate when she finds out that Persephone is missing, abducted by Hades. She raises hell, and demands her daughter's return. Hmmm. Could it be that while it is possible to sing like Janis Joplin in the cult of Demeter... it is neither possible, nor desirable to sing like Nina Simone? Who would "descend" to defend her? Does she even need defending? If Persephone were the one to answer to, what man would dare?

In conclusion I want to share a discovery I made recently regarding a new etymology of the Goddess' name: Persephone, as "the threshing maiden" by Rudolf Wachter in 2005. (it is a short and complex explanation that I can send to anyone interested.) In his conclusion, Wachter states "Now, I believe, we know again what Kore originally did: she (helped to) beat the sheaves. This interpretation recalls the 'corn maiden' ... and, if accepted favourably, may have quite some implications for our understanding of the myth and cult of Demeter and her daughter, who used to be called up from the netherworld when the corn was ripe (Diodor. 5.4.5f. about Sicily)." To introduce his discovery, which seems to have been widely accepted, R. Wachter shows a photograph from Java, Indonesia, of young girls in the act of threshing wheat, which, like Marsyas' music, demands extraordinarily effortful physicality and is often realized in alternating rhythms. To accompany the image, Wachter quotes a German tale:

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“In a time before the Cholera break out in the Capital city of Munich,
a farmer in Tegernsee-Winkel saw, at night, his barn light up at once.
He took the Neighbors and watched through the cracks of the threshing floor gate.
They saw and heard three virgins threshing,
"we thresh, we thrash our arms for bread, and submit to death. "
Some say, the three girls were dressed completely in black,
but only the youngest boy of the family had seen the full apparition.
That was a hundred years ago.”

*Source: tales of the Isarwinkel, Willibald Schmidt, Bad Tölz,
1936, 1979. (translation from German, mine)*

Joserra Leza

Cómo mira un monje bobalicón y sonriente maricón estas imágenes desde su cuarto ???

mi recuerdo del video es algo borroso confuso

pero la fuerza salvaje rítmica domada por la notas de esta chica todavía está.

Siento respeto incluso me admira esas mujeres que se expresan con fuerza y arrogancia, su **queja** su desconsuelo y **malestar** como si pareciera que detrás de esa máscara no hubiera otra y otra y otra...presume de ser muy **única** pero seguro que esconde más.

También me recuerdo los golpes de cerveza sobre el piano, esta cerveza no es la cervecita sevillana, esta servida en jarra fuerte ! y los golpes son ecos del golpe de ataud!!! la cerveza sevillana como sabes se bebe en cristal fino y se bebe a todas horas para llegar a **desatar** otro lamento otro "quejio" más atenuado y menos virulento y "vivo" pero sórdido también.

Por eso me gusta repasarlo en mi memoria porque por un lado me anima a recordar "esa" queja de metales pesados y me incita a correr hacia otros lugares mas ligeros y graciosos donde encontrar mi voz

y mandarte un gran abrazo querido.

Joserra agradecido porque te acuerdes de él.

Larissa Antunes

Analise critica de Larissa Antunes.

Cuando se escucha a la actuación de Sarah McCoy se puede observar una intensa relación entre voz, personalidad, instinto y sentimientos. Sentía escuchar la voz de un alma que no busca llegar a las notas, pero que siente y expresa su naturalidad.

Además, me dio una cierta angustia por escuchar una voz que me parecía ultrapasar los "límites". Lo que me molestó y llevó a la pregunta: ¿Cuál es el límite de nuestra voz? Conozcamos la medida de nuestros límites?

Es muy difícil conocer la totalidad del ser humano, que vive en una sociedad donde la adaptación se relaciona directamente con la represión de los deseos, actitudes, y formas de pensar y de actuar. Ponemos las máscaras sociales que nos sirven muy bien. Nos adornan, protegen y aseguran una relación social segura y buena. Y si hacemos este ajuste a nuestra personalidad, también no lo estamos haciendo con nuestra voz? ¿Cómo sabemos se utilizamos toda nuestra voz y sus alcances, si no tenemos fuerza de hablar lo que pensamos para la sociedad? Tenemos tanto miedo de rasgar nuestra voz ...

En nuestra vida civilizada, nos hemos concentrado tanto en actividades dirigidas a la consciencia, que a menudo nos alejamos de nuestra esencia. ¿Y cuál es la esencia?

Hay muchos teóricos que la describen con diferentes nombres: "inconsciente", "Hades", "alma", "el infierno" ... Todo para hablar de una parte de nosotros que parece estar lejos de lo que conocimos.

El camino a este encuentro con el desconocido es individual, pero se habla como el alcance de lo que se puede encontrar es grande. En "La naturaleza de la psique", 1991, Jung dice que "el inconsciente no sólo contiene todo el material olvidado del pasado de la persona, pero todos los rasgos heredados que son la estructura funcional del espíritu humano" (p.1).

Así, el camino para encontrar con el "interior" parece una manera distante, y a veces desgarradora, porque "yo sé lo que tengo, pero no saben cómo encontrar". Sin embargo, algunos autores como Alfred Wolfson muestran que las cosas pequeñas pueden tocar nuestro ser interior, y pueden indicar una ruta para nuestro polo opuesto. Él dice: "*One must go into oneself first to be able to go out of oneself... To go into oneself also means to recognize one's own hell... But to search for the alternative road, the one that leads to the opposite pole. It is more important to be touched deeply by a few things than to try to comprehend everything*" (BRAGGINS 2012, p.59.) (Primero hay que entrar en uno mismo para ser capaz de salir de sí mismo ... Además de entrar en uno mismo significa reconocer el propio infierno ... para buscar el camino alternativo, el que conduce al polo opuesto. Es más importante ser tocado profundamente por algunas cosas que tratar de comprender todo.)

Tal vez la forma de conocer a nuestros demonios sea dejarse llevar por cosas pequeñas, impulsos y sentimientos, que están más allá del propio control; la preocupación de bien o mal; o el alto nivel de necesidad de complacer a otras personas. En el video "Mary Go Round" se nota el desapego crujiente de la cantante a la percepción de los demás. Ella estaba totalmente envuelta a sus impulsos y parecía confiar en lo que hacía.

Sin embargo, en mi experiencia como psicóloga, me di cuenta de que para salir de control y conectarse a la necesidad natural, es necesario tener confianza en sí mismo. El control parece una respuesta a la inseguridad por el miedo de la represión; o de no ser aceptados y amados; también para no ver lo que es feo, entre otras causas. Por eso, puede ser más fácil de lograr la despersonalidad social después de haber construido su propia

voz con fuerza. Así, para mi, la voz tendrá que cantar “canciones conocidas” antes para así tener la fuerza de buscar la realidad que la atraviesa y precede.

Jo sigo en la búsqueda de mis infiernos y me inspiro en infiernos de, que a menudo parecen me hacer reflejar mi profundidad que muchas veces no puedo ver con mis propios ojos ... y solamente siento ... Así como sentí con la canción " María Go Round " y otras canciones que siempre me escapan a la razón . Me bueno!
Gracias a Sarah McCoy por compartir tu música y tu infierno .

"Tanto Hades como su reino se consideran ctónico , tierra, del inframundo, el mundo subterráneo , que es el sitio de los depósitos ricos , las metamorfosis , los pasajes de la muerte a la vida, desde la germinación . " Libro Ilustrado Mythology, 1998 , p.68 .

A Natureza da Psique, C.G. JUNG, 1991, Ed. Vozes.

The Mystery behind the Voice, SHEILA BRAGGINS, 2012.

Nina Negri

Commentaire Critique sur Sara McCoy

Cher Enrique,

Sans rien enlever à l'évidente puissance vocale de cette interprète, je trouve la performance de Sarah McCoy très violente et désagréable.

A dire le vrai, elle me met dans le plus grand embarras.

Je ne partage pas la nécessité de *se détruire* sur scène pour paraître *plus* authentique ou plus *inspiré*.

Effectivement, il y a eu une époque où la plupart des artistes étaient très *autodestructifs* (par exemple on a mentionné Janis Joplin la dernière fois qu'on s'est rencontré), mais c'était les années soixante et soixante-dix, et il y avait un geste de subversion politique implicite dans l'usage de drogues et d'alcool.

Aujourd'hui je ne comprends pas le besoin de *se faire du mal* pour *mieux chanter* ou interpréter une chanson.

Ça me paraît un geste forcé, artificiel et très peu authentique.

Lorsque je vois Sara McCoy faire cette performance, je souffre pour elle. Et pourtant je fume ! Mais je ne considère pas ça comme quelque chose de bon pour ma voix et pour mon corps, donc ce n'est pas quelque chose que je voudrais *mettre en avant* - ou sur lequel je voudrais insister - dans une performance publique.

Je pense que si elle prenait plus soin d'elle - dans tous les sens du terme - elle gagnerait en puissance, profondeur et crédibilité. Mais ce n'est que mon humble avis...

Nina

Christine Isherwood

Sarah McCoy's whole appearance flaunts current mores of what a female performer 'should' look like, never mind what they should sound like. She is large, wearing small amounts of clothes. Her outsider status is confirmed by her hairdo, which incorporates three different hair styles in one. She smokes her fag which she perches on the piano, drinks her beer from a pint glass, her rhythmic piano playing a call to arms, brings in deep guttural singing, a blues wail as in days of yore.

Her singing persona begins and ends with glottal engagement, the throat clearing 'huh', with one in the middle for good luck, as if the glottal stops are the quotation marks around the singer. Her piano, while an integral part of the performance, holds a dual role as liberator and prison guard. While enabling the song, voice and performance, it also chains her, and keeps her locked away; stymying her ability to move, to move into her body, at times binding her vocally and impacting on her ability to give of her song and self. At times a lot of her vocal power comes from the vocal folds, the dimensions of the vocal tube curtailed. Other times there is a deeper engagement with a more resonant grounded voice: her unamplified voice is considerable and powerful: yet it could be greater.

Her cigarette seems to have some kind of transitional objective, delivering her from self to performer. It has its story, its place: it is used to deflect attention away and simultaneously to call the attention. Her performance culminates with another mystery about the cigarette, this time it does not have a hole in it but has disappeared. She professes to believe it could have set the piano on fire, bringing drama, the possibility of danger, almost as if she does not consider what she is doing dangerous enough.

I would love to come across her, coughing and clearing her throat while she sings, hammering away at the piano, with her moments of blues disruption and Brechtian cabaret, the merry go round spun by the flamboyant left arm movement.

The pool players in the background carry on regardless as she sweats her guts out; as others do not pay attention, so she too has moments where she tries to pretend she is not giving it her all; the throwaway lines, the drink, the fag; not sustaining the moment after, the discarding of that which has been. I find the vocally younger, sweeter self which manifests at the culmination of the song interesting- here I feel a sense of betrayal as her throwaway self steps in: a different kind of hurt than that expressed lyrically, a more vulnerable being.

After the song her voice is a bit hoarse, with some vocal disruption occurring towards the end. She has a lot of push. It seems to have been an exertion, vocally and physically, and her voice sounds tired and somewhat abraded by the end. She's working her stuff, exhausted and sweating, in lineage of many of the great blues/ piano playing women of old. I imagine she's listened a lot to Screamin' Jay Hawkins.

Merry Go Round Sarah McCoy
Merry Go Round Sarah McCoy

Catalina Moya Marchant

Enero 2014,

**La voz como medio de manifestación del espíritu
Comentario crítico al video "Merry Go Round" por Sarah McCoy**

La primera impresión que recibo al comenzar a ver el video es el estado de Sara McCoy, me llama la atención lo deteriorada que se ve; la presencia de la cerveza y el cigarrillo constantemente, el sudor, sus ademanes de mujer ruda, su voz cantada versus su voz hablada, cuando termina de cantar dice “thank you” muy dulce y aguda. Aunque mientras canta accede a espacios de la voz que parecen interesantes y atractivos, también observo un gran esfuerzo por lograr esos sonidos virtuosos, cercano al daño y la lesión. Se escucha una carraspera constante, una disfonía e incluso tose en algunas ocasiones. En relación al trabajo de apoyo muscular para la voz, seguro que la posición corporal en la cual está sentada al piano le ayuda a ejecutar lo que hace, aún así su trabajo respiratorio es difícil, se ve muy cansada mientras canta. A ratos, se la ve en un estado similar a un trance, esto también le debe ayudar a acceder a ciertos sonidos. Cuando los sonidos rotos y el grito surgen por una necesidad mientras cantamos no hay daño, es más, son como llaves liberadoras del espíritu y la voz. No suelo forzarme a llegar a estos estados, la verdad no conozco en profundidad este tipo de trabajo, por supuesto que he transitado por ellos en algunas ocasiones, pero no es algo que en mi experiencia use recurrentemente. He visto a Audrey Pernel haciendo cosas impresionantes con su voz, su trabajo técnico y la conexión con su sonido, se lo permiten. Pero la mujer del video está muy dañada, imagino que luego de las presentaciones que realiza queda absolutamente agotada e incluso sin voz. Quizás no, no lo sé, pero el video que he visto más que impresionarme por su trabajo vocal, y pensar que es “The incredible Sara MacCoy”, como lo anuncia el video, me ha causado preocupación, ¿cuánto tiempo más podrá seguir cantando?

Los profesionales de la voz somos los más sensibles a sufrir patologías fonoaudiológicas, cuando me ha sucedido he sufrido mucho, y me imagino que para otros colegas debe ser similar, no puedo imaginar lo que me pasaría si perdiera mi voz totalmente, sería como morir. Cuando por medio de la voz nuestro espíritu no puede manifestarse morimos en vida.

La esclavitud negra ha sido uno de los procesos más salvajes e inhumanos de nuestra historia, los esclavos africanos y sus descendientes esparcidos por toda nuestra América del Norte, del Caribe y del Sur se encontraron con distintos colonizadores: británicos, franceses, españoles y portugueses entre otros, se encontraron también con distintas geografías y pueblos indígenas. El desarrollo de la lengua, la música y el canto dio por tanto, origen a diversos estilos. Los factores que se conjugaron en Estados Unidos dieron a luz a un gran movimiento de música negra, padres y madres del futuro Rock, Soul, Pop, etc... el Blues y el Gospel fueron la manifestación del espíritu de esos esclavos y sus descendientes, fue el grito mediante el cual expresaron años de tortura, en ese estado de crisis era la voz la única capaz de proporcionarles algo de libertad, la única capaz de traer al presente el hogar cercenado y añorado.

Quizá Sara McCoy, más allá de lo que como performer necesita provocar en el público, necesita también liberar algo, por eso elige ese estilo musical y no otro. Aunque se dañe, hay algo en su interior que le provoca mucho dolor o ira, y necesita liberarlo. Quizá si su trabajo vocal es producto de una real necesidad interna más allá de querer provocar un recurso espectacular performático con su voz, entonces quizá pueda seguir cantando, manifestando su espíritu por medio de la voz durante muchos años más.

Deborah Carrasco

Comentario crítico de Sarah McCoy

Primer plano, una mujer en un bar, bebe cerveza, transpira su cuerpo, hace calor, fuma, habla una voz ronca, fuma, bebe, por su sangre debe correr mucha cerveza. Se sienta en el piano y antes de cantar, hace lo que para mí sería transgredir una voz, fuma y bebe, su preparación es mi transgresión. Su cara está colorada, su pecho transpira como todo su cuerpo. Es una mujer grande, un gran cuerpo, una gran trenza, una gran voz. Tose y se pone a cantar. Sus gritos, su tos, su canto y su cuerpo hablan por si solos en ese lugar, su gran trenza de hembra, muy hembra, se menea, se impone al ritmo de su música en un lugar donde la mayoría podrían ser machos, su piano y su voz funcionan como un cuerpo entero vibrando para llegar a todos los rincones de ese bar, a los jugadores de pool, a los ebrios que podrían estar descansando en alguna esquina de aquella cantina, en el baño o en la cocina. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x90ozHjqD44> en este link hay un video donde claramente se puede ver como se posiciona Sarah en aquel bar). Ella vibra hasta sus extremos, supera y rompe los límites, todo está funcionando en ella sobre el 100%, el color rojo de su cara lo revela, su voz, sus sentimientos hablan desde una rudeza femenina en un ambiente masculino, es un ambiente en que su canto rompe el espacio y lo llena con mucha fuerza y potencia, es una fuerza cautivante, atractiva incluso violenta con su aparato, con su voz, con su corazón. Toca con fuerza el piano, golpea fuertemente con sus garras cada tecla, dejando caer su peso, se impone en el lugar y su gente, frente a su piano, con su cerveza y su cigarro, le canta a todos y a nadie a la vez, en ese lugar donde tal vez los hombres no van precisamente a escucharla a ella cantar, van a disfrutar de algún trago o a pasar el rato, me da la impresión de que con sus ojos cerrados ella viaja hacia ella, encuentra algo por ahí muy adentro, que rápida y ferozmente lo hace explotar, con todo, con fuerza, con gritos, con sus vicios, con su voz florece en una explosión titánica, sacando rápidamente lo oculto, gritándolo, incluso refregándolo, con escupo, con su canto y su tos. Y en este abismo, en ese riesgo a ojos cerrados me pregunto yo, que es lo que la sostiene técnicamente de principio a fin, como lo hace para partir así de potente y terminar mucho más arriba, sonando como lo hace, porque ella me da la sensación de destrucción, que se destruye cantando, destrucción para liberar su emoción y destrucción para transmitir esa destrucción. Cuáles son sus daños y como ella los ocupa en su interpretación, pasando a ser esa voz ronca una virtud tan atractiva en su canto. ¿Hay que destruirse para sonar así? ¿Cómo destruirse sin dañarse tanto? O cómo lograr destruir las estructuras, sonar así como suena ella, pero conservar aquello de mi construcción, que me permita mantenerme así de potente de principio a fin.

Deborah

Leonor Lopehandía

Opinión sobre Video

La imagen que propone es perturbadora y provocativa sentada en ese banco la ropa que lleva puesta, como su pelo está teñido, ya su estilo nos habla, nos dice quien es, desde como bebe, como fuma, su relación con el resto, con el espacio, con el piano.

Se puede percibir la hora, es tarde en la noche.

Quizás cuando ya todas las personas del Bar ya se han ido, o quizás un bar donde no va mucha gente.

La imagen, los músicos hacen que uno pueda echar a volar la imaginación y llegar a pensar hasta que sucede cuando ese bar cierra y ella se va a su casa.....

¿Le estará cantando a alguien o solo estará cantando junto con sus músicos para expresar un sentimiento, un estado, una forma de ver la Vida, una manera de relacionarse con el mundo?

Quizás todo junto, también es un grito al cielo, un lamento que mas de alguna vez cada uno a sentido en su corazón y ha querido tener la posibilidad de expresar, no por la posibilidad de tener un público, si no una explosión, un vomito al mundo de emociones guardadas.

Aparece un estado decadente, con una autoestima desgarrada, logro percibir una profunda lamentación de algo perdido.

Algo que no quiere olvidar, pero le duele y al mismo tiempo la alimenta.

La búsqueda o mas bien el encuentro y la utilización de la mayor posibilidad de sonidos, la apertura impresionante de sus tonos graves, que llegan a quebrarse, se vuelven provocativos también.

Provocativopor como a uno generalmente le enseñan como utilizar la voz de manera “sana y correcta”, hace todo lo contrario a lo que culturalmente se le denomina hoy como “El ser Sano”.

Me llama la atención y me gusta, es intenso, interesante.

Olivia Lanas

A partir de Sarah MacCoy

Cómo hacer para hablar desde un lugar menos común que el habitual, con las herramientas escasas con que puedo comenzar un análisis vocal de estas características.

Detengo o comienzo la escucha, me aventuro en la posibilidad de saber, los sonidos me recuerdan el pasado, en los escasos tiempos de alumna vocal. Sonidos rotos impresionantemente rotos, provistos de una profundidad no escuchada, un sonido que es parte del cuerpo pero que se disocia de este, ante la falta de asidero terrenal. Terrenalidad acostumbrada, siempre marcada por nuestro constructo social...

Todas las culturas son posibles de encontrarse en este sonido inicial de Sarah MacCoy, desde la familiaridad marginal (por lo de margen) de un pool bar hasta el sonido tribal representante ritual. Potencia acompañada de cuerpo y gesto lo que genera una resonancia escalofriante grandilocuente, apoyada de la presencia sonora de la respiración, lo que aumenta la insipiente llegada de la crisis que culmina en la utilización del recurso hablado/cantado.

Esta forma de sostener la presencia vocal, en una mixtura con sonidos de carácter roto, se ve acompañada por la forma en que toca el piano, construyendo escénicamente una coreografía coherente en su forma total. Recordándonos que la voz es cuerpo y que se presenta en el espacio desde su auténtica conexión.

Todos los elementos que interactúan en esta puesta, nacen del elemento performático del tiempo real, del frágil espacio en que se encuentra técnica y realidad (lo que acontece sin premeditación). Y en esta interacción que nace entre humo y cerveza, una interpretación sin miedos, explorando en las variadas posibilidades del universo sonoro. Sarah MacCoy realiza una clase magistral, nos muestra la belleza marginal de su trabajo vocal y nos regala intensidad y autenticidad.

¿Qué pasará con esta voz, que se aleja de todos los cuidados enseñados y heredados de la clásica escuela, humo, rotura...?

¿Con qué antiguas figuras femeninas relacionamos esta sonoridad?

Será que la voz refleja el alma y que el alma rota, ante tanta intensidad se desangra en sonidos bajos maravillosos y auténticos.

Lorena Prieto

Estimado Enrique,

Es la primera vez que escucho a esta artista. Me gustaría entender lo que dice la canción, para poder saber la razón de por qué la interpreta de esta manera. La primera vez que la escuché , la sentí muy violenta, y eso me hizo suponer que algo muy doloroso o rabioso debe sentir ella con respecto al contenido de la canción. La verdad es que no me agradó escucharla y temí por sus cuerdas vocales. La escuché un par de veces más, para saber cómo maneja la técnica para no quedarse afónica y quise fijarme muy bien en los matices que son difíciles de apreciar dentro de esta melodía rápida y gritada. Efectivamente se aprecian muchos matices y melismas que me imagino son difíciles de cantar de esta manera, puesto que requieren una voz ligera. Me llamó la atención que ella pudiera lograrlo estando en pleno grito. Su potencia vocal es bastante impresionante y recuerda los cantantes de rock. Lo que más me impresionó es su sentido del ritmo. Coordinar las manos del piano y al mismo tiempo proveer de fuerza y expresión una melodía relativamente simple, convirtiéndola en un acontecimiento teatral. Sin embargo se escucha a pesar de manejar la técnica del grito, una voz que trataré de describir como un metal sólido pero desgastado en uno de sus cantos (esquinas). Impresiona que su voz hablada contraste tanto con su voz cantada, puesto que suena mucho más dulce y delgada. Pero a pesar de eso, yo escucho en el trasfondo y de una forma muy velada, ese sonido característico de la voz afónica y gastada por cansancio. La voz que aparece cuando uno ha abusado tratando de alcanzar volumen o notas poco cómodas para su registro.

Creo que no sería capaz de escuchar un concierto entero. Hay muchas cantantes que saben gritar, pero que no por eso pierden el brillo o la belleza de su voz. Creo que el grito es un matiz más dentro de toda una gama de matices necesarios para expresar también otro tipo de sentimientos. Si ella fuese un violín, diría que atacó , raspó y percutó las cuerdas manejando el arco de una forma impecable (ritmo), pero que en ningún momento pude escuchar el sonido armónico y brillante que caracteriza al violín.

Si aplico esto a la voz, en esta interpretación me faltó eso. Un momento al menos donde la voz suene realmente bella. Porque creo que para expresar algo en plenitud, necesariamente tiene que haber contraste. Y así como es difícil manejar el grito dentro del canto, también es difícil alcanzar un sonido con color y brillo.

Oriette Castro Checura

Es la primera vez que escucho a esta artista. La escuché varias veces , la sentí un tanto rabiosa a ratos, por lo que pensé que quizás era algo doloroso o también violento el tema de la canción . Me gusto el juego de matices que manejaba y la técnica como no quedarse afónica a veces pensé que era tanto lo que esforzaba su voz, según yo, que temía que se quedara afónica. La escuché varias veces más, para saber cómo lo hacia para no quedarse afónica me imagino que tendría alguna técnica y también la escuche varias veces mas para fijarme en la cantidad de matices que maneja y son muchos tiene un una voz que me recuerda a cantantes como janis joplin y rockeros en partes que llamare como una técnica grito un potencial bastante poco escuchado por eso cuando se escucha sorprende le da fuerza a la melodía y ritmo y da fuerza y expresión a una melodía .Pero el hecho de cantar y tocar el piano le da un característica bastante rítmica en este estilo de canto donde se requiere de tanto sentimiento y fuerza, entonces se hace mas difícil la coordinación(a mi punto de ver). El grito muchas veces cansa pero en este caso no creo ya que tiene sentimiento, belleza es la única canción que escucho de ella quizás si escuchara mas canciones cambiaria mis comentarios y criticas y me ampliaría mucho mas y si tuviera mas conocimientos podría dar una critica mas amplia.

Carolina Larenas

...Una experiencia.... que simplemente me atrapó.

Durante los casi 6 minutos que duró el video, no pude dejar de quedar completamente enganchada...nada en mi cabeza...solo escuchar, ver...y sentir una profunda empatía con un dolor en el alma que llega a romper la voz...

Un dolor que si bien puede tener orígenes o un color muy distinto al mío, genera conexión por el solo hecho de habitar en el alma.

Fue estar absolutamente hipnotizada por alguien que simplemente es y está en el momento presente con todo lo que trae, para vaciarlo. Y con un desenfado tal, que me lleva a pensar mientras me rio: "Le da lo mismo si la están escuchando o no"...

En sus ojos y en su voz.. dolor, insolencia, oscuridad, locura, placer, sensibilidad, dulzura, humor, y exceso.....ante todo.... exceso..... La necesidad de encontrarse en esa abundancia de contrastes a través de la música, la hacen una personalidad notable.

Un canto oscuro, sucio y cotidiano como un vehículo para vaciar el alma. Para mí ella es un puente a través del cual, muchas voces cantan y hablan.

Cuando la vi y escuché, recordé una entrevista hecha a Jerzy Grotowski en la cual habla sobre su visión del teatro y recordé una cita:

"El teatro es un instrumento antiguo y básico que nos ayuda con un solo drama, el drama de nuestra existencia. Y nos ayuda a encontrar tal camino hacia la fuente de lo que somos"

Independientemente de que se está hablando del teatro, creo que esta afirmación es extrapolable a todas las expresiones artísticas. Desde mi visión, resulta innegable la razón de que Mc Coy es la cantante que es, no necesariamente por un gran virtuosismo o gran técnica, sino porque este es su medio para sobrevivir. Es una cantante no por el hecho de tener una "oscura" o "bella" voz; o un limitado o gran registro, sino porque ésta es su forma de sobrevivir, de ser y estar.

La manera en que se conecta con el piano, con su cuerpo, y sobre todo con lo que "carga" o "trae" vuelven el acto de cantar una necesidad real, un rebalse, un estilo que le pertenece y que como "performer" a ella le funciona.

Sigo pensando... y vuelvo a la entrevista de Grotowski cuando reflexiona en relación a dos cuestionamientos esenciales para él:

¿QUIEN SOY? Y ¿QUÉ HAY ANTES DE MI?

Preguntas difícilísimas de responder, pero que a través del arte, y en éste caso en particular a través de la música y el canto, quizás se puede encontrar algo...

Cuando la veo y escucho me cautiva notar cómo vive el momento presente tan intensamente.. y advierto muy claramente cómo lo que ella "trae", al entrar en dialogo con el entorno que la rodea, forman ese "algo" casi imposible de definir que me atrapa y me deja vacía.

La atmósfera del bar en donde está le otorga a su interpretación una teatralidad digna de una película de David Lynch o de Tarantino que para mí resulta inquietante, abriendo varios escenarios posibles al terminar la canción. Es como una pequeña escena dentro de una película.

No sé si alcanza el nivel de performance o no...lo que sí sé es que no me es para nada indiferente. Al contrario, me atrapa y conmueve.

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