Panel: The Brazilian Song of Oswaldo de Souza: musical landscaping
of Brazilian folk traditions

Paper: “Oswaldo de Souza’s Affective Musical Language:
Expressive Resources”

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Abstract

Poetry may be considered one of the major “inspiring sources” in Oswaldo de Souza’s songs. The composer himself was fond of writing poetic texts, providing the lyrics for the greater part of his songs with original melodies, mainly composed in the beginning of his career. In this repertoire, the interaction between text and music is such that the listener may perceive the text as sovereign and the music conveyed in such a way as to underscore the verbal communication, flaring up the poetic expression of the text. De Souza’s songs, therefore, stimulate the analytical reflection upon the interrelationships between lyrics and music.

Within this objective, we intend to delimit compositional choices that may be suggested by the text, having functionality in its expressive communication. Our investigation looks toward the expressive system of de Souza’s music, not considering its structural aspects.

Looking for a methodological orientation that would respond positively to the analytical objective, we decided to borrow a theoretical model from the style analysis of verbal language. Our model was derived from the “Rhetorical Figures”, especially from “figures of thought”.