CHORAL SINGING IN THE NEW NORMALITY

O CANTO CORAL NO NOVO NORMAL

EL CANTAR CORAL EN LA NUEVA NORMALIDAD

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How to refer to this article

ABSTRACT*:* The covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted the choirs, however, the use of digital technologies made it possible to continue artistic and social activities. This article identifies the challenges the scenic choir UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO encountered in this new modality and identifies the adaptations necessary for its musical performance on the various digital platforms available. The methodology adopted was Artistic Research (COESSENS; CRISPIN; DOUGLAS, 2009), combined with digital ethnography, conducting discourse analysis, choral composition for the GMeet environment, planning and reorganization of rehearsal strategies for the play, recording each stage, performance, and self-assessment followed by an analysis of the results. Through the data collected and the artistic results achieved, were considered the importance of a multidisciplinary team and the need for more knowledge about musical acoustics and creative practices for the new conductors.

KEYWORDS: Choir singing teaching. Composition for coral. Artistic research.

RESUMO*: Os coros foram muito impactados pela pandemia da Covid-19, no entanto, o uso das tecnologias digitais possibilitou a continuidade das atividades artísticas e sociais. Este artigo identifica os desafios que o coral UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO encontrou nesta nova modalidade e aponta as adaptações que foram necessárias para sua performance musical nas diversas plataformas digitais disponíveis. A metodologia adotada foi a Artistic Research (COESSENS; CRISPIN; DOUGLAS, 2009), aliada à etnografia digital, realização de análise do discurso, composição coral para o ambiente GMeet, planificação e reorganização de estratégias de ensaios da peça, registro de cada etapa, performance e autoavaliação seguida de análise dos resultados. Através dos dados coletados e resultados artísticos alcançados se considerou a importância de uma equipe multidisciplinar e a necessidade de conhecimento mais aprofundado sobre acústica musical e práticas criativas para os novos regentes.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVES*: Ensino de canto coral. Composição para coral. Artistic research.*

RESUMEN*: Los coros se vieron muy afectados por la pandemia del covid-19, sin embargo el uso de las tecnologías digitales permitió continuar con las actividades artísticas y sociales. Este artículo identifica los desafíos que encontró el coro escénico UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO en esta nueva modalidad y señala las adaptaciones que fueron necesarias para su desempeño musical en las diversas plataformas digitales disponibles. La metodología adoptada fue la Investigación Artística (COESSENS; CRISPIN; DOUGLAS, 2009), combinada con etnografía digital, realización de análisis de discurso, composición coral para el ambiente GMeet, planificación y reorganización de estrategias de ensayo de la obra, grabación de cada escenario, performance y realización de autoevaluación seguida del análisis de los resultados. A través de los datos recopilados y los resultados artísticos alcanzados, se consideró la importancia de un equipo multidisciplinario y la necesidad de un conocimiento más profundo sobre acústica musical y prácticas creativas para los nuevos directores.*

PALABRAS CLAVE*: Enseñanza del canto coral. Composición para corales. Investigación artística.*

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Introducion

Constant adaptations to socio-cultural dynamics are part of life. To a greater or lesser extent, we live in continuous transformations, but the demands imposed by the pandemic - COVID-19 - imposed radical adaptations in a short period. The pandemic greatly impacted choirs, however, the use of digital technologies made it possible to continue artistic and social activities. This article identifies the challenges UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO encountered and identifies the adaptations necessary for its musical performance in the various digital platforms available.

UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO is the result of activities in the mandatory discipline Choral Singing and Vocal Technique I and II and in the extension project that takes the name of the choir. The number of members varies from 20 to 60, depending on the community's participation, more or less assiduous. Based on the proposal of being a compulsory discipline and also a university extension, the choir serves as a place of musical experience and a conducting laboratory for the students of the Degree in Languages and Codes - Music, from the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), in the São Bernardo Science Center.

To envisage a study that could consider the scientific rigor and the malleability of art without dichotomizing Science and Art but rather uniting the paths for the production of shareable knowledge, we opted for Artistic Research, which we translate, literally, as Artistic Research, and which is a form of research proper to the Arts, the result of a European movement initiated since the Bologna Declaration (1999), on the unification of higher education. Thus, when we talk about Artistic Research, the term will be capitalized because it refers to a specific type of research with its characteristics, which, in our understanding, is in line with Coessens, Crispin, and Douglas (2009).

The methodology includes critical-collaborative action research (PIMENTA, 2005) and digital ethnography, where participant observation is the main instrument of data collection (HORST; MILLER, 2012), without discarding some elements of discourse analysis and artistic practice as an essential element from which the research questions emerge being answered. We emphasize that in Artistic Research, we have numerous research questions that should guide the artist-researcher during the process. Even so, our initial question was: what characterizes choral activity in different contexts and environments - in person and online? From this question, many others arose, leading us to the results presented in this text and are related to the objectíve of verifying the problems of choral music-making in the domain of digital platforms, which also involved testing multiple platforms (Google Meet, Bandlab, Whatsapp, Cleanfeed), listing

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the specificities of the student's contact with the platforms, proposing possible solutions to the challenges found, and verifying the applicability of the solutions proposed according to specific situations.

Environment and learning - context and relationships

We are dealing with a choral group operating in the countryside of the state of Maranhão, northeastern Brazil, and in a degree course that considers that the musician's education includes the voice as an inseparable element of the listening process. In general, the voice occupies several places in the training, and perhaps the most representative is the intonation of sounds. The practice of solfeggio is the most common in the area, besides the use in creative practices that involve free improvisation, and imitation of sounds of nature, for example.

In Maranhão, musical education in higher education is provided by two institutions, the Federal University of Maranhão, with two campuses, one in São Luís (the capital city) and the other in São Bernardo (the countryside) - both in the on-site modality - and the State University of Maranhão, with one course, also in the on-site modality, in the state capital and is present in several cities in the state, in the distance learning modality, in degree courses.

The camp/poles of the music courses in Maranhão do not count, in totality, with students who are singers, that is, we talk about students who are violinists, saxophonists, keyboard players, pianists, violinists, among others, or people who did not have a formal or informal musical education and hope to learn during graduation. This reality makes choral practice an experience accessible to all at different levels and, therefore, important for the experience of making music.

In the capital, São Luís, we have the Music School of the State of Maranhão "Lilah Lisboa de Araújo", which has a technical level and has been teaching instruments for longer than the universities. During the pandemic, individual lyric singing lessons were offered remotely, but choral singing was not, despite being a mandatory curricular component for all the school's courses.

When it comes to the effectiveness of remote communication over Internet networks, the quality depends on various factors that determine the communicative limits of certain digital tools and their functionality within this domain. For example, the data flow established in the connection between systems and servers depends on a functional physical-technological structure that coordinates the communication between platforms. Problems such as data transmissibility between devices connected to a network and structural limitations of most

videoconferencing software, such as interface limitations, data management limitations, and optimization limitations, further complicate the scenario.

Within the realms of communication through remote-digital resources, real-time synchrony is one of the major barriers that delimits this experience's limits. The impossibility of a simultaneous practice and satisfactory sound synchrony among the users engenders severe unfoldings in several educational layers of the performance and of the teaching of choral singing, for example, the articulation of collective sound perception, the collective listening of the musical group, dynamic and reciprocal among all that embraces a series of sensorial relations essential to the artistic practice.

Several aspects of the choral practice are being studied, but the individual performance and the performance that takes place with and in response to the other is the one that seems to be compromised, admitting that the group's listening, in the group and with the group is the generating matrix of the several possibilities of conducting the interpretation that the conducting seeks to determine. It is not only a matter of technical listening. It is about the development of active, participative, and group listening. We hypothesized that to do without this condition would be the same as creating the illusion of a choir without, however, providing the choral experience as a sound event resulting from a characteristic listening process. With this, the choral musical event that we knew before the so-called new normal would become a privilege for experienced musicians using internal, incorporated listening that, in turn, is the result of the experience of singing in a common space, sharing the same acoustics of the environment in which it is performed.

To affirm that the sensorial experience of singing together in the same physical environment is indispensable for the proper formation of the future music educator, would this be our exclusive perception while conducting the UFMA CANTa - CORAL CÊNICO or, in fact, did other music educators, conductors, and choir singers have the same perception? For this, we started to take the discussion to research groups and study the conversations, transcribing dialogues and analyzing the speeches that, later on, we present.

Digital literacy, being inserted in the technological environment, has been, in our daily lives, a constant demand since the requirements imposed by COVID-19 because it is a context in which the flow of information, communication, daily actions, and planning are performed, almost exclusively, by technological means, such as WhatsApp, Telegram, online newspapers, and course platforms. In our context, music education, mediated by technology, has meant a

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great change, requiring teachers and students urgency in managing resources to maintain the learning process.

Applications and platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Teams Platform allow music education focused on expository lessons that involve explanation and collective debate of theoretical content, however, in choral singing, these applications did not meet the expectation of synchronized collective listening. Cleanfeed[1] promised synchronization, but when we were in class, we were not successful in any of the attempts.

As for learning, the fact of being a discipline of choral singing in a music teacher training course, living a choral experience in the context of a degree course, by the very address of training, presupposes learning how to conduct a group practice of musical experimentation, including vocal practices of singing together. Therefore, we could not do without providing a meaningful experience that, in our opinion, the means and resources at hand did not contemplate.

The practice of resolving the questions - or the path is made by walking

Guided by the premise of Artistic Research, where practice must answer questions, we resumed choral practice only with undergraduate students, without the participation of the community to, along the way, decide how and where to go.

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In one of the approaches taken, we chose to use the Cakewalk Bandlab platform as the main tool for choral singing in the virtual environment. It is a Digital Audio Workstation - DAW - software for storing and managing audio. Among the various difficulties imposed by the teleconferencing platforms tested, the limitations in listening to other members in a synchronous musical activity, the problems of proper synchronization, and undesirable listening conditions in the google meet and clean feed platforms appear. One possible alternative approach was eliminating synchronous choral singing to make way for individual, individual choir member development. The desired musical result was producing an audio file that could be sent via email or Whatsapp and mixed with others later.

This activity consisted of each student recording an audio file where they perform their melody line using the available devices, cell phone, computer, or tablet, based on a synchrony reference. This main reference point consists of recordings of the separate SATB parts - soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass - digitally synthesized by computer using the midi language, widely used in notation programs - accompanied by a metronome. We call this a guide. This guide is

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[1] *Cleanfeed* - It is an online studio platform for live interaction and audio recording and promises to synchronize audio, from multiple voices, in real time.

the main reference for studying the precision of the heights corresponding to the individual parts of each choir member and also serves as a metric reference for rhythmic precision, facilitating later joining and mixing with the other audios.

Like ours, Eren and Öztug (2020) developed a study on the applicability of computer-generated samples as an auxiliary tool in learning choral singing. This practice is called a virtual choir.

> During the initial stages of the isolation period, handling the choir class has been particularly challenging for teachers; online platforms such as ''Google Meet'' or ''Zoom'' could not provide a real-time environment in which multiple people could sing together. To ensure that such an important class continued with minimum hindrance during distance learning, a supplementary tool was devised for students taking the choir course: the virtual choir. (EREN; ÖZTUG, 2020, p. 1118).

Among the many challenges encountered - in addition to developing a consistent pedagogical plan - we faced difficulties surrounding the relationship between the students and the platforms used. Because the process was much more focused on individuality - due to the handling of the virtual tools available and the isolated study - the affinity and technical mastery of the student in the virtual environment was essential in the process.

At the beginning of the pandemic - COVID-19 - the need for social isolation emerged. The various social transformations in the educational environment demanded from the student and the teacher the mastery of digital tools to meet the new possibilities of contact. Such a reality can be observed as a phenomenon that imposes profound transformations for the students - choir members - and the conductor-teachers. We see in the account of Grushka et al. (2021, p .7) when they state that "this was uncharted territory and my professional identity was about to experience a significant social and technological adaptation" that it was not exclusive to us, the need to retrace the path of teaching and learning.

At first, as part of the planning, we listed some considerations about the problems we had experienced with the previous activities of musical performance in virtual environments, with a focus on collective singing. We concluded that some of these practices in some environments had become very frequent and, in others, almost predominant. We can highlight the main one: the exaggeration in the audio editing processes after the activities, usually done by the teacher due to the meticulous and perfectionist character that such a procedure requires. We opposed this line of reasoning and work, considering it essential that the quality of the product of the choir class is a reflection of the learning path of the choir student, given our

teaching context, an interdisciplinary degree course in music, or other words, a training course for music teachers.

Notably, the most frequent editing approach consists of selecting small fragments of the track recorded by the choir and artificially synchronizing certain excerpts of the audio at the tempo of the music, creating another type of performance, now mediated and with direct interference of what we call virtual regency, that is, now the conductor, or as we chose to say here, the conductor-teacher, makes the decisions at the time of editing.

For us, two considerations at that moment of the research were crucial for the continuity of the process. The first one is the verification of the deconfiguration of the original performance through the editing of the audio, which, in turn, resembles an unreal and undesired result from the teaching-learning point of view, for the final product resulting from the choir's activity does not correspond to the reality of its happening, nor does it reflect the skills developed by them, The second, about the sound result of the activities, which should aim for a satisfactory result, yes, but one that, regardless of its small imperfections, reflects a real and complete performance by the choir member, recorded on audio.

Because the activity is centered on the choir member, we consider the result a precise instrument for the teacher's evaluation and the student's self-evaluation. Despite its limitations - especially in regards to the loss of audio quality- this evaluative instrument depends on the device in which the recording was made, and it is not easy to teach choral singing techniques. In this case, the sound parameter most affected was the timbre and the voice projection, limiting the levels of guidance that could be shared in a live rehearsal, especially about vocal technique. However, the recording preserves the elements we take as basic to vocal performance, precision in pitch, phrasing, and rhythmic accuracy. Finally, we started by analyzing these basic elements provided by the audio to know the difficulties and improve our perception of the real musical condition of each choir member.

Altogether, we recorded three choral pieces: Per Crucem - from the Song of Taizé, Night of Prayer - an adaptation of a Christmas song, and The Heart - a composition by the composer Francisco Silva, a student that graduated from our undergraduate course. Each piece has different characteristics and musical challenges; however, it is possible to perceive the learning curve in the result of each process. Following the chronological order, we present the links for listening to the results:

a)Per crucem[2].

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[2] Disponível em: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhqcjnEBCuI. Access: 10 jan. 2022.

b) Night of Prayer[3].

c) The Heart[4].

The use of the guides was the instrument that made synchrony possible within this environment. It also made possible a result from a learning path that offers novelty as to the study tools that are complementary to the choral work. In this aspect, the guides are a flexible individual study tool for the student, who develops individual skills despite the absence of contact with the choir in person. Eren and Öztug (2020) call virtual choir, in their denomination, what we call here the guides. About the expected results and chances that training with the guides can offer for the student, in their view:

> A series of assumptions are put together regarding the usability of virtual choir recordings during distance education. It is expected that students will have efficient practice sessions with virtual choir sounds; with the opportunity to practice anytime, anywhere, they will have more time to enhance their skills compared to real-life rehearsals, which are limited in number (EREN; ÖZTUG, 2020, p. 1119).

Looking at the guide as the main guiding tool, it is an exact reference point for the intonation of notes, the rhythmic arrangement, and the articulation of voices with each other. Eren and Öztug (2020) strengthen this argument by stating that:

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> Moreover, the virtual choir recordings, being computer generated, are impeccable with respect to the accuracy of pitches, and so it is assumed they will provide a suitable audio environment for students to work on their intonations (a sub-category of musicality). A metronome sound is provided for each virtual recording, and this feature is expected to help students keep track of their timing in the absence of a conductor (EREN; ÖZTUG, 2020, p. 1119-1120).

Grushka *et al.* (2021) term virtual choir, choral making within the virtual environment, which differs from the name suggested in the study by Eren and Öztug (2020), who treat the term virtual choir as computer-generated artificial samples for learning resources and study references, the guides. Within the perspective of Grushka et al. (2021), we can complement our argument with our observations and pedagogical insights in the face of the relationships that permeate choral performance in the virtual environment and share the idea that "virtual choirs perform within their ecology from access to the personal, the biological, and the technologica"[5] (GRUSHKA et al., 2021, p. 4) and, from this, believe that the constitutive reality of the virtual

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[3] Disponível em: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdTzwcK_Wm4. Access: 10 jan. 2022.
[4] Disponível em: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SnwSlDqxCI. Access: 10 jan. 2022.
[5] Virtual choirs perform within their own ecology accessing the personal, the biological, and the technological.

environment imposes an ecology of its own. This happens, bypassing and governing the limits of communication and the way individuals interrelate within this environment. These relationships have countless variables that tend to change according to the virtual environment, the software, or the platform.

The realization that the pandemic generated a **new normal**, as the time after strict social isolation was called, made us look at conduct differently. It was no longer a temporary situation. Instead, it was indispensable to define how to experience the characteristics of choral singing in the new environment and decide which characteristics would be indispensable to maintain the choral practice aiming at its permanence.

In our understanding, collective listening was the most critical point. Talking in a research group, reflecting on the subject, transcribing the conversation, and analyzing the discourse showed that listening was the key point for many choral conductors. In G-PEM - Grupo de Estudos em Educação Musical/UNESP and in the Laboratório/Ateliê de Pesquisa Artística - UFMA/SB professional conductors discussed the issue, and some statements deserve to be highlighted.

Statements made by conductors who used multitrack music editing, recording, and mixing software in teaching experiences lived in choral activities, after being transcribed, were selected and are presented below. The expressions that brought, directly or indirectly, listening as an essential characteristic were bold.

Table 1 - Analysis 1

Conductor 1 - As an educator, it was very nice to discover new ways to tune people and to help with this question of listening because tuning is **more in listening, and listening in choral singing in class, is so tiny. We have a little time.**
Conductor 2 **- Working with listening has not been easy**, it has been possible to create the choir and keep the choral work going! But then, I decided I won't offer Choral II because they only have two semesters of Choral in the whole course. So I want you to convince me otherwise because this is what is cool and what we will do for sure [...] I'm deciding this (not to offer Choral II) because if I offer Choral II, this group that will do Choral II will live the Choral but will not live the proposal of working listening from the point of view of being the teacher!
Conductor 3 - So, what was good for me this year, was not to know the voice of the singers, - on the contrary - was to make them know each other! Because the things that I had been working on and talking to them about revealed themselves differently, more concretely. So it worked the other way around, that the conductors didn't know the singers' voices. It's not my experience precisely because I work with small choirs. So, I know the limitations of people very well, and I could witness their growth because **they did another vocal work, which was to recognize their voices.**

Source: Personal Archive

Such a process of transcription and analysis of discourse markers related to listening corroborated our hypothesis and, at that moment, allowed us to move forward. Without it, the

new normal imposed by the pandemic would have passed without bringing us the challenge of thinking about the possibility of new solutions.

We saw that each of the regents mentioned, despite having listed the positive aspects of the experiences, to a greater or lesser extent, made transparent the fragility of the work of collective listening that we felt was so lacking. The analysis of the speeches confirmed our hypothesis that the development of listening was still present as one of the fundamental characteristics of choral work.

Changing course to find other paths

This topic deals with the creative process that involved the composition of miniatures for the new normal of choral singing. Since this knowledge can be shared directly with the process, it will be written in the first person, in the voice of the researcher responsible for the research and composer of the miniature. However, it must be emphasized that such specificity is part of the characteristic structure of Artistic Research to give voice to the incorporated knowledge.

Driven by the need to connect with the new normal, I started thinking about how to create conditions for the development of collective listening in the virtual environment the choir members had at their disposal. The concept of a lay choir needed amplification because the term layman also refers to the unfamiliarity of how to use the platforms and applications specific to the area of music.

Choir is a vocal activity, so which voice do we have on GMeet or Zoom? In the same way that when we sing in a theater, a church, a square, or a concert hall, we need to adapt ourselves to search for a specific acoustic result. In the same way that certain compositions are designed for particular environments, I needed to think about how I could create miniatures that would help the choir to exist collectively in the virtual environment, in real-time, making music together in the same time-space, assuming the possible voice in GMeet or Zoom, providing that group of teachers in formation with the minimum experience necessary to create their vocal groups, their choirs. It was not only the concern of living the choral experience but of learning, through practice and incorporated knowledge, to experience listening and vocalization in suits in a new environment.

It is essential to emphasize the great influence of the assumptions raised by Murray Schafer (2011) both in his written and compositional work, especially in The Tuning of the World and the work of the researcher Marisa Fonterrada, music educator, notably in work The

Labyrinth Wolf - (FONTERRADA, 2004). Such influences led me to a new, very recent field of study, Environmental Sound Art.

Environmental Sound Art is an art with the clear goal of provoking the listener to reflect on environmental issues in its broadest sense. In Gilmurray's understanding (BIANCHI; MANZO, 2016), sound art strongly connects with using different media and experimental music. The understanding depends a lot on how each one interprets the terminology. For example, the paths of Environmental Sound Art are traced in this fluid territory, which admits experimentation and, at the same time, musical tradition.

In this mixture of influences, the first miniature called INter was proposed. The name suggests interdisciplinarity, interconnection, the interiorization of listening - or inner listening, interculturality, and all the internal processes when we face limiting situations that challenge us. In the specific case of the creation of INter, what triggered the creative impulse was the perception that the virtual environment was this new place that I, as a composer, singer, conductor, teacher, and researcher, was inhabiting. The virtual space gave me the consciousness of one more possible voice, therefore, thanks to the contribution that I apprehended the ideas and assumptions of the mentioned authors over the years of contact, the virtual environment became one more dimension of my understanding of presence in the world, without dichotomizing the virtual and the non-virtual, but integrating them to my being and living the world in the present moment. Other studies need to take place about this aspect to deepen it.

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The compositional material chosen, starting from the fluid territory provided by Environmental Sound Art, was: C, D flat, and E with different fixed structures repeated in each suit.

The division was made into three voices: Voice 1, Voice 2, and Voice 3:

Table 2 - Compositional Material

Suit	Structure
Voice 1	E, Db, C, Db, E
Voice 2	C, Db, E
Voice 3	Db, E, C

Source: Personal Archive

The choice of using a graphic score to indicate the movement of the voices was made to take the focus off the conventional music reading and all the tension that music students carry about solfège to favor the entry into the new environment and its enjoyment.

The movements of the voices were determined thus:

Figure 1 - Graphic score
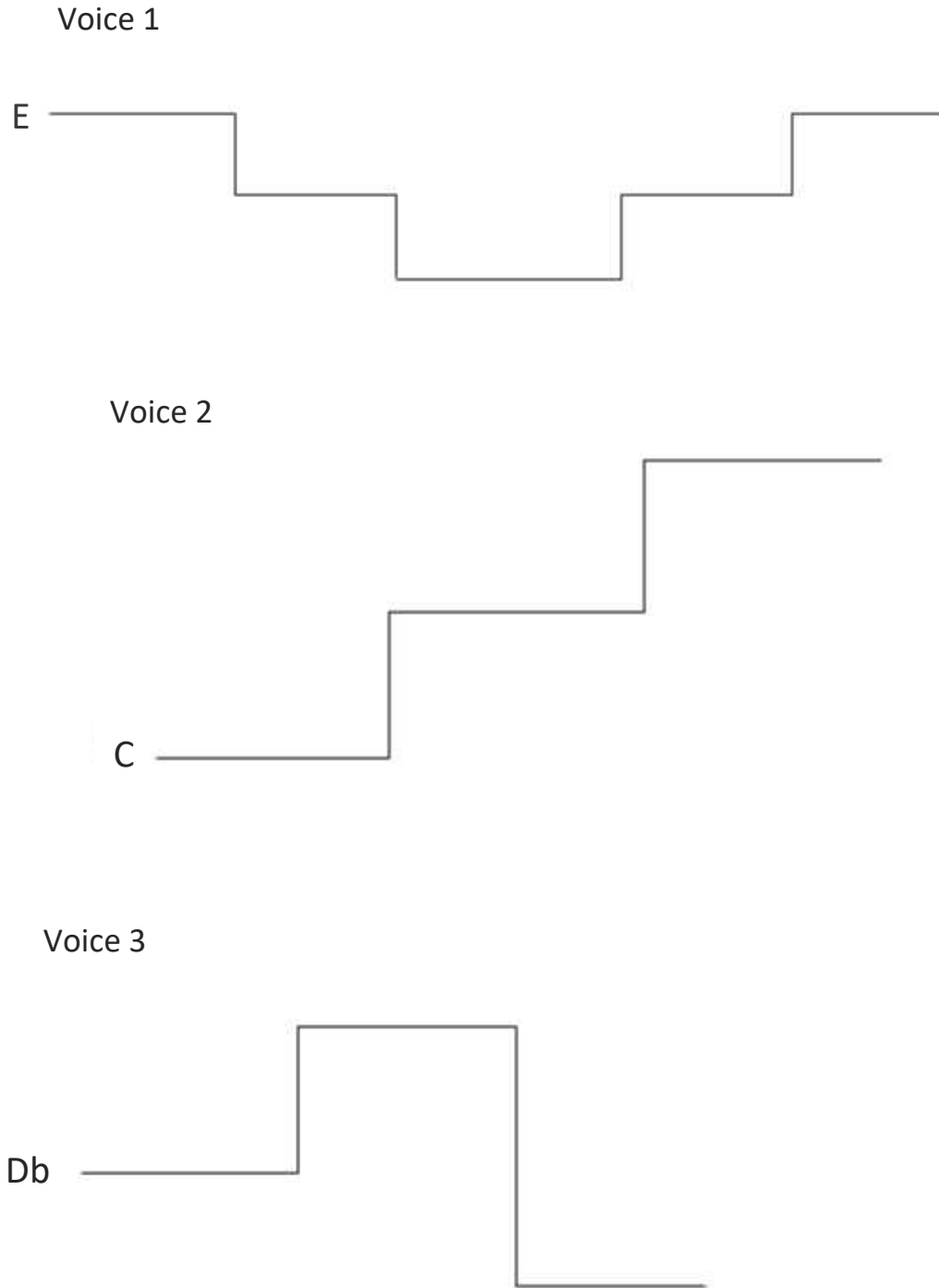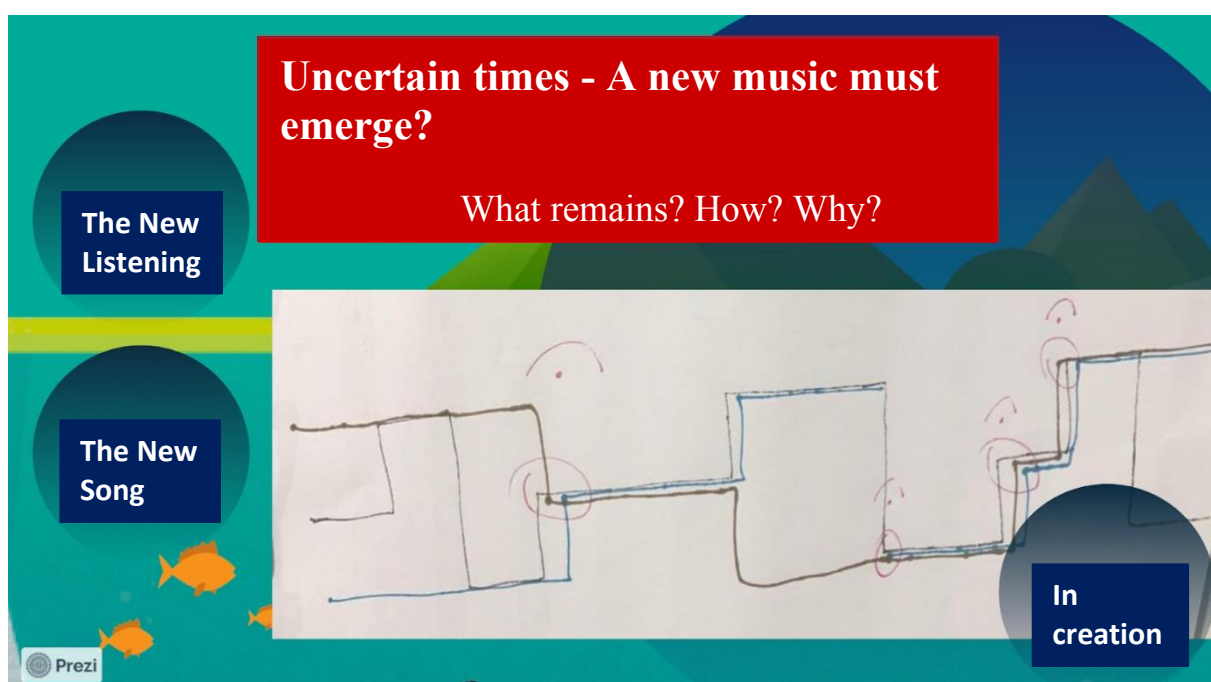

Source: Personal Archive

The creative decisions aimed at the sonic result that occurred in the game of tensions and resolutions that overlapping voices would generate, acoustically speaking. The delay - that

usual Gmeet and Zoom delay - became part of the game, and the challenge of attentive listening intensified. The attention to each voice's movement was indispensable, so the presence in that environment was also demanded. It was no longer possible to be on the sidelines of what was happening, but it was necessary to be in the virtual environment as a whole for the result to emerge.

It was with these consignments that the first miniature - INter - was interpreted. Below is the manuscript and the link[6] to access the successful recording:

Figure 2 - Manuscript Score

Source: Personal Archive

Stop to analyze the process

All the work developed would be without the possibility of an analysis of results if a self-evaluation were not provided. Instead, we organized an open interview with two chorus girls and the analysis of the participant observation, the fruit of the digital ethnography that led us to a discussion of the results.

Initially, we present the self-assessment from the participant-observation point of view. We elaborated five guiding questions that directed the dialog with two participants immersed in the musical experience that is the focus of this study. The first question was asked to

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[6] Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wiymQQJSudJDclrx433cnVgQa7WiTEE9/view?usp=sharing. Access: 10 Jan. 2022.

understand how the choral practice had been received in the online context; in both dialogues, a good receptivity to the environment for vocal practice was noticed.

In the second question, we sought to know the perception of the choralists regarding something that was most remarkable in the classes: "the way the classes were conducted - the teachers didn't teach us to memorize a voice simply but to understand what we were singing, how to correct mistakes, and this contributed a lot to a better learning process", this shows that the work developed instigated the participant(s) to understand the melodic line of the suit, the harmonic context, besides learning to solve and pay attention to points that, normally, they wouldn't have time to do in person.

The third question asked if there was an understanding of these two universes of musical practice (in person and online). In explanation, the chorale endorsed that the physical contact between the choir members was the greatest need since the internet connection, in general, did not contribute and did not provide a quick response to what was being proposed. They reported that, specifically in the contemporary piece, there were greater difficulties because they could not precisely hear the changes in notes.

In the fourth question, we wanted to know the difficulties they faced. At this point, it was pointed out that listening was the biggest challenge, besides understanding the | **15** unconventional score, since the score did not define a duration for the note changes, the participants depended on the auditory attention to the other melodic line in development.

Finally, they were asked about something that had marked them significantly and could boost their professional/musical practice. Both answered that the initial information about the pieces, the vocal warm-ups aimed at the repertoire and to solve the difficulties of a class member, the repertoire readings, the rehearsal kits, and the pedagogical practice applied by the teachers were points that would influence their musical practice.

Here we present the point of view of the three conductors - discipline teachers:

Table 3 - Analysis 2

Conductor-teacher 1
As teachers and students, we are inserted in a face-to-face social context where physical contact, sound perception, and instantaneous responses to proposals happen more effectively. Perhaps the most challenging point was the participants' attention to what was developed in class or after class, with zeal and care, seeking something meaningful to the musical learning process.
Thus, instigating the students to remain participative and integrated into the proposal was a challenge since, at first, they would not be singing together as in a traditional choir, but studying the melodic line of their group, making a recording, and posting it in BandLab for the teachers' analysis.
At the same time, the "vocal warm-ups" took place, which contemplated the repertoire previously studied or technical aspects that adjusted the singer's tuning, muscular/body awareness, among others, as well as the analysis, reading, and harmonic understanding of the conducting of voices.

As mentioned earlier, listening was a challenge not only for the singers but for the conductors due to the limitations of the platform and the internet connection among the participants. In particular, in the last piece of the repertoire, which was developed in the trio, this listening intensified because even with the limitations of this context, we had to instigate the students to understand (listen) to the melodic line of the other suit so that there was harmony between the voices and efficient choral practice.

Partially, in the face-to-face choral context, such adjustments happen in an auditory way or intuitively through harmony, becoming easier or more commonplace for being something faster due to the interaction, however, what differs from the choral practice remotely is that not always there will be a good internet connection and equipment (notebook, headphones, tablet, Ipad) of great quality for the development of this in a beneficial way.

Regent-Teacher 2

The developed activities greatly affected the students' teaching and learning, especially regarding the self-study strategies. Although in-person choral practice is the ideal activity for collective vocal musical performance, it has its limits, too. Mainly in what concerns the valorization of the accentuated dimension of the choir's personal development and the process of self-knowledge of their abilities and weaknesses.

Throughout the study, it was possible to glimpse the digital usefulness of tools for musical and pedagogical development in physical and digital environments of choral singing.

From this, we can glimpse insights into the future of the choral practice. In this future, one should reconcile the best that these two worlds can offer, provide the renewal of musical studies and take advantage of the best that these two environments can engender.

Regent-teacher 3

All phases of the process were distressing to some extent. First, I had to work on my rejection of correcting what was missing in the collective listening by editing the tracks of the individually recorded audios. I felt like I was cheating people. It would be different, I think, if it were a choir gathered to sing for the pleasure of singing. But I had under my responsibility a group of future teachers that, when entering the school space, would need the skills learned in being and doing choir.

Then, during the INter miniature rehearsals, the anguish was caused by the uncertainty about the real efficiency and effectiveness of the proposal.

Thinking of new music for a new time, in a new environment, and creating conditions to make the rehearsals more dynamic and involving the group were moments of excitement, anguish, and anxiety.

With the recorded results and the self-assessment of the choir members, the certainty came that the work opened new perspectives and required continuity.

It is necessary to rethink conducting in the virtual environment and choral practice itself in many aspects.

Source: Personal Archive

Three perspectives point to complementary aspects. Conductor-teacher 1 - the question of vocal technique; Conductor-teacher 2 - the perception of musical regency through editing via digital resources and Conductor-teacher 3 - the learning objective for musical accomplishment in the new uncertain times that generated the new normal.

Putting all this together, it is possible to point out that the choral activity was developed with three teacher-riders focused on fundamental aspects for a successful practice in choral singing could be taken as a premise for a future study.

In everyone's self-assessment, it was possible to perceive the commitment to the search for quality results that contain well-constructed and meaningful processes.

Final Considerations

Looking to the future seems necessary to emphasize these final considerations. It was perceived, through the course of the research, its results, and challenges faced, that new music can emerge and that it is music that occurs in a real environment of communicational interaction with characteristics that conceptualize a new musical paradigm for the virtual environment in which the present times place us; that the musical regency also remakes itself, finds new space and new codes, without the interaction in real-time, but, still definitive for the result of the musical event that reaches or will reach the listeners; that new concepts of musical learning seem to arise, such as, for example, assuming the virtual voice as one of the possible voices of the choir voice; that the virtual environment is an environment; that subsequent studies to this one, with the same choir, need to be developed for a deeper discussion and the dissemination of creative practices that involve the virtual environment we use today are urgent.

We conclude that collective listening is one of the indispensable and non-negotiable elements of choral singing, therefore, one of the characteristics of this musical practice. It is also pointed out as a necessity for the new curricula to intensify the contents of musical acoustics and creative practices in training new choral teacher-regents.

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