

# The 'imaginary sound museum'. The reinterpretation of European tradition in the music by Gerardo Gandini

Pablo Fessel

University of Buenos Aires - CONICET, Argentina  
pfessel@gmx.de

Proceedings of the International Conference *Beyond the Centres: Musical Avant-Gardes Since 1950*  
Thessaloniki, Greece, 1-3 July 2010, <http://btc.web.auth.gr/>

**Abstract:** The availability of "the materials provided by the whole history of music" represents a fundamental attribute of the musical poetics of Gerardo Gandini (1936) –one of the most significant Argentine composers. Gandini regards composition as a result of a 'conversation' between different musical works in an 'imaginary sound museum' – a distinctive cosmopolitan stance of many contemporary art manifestations developed in Buenos Aires. This discursive imaginary could be associated with what the composer himself calls 'rereading': a compositional reworking of material and/or formal configurations taken from his own works or from works by other composers. (The music by Mozart, Schumann, Debussy, Schoenberg and Berg occupy a relevant place in Gandini's music as a basis for reworking.) This procedure establishes the 'objets trouvés' –according to the denomination that Gandini gives to the borrowed material included in his works– as a compositional substrate and transforms them in various ways, and through different works. The study of this compositional technique embodies not a restoration of disguised identities, but a characterization of the strategies of reinterpretation, transparency and opacity merged in the works. The reinterpretation of materials coming from different historical contexts shapes Gandini's music as a complex intertextual framework, whose analysis involves the recognition of structural, semantic and historical aspects, as they relate and manifest in the music itself. The paper explores these assumptions through the analysis of the rereading procedure applied to the piano piece "Vogel als prophet" by Robert Schumann (*Waldszenen* op. 82) in works such as Gandini's *Diaries I-III* (1960-87) for piano, and his *Estudios* for violin and piano (1990). This reworking poses the question of whether a distant perspective from European culture results in an particular approach for the reinterpretation of its music.

The oeuvre by Gerardo Gandini (Buenos Aires, 1936)<sup>1</sup> consists, to a great extent, of an intertextual framework that relates his own music with other works of music, as well as with other arts. This intertwining does not limit only to the musical structure, but extends also to the compositional poetics. In both of them, primarily musical materials, procedures and categories can be identified, along with others that evoke imaginary from literature and visual arts.

The frequent allusions to literature, in his writing as well as in the titles of his works, reveal a discursive imaginary, connected to the reading and re-writing. These allusions are related to a meta-musical condition of Gandini's work. "Music always talks about itself," wrote the composer (Gandini: 1984). This expression does not mean a denial of musical semantics, but it implies an intertextual nature of music. Indeed, Gandini sees composition as the result of a conversation between the different works of music in an "Imaginary Sound Museum".<sup>2</sup> This stance is based on the idea that the whole musical materials shaped throughout history are aesthetically available. Gandini's poetics articulates in this way an attachment to contemporary aesthetics, with the compositional molding of a personal history of literary, musical and pictorial reception.<sup>3</sup>

The discursive imaginary appears as a creative strategy, which the composer refers to as "re-reading": it is the reworking of materials originated in his own works or in works by other composers. Taken from different stages of the historical tradition, these materials are cut out and transposed to a new context, thus becoming the object of a compositional reinterpretation. In this way, they enter in a dialectics of remembrance and estrangement.

Music by Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Schoenberg and Berg occupy a relevant place in Gandini's music as a basis for this reworking. Along with them, Schumann's work takes up an outstanding position in Gandini's oeuvre.<sup>4</sup> "Vogel als prophet", the seventh piece of the *Waldszenen* for piano, represents the source of a number of re-readings by Gandini.<sup>5</sup> In this paper I will concentrate on the re-reading present both in the *Diaries I-III*, 36 *Preludes* for

piano and in the *Studies* for violin and piano. To this end, I will first set out some considerations about the literary genre *diary* and its projection as a musical genre. Secondly, I will briefly characterize “Vogel als prophet”, as a reference to develop, in the third place, an analysis of the reworking procedures that the composer carries out from this piece. Finally, I will make some considerations about the meaning that Gandini’s intertextual poetics assumes in the context of the Argentine contemporary culture.

### Genre projection

One of the re-readings of “Vogel als prophet” in Gandini’s work (probably the first one) is present in “Pájaro profeta (I) [Escena en los campos]”,<sup>6</sup> the prelude with which his *Diaries* I-III conclude.<sup>7</sup> But Schumann’s presence in the *Diaries* is not limited to this prelude,<sup>8</sup> but affects the work as a genre. Furthermore, the availability that Gandini purports is also made extensive to the level of genres, musical and aesthetic as well. The re-readings bring into play a genre projection. The *Diaries* for piano project the literary diary and the cycle of characteristic pieces.

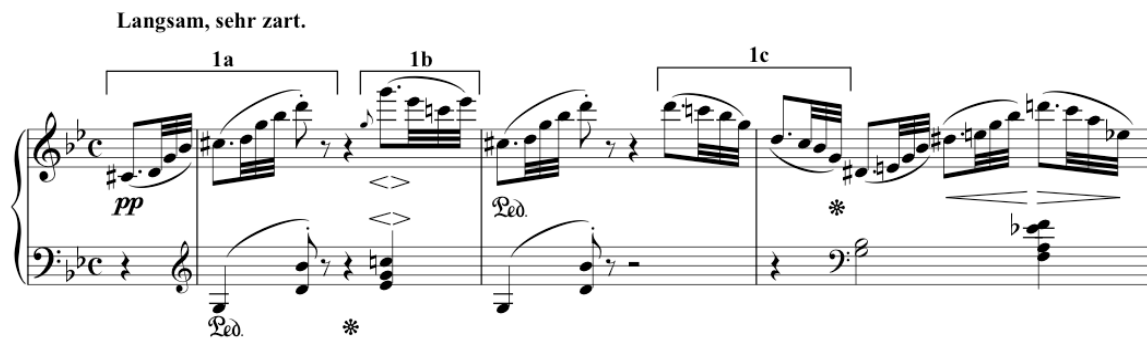
The designation of these musical works as ‘diaries’ makes a strong appeal to a documentary condition.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the literary diary establishes itself as a documentary genre: its enunciation is based on the appearance of an immediate presentation, devoid of the rhetoric mechanisms distinctive of the literary construction. It is a literature that sets up a dialectics of authenticity and construction.<sup>10</sup> There is a second fiction associated with this immediacy: its so-called privacy. Different from the public genres, aimed at an anonymous reader, the diary claims to be a genre foreign to the social circulation of literature, or that experiments it as a reality a posteriori that does not affect its writing.

The pieces of which the *Diaries* are composed consist of re-writings of Gandini’s own works, of music for the theatre, re-interpretations of pieces by other composers, and a few fragmentary and self-sufficient miniatures. In some cases, the pieces are drafts of what was later constituted as artwork; in others, they represent subsequent derivations of the composition, not included in the finished works. Gandini’s first rhetoric operation is the projection of a collection of short pieces to the genre diary; a collection that presents itself as a notebook of sketches, but consists mainly by pieces composed a posteriori of his respective previous “fictional” versions.<sup>11</sup>

The imaginary characteristic of both the literary diary and the cycle of pieces have a romantic background. The fragmentary condition of the pieces, their thematically expositive nature, as well as the immediate writing of the diary, its intended documentary nature, are elements that belong to the same aesthetic constellation.

### Vogel als prophet - Pájaro profeta (I)

Schumann composed his *Waldszenen* in Dresden in the span of a few days between 1848 and 1849. “Vogel als prophet”, dated from January 6, 1849, was the last piece included in the cycle which, after a lengthy revision work, was published in December 1850.<sup>12</sup> This piece consists of a typical ternary form. A first section (A) of 18 measures in G minor, is followed by a middle choral-like section (B) of 6 measures in the tonic major and then a repetiton (A’) of the initial A, harmonically varied. Gandini’s material is based on motifs taken from the main section (A). This is characterized by the alternation of a series of rhythmically homogeneous motifs, with a similar intervallic pattern (an appoggiatura in the strong part of the beat that leads to an arpeggiated chord),<sup>13</sup> that are differentiated mainly by the direction of the melody (ascending, broken, or descending). (Fig. 1: 1a, 1b, and 1c, respectively.)



**Figure 1.** Robert Schumann, "Vogel als prophet" (*Waldszenen* op. 82), mm. 1-3.

The disposition of the motifs in the phrases gives rise to a melodic line that is both undulating and rhythmically irregular.<sup>14</sup> The appoggiaturas, prominent by its metrical position, emphasize the dissonances (which occasionally include cross relations) formed between these nonharmonic tones and its accompaniment. (Fig. 2)



**Figure 2.** Robert Schumann, "Vogel als prophet" (*Waldszenen* op. 82), m. 11.

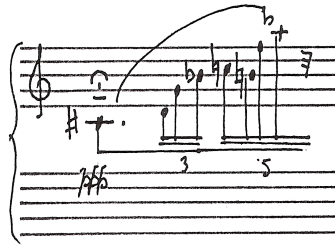
The unique contour of the melodic line, the standing out of the appoggiaturas, which scan the line emphasizing the dissonances, could explain the criticism's characterization of the piece as bizarre and enigmatic. (Jensen, 1984: 83)

"Pájaro profeta (I) [Escena en los campos]" is the last prelude of the *Diaries I-III* (and one of the two preludes from this cycle based on "Vogel als prophet"). The title, which also alludes to the third movement ("Scène aux champs") of the *Symphonie Fantastique* op. 14 by Hector Berlioz, and the opening of the prelude explicit the relation between these pieces: the first four notes outline a motif identical from the viewpoint of pitch, register and articulation, and slightly varied from the point of view of rhythm and dynamics, to the beginning of "Vogel als prophet". The explicit nature of the reference, that is, the literalness of the material, represents an important aspect of the meaning of Gandini's re-reading in this piece.

The quotation shows one of the principles that define the compositional technique employed by Gandini, to which he refers with the expression of "ready-mades" –a designation that reveals that imaginary coming from the visual arts is put into play. The expression refers to the selection and delimitation of a borrowed musical element, which is converted into material.<sup>15</sup> As in Duchamp, in Gandini the operation of cutting, and the resulting loss of context, which the material undergoes, is of such (or more) importance than the object itself.

In this way, the motif that in "Vogel als prophet" works as anacrusis and that reiterates in the strong beat of m. 1 to resolve the appoggiatura of the C# in the second beat of the measure is object, in Gandini's work, of a sectioning that elides the repetition of the motif as well as the resolution of the appoggiatura. Instead of the repetition, Gandini extends the material with a

quintuplet of thirty-second notes whose pitch content results from the transposition (to an upper seventh minor) of the initial material, with a permutation of its two first notes.<sup>16</sup> (Fig 3)

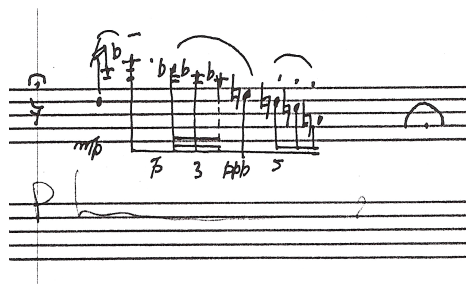


**Figure 3.** Gerardo Gandini, "Pájaro profeta (I)" (*Diarios I-III*).

The motif that in "Vogel als prophet" is crossed by the play of tonal tensions (that is, notes such as C#, whose harmonic justification is not vertical but linear, and in this sense contain, implied, their resolution) is placed in the prelude in an atonal space in which the pitches, devoid of harmonic function, emphasize their dissonant condition.<sup>17</sup> There is in "Pájaro profeta (I)" a disparity between the gesture of the arpeggio, originally derived from the horizontal display of an underlying chord, and a content of dissonance that fragments it and associates it to the Webernian linear disintegration.

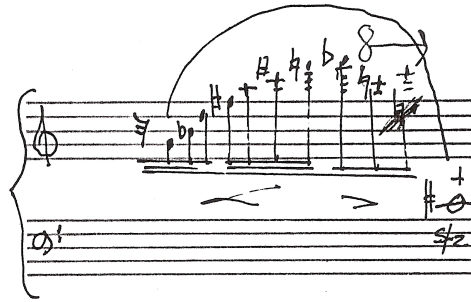
Likewise, the *temps lisse* that characterizes the piece deprives the material of the play on ambiguities that are established between the linear metric (the agogic accents) and the global metrical structure. The pitches and the rhythmic configuration of the initial material of "Pájaro profeta (I)" are identical to the ones present in the motif of "Vogel als prophet", but its insertion in an atonal and ametrical context entails a deep transformation in its nature. Thus, a tension is established between the recognition that allows the literal nature of the quoted excerpt and its transformation in Gandini's re-reading.

The third material of the prelude (using the caesuras as a segmentation criterion) has a rhythmic configuration similar to that of the first (a dotted eighth note, triplet of thirty-second notes followed by a quintuplet of sixteenth notes), but its intervallic design is derived by transposition from the Schumann piece's 'descending' motif (rhythmically identical to the 'ascending' one). (Fig. 4)



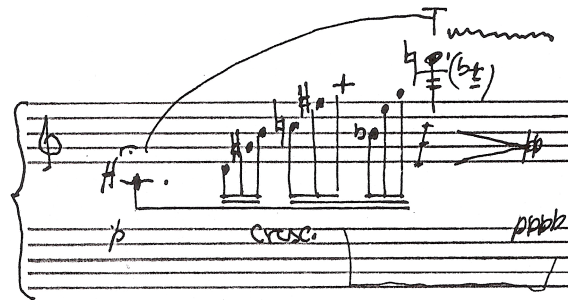
**Figure 4.** Gerardo Gandini, "Pájaro profeta (I)" (*Diarios I-III*).

The characteristic triplet of thirty-second notes of the motifs from "Vogel als prophet" gives rise to a complex rhythmic structure in "Pájaro profeta (I)", of a great number and variety of irregular time values (triplet, quintuplets, septuplets, nontuplets), that sometimes acquire autonomy and elide the material's distinctive beginning with its highlighting appoggiatura. Thus, just the thirty-second notes remain, displayed in a kind of horizontal filling material.<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 5).



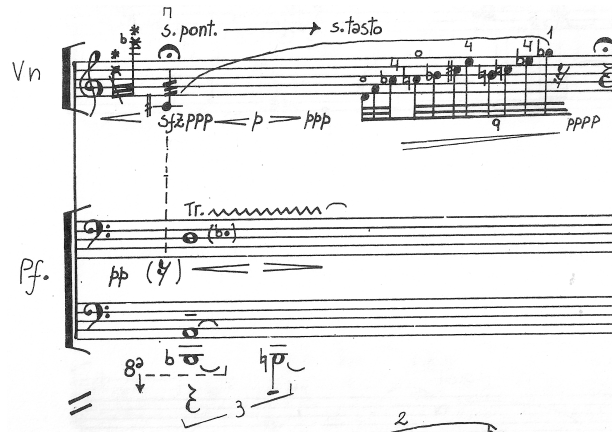
**Figure 5.** Gerardo Gandini, "Pájaro profeta (I)" (*Diarios I-III*).

Far from the reference to dance that Jürgen Udhe and Renate Wieland (1988) find in "Vogel als prophet", the lack of a metrical structure and the caesuras that articulate the different materials gives to the texture of "Pájaro profeta (I)" the appearance of a faltering impromptu. However, its construction is far from being a notated improvisation: almost each note of this texture can be derived from some of the motifs in "Vogel als prophet". Gandini builds his materials from the cutting of motivic fragments of the piece, from the picking out of notes (the pitch content of the prelude's fourth material results from a selection of notes of the motifs of mm. 3-4 of "Vogel als prophet"), or from a succession articulated by the overlapping of motifs (as in the material at the beginning of the 4th system, where the fourth note [B] works in turn as the first in the group of notes 4-7, and the seventh [A] does so as the first one in the group 7-10). (Fig. 6)



**Figure 6.** Gerardo Gandini, "Pájaro profeta (I)" (*Diarios I-III*).

A few years after the composition of the prelude, Gandini re-elaborated it once more so that he could include it as No. 4 of his *Studies* for violin and piano. In this context, the violin takes the line that in the prelude was given to the piano. The change of timbre and articulation (since the violin performs with true legato) emphasize the transformation of the motifs from "Vogel als prophet". The piano takes part with materials that, like a pedal point, offer intermittent dissonant 'harmonizations'.<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 7)



**Figure 7.** Gerardo Gandini, "... pájaro profeta" (*Estudios I-V*, para violín y piano).

The material's denaturalization is emphasized even more with this new instrumental setting regarding the version for piano.

The selection of a borrowed musical material, the cutting of what it is object, the derivation of other materials originating in this one (called 'proliferation' by the composer) and the reinterpretation that is produced as its consequence, make up a sequence of procedures that give rise to a musical texture articulated by a tension between remembrance and updating.

Gandini's re-reading (a denomination that encompasses all those compositional procedures) entails a diachronic dimension in which, if possible, the borrowed material retains its historical content at the same time that it reveals its future potential. The re-reading constitutes a reinterpretation, formulated in purely musical terms, which emphasize in some way aspects of the object able to produce a new music. Something from the old figure of the *ostranenie* of the Russian formalists, a kind of estrangement, is put into play with this principle.<sup>20</sup>

The tension between the object of recollection and the metamorphosis to which is exposed by memory is also related to an introspective quality of Gandini's music. His re-readings are somehow the remaining traces from a private remembrance that covers at the piano the history of music. Gandini's short pieces are fragments, as well as Schumann ones.<sup>21</sup> The melancholy of a writing that is born posthumous as the one from the literary diary reminds of that of the aesthetized ruins of the 19th century.<sup>22</sup> Gandini's fragments contain something of that melancholy, aimed at the European musical past.<sup>23</sup>

### Whose Schumann?

The intertextual framework that Gandini's work deploys does not blend into a gentle synthesis. Part of the meaning of this music derives from a tension between the elements encompassed in it. This tension crosses several orders.

The first one is linked to the work's artistic individuality. A tension arises at this level by the relative weight of Gandini's own materials with respect to existing ones. There is a displacement in the focus of originality, which derives from what Gandini understands as an exhaustion of the phase of experimentation and discovery of new musical materials, and that transfers accordingly the composition aesthetic center to the syntax level.<sup>24</sup> The syntax of Gandini's music is, as the one in Jorge Luis Borges' literature according to an expression by Ricardo Piglia, a syntax of erudition.<sup>25</sup>

The imaginary museum that develops this historical erudition isn't the static image of a juxtaposition of musical works, but it involves a second tension level. Actually, there is a historical tension in this music between –to put it in Carl Dahlhaus' (1977) terms– the past

condition of the borrowed music and an update that, selectively and by means of a reinterpretation, arranges it in an aesthetic present.

Finally, a specifically cultural tension is articulated, that refers to the way in which the rereading of music like Schumann's, coming from the core of the Centro-European tradition, takes part of contemporary Argentine culture. Gandini's intertextual poetics and the selection of its musical objects from the European repertory have, within Argentine cultural context, the value of a statement regarding the debate about national identity.<sup>26</sup>

Some aspects of Argentinean history explain the very existence of the debate, as well as they clarify some of the involved stances. Argentina set itself up as an independent nation in the first half of the 19th century, in the south area of what had been the poorest colony of the Spanish Empire in the new world, a region inhabited by nomadic people that couldn't exhibit cultural monuments as those from other American nations. The vastness of a uniform and scarcely inhabited territory (although profusely traveled) brought about a widespread representation of it, as if it were a deserted land. The annihilation of the aborigines by the end of the 19th century, along with a migratory policy directed to the settling and exploiting of the conquered lands by European farmers, produced a drastic transformation in the demography of the novel nation and consequently in its cultural identity. The Creole elites' fear of a diluting of the tradition that legitimated its supremacy gave rise to a revalorization of the figure of the 'gaucho' and of rural culture in general that entered in opposition with the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of urban environments, deeply transformed by immigration. At present, a significant proportion of the population comes from those immigrants. The political persecution of the last military dictatorship and the subsequent economical crises motivated an exile that reverted the direction of previous migrations and emphasized the proximity with Europe. The European culture and its tradition represent, in the imaginary of a large number of Argentinean people, a part of its own identity.<sup>27</sup>

The history of the Argentine concert music is in turn crossed, since the end of the 19th century, by a debate between localist (nationalist or Latin Americanist) and cosmopolitan stances. The former were concerned about producing a characteristic music in relation to the aesthetic orientations originated in the central countries. The latter claimed their right to be included, despite their distant enunciative position, among the current expressions of contemporary music, understood as a universal construction.

As Omar Corrado (1997: 81) raised it:

"Like other intellectuals, [Argentinean] composers faced a two-sided problem, namely that of converging suddenly with a modernity in whose slow gestation they had not taken part, while simultaneously fulfilling the need for differentiating signs within that modernity's uniform tendencies. Argentinean music in this century [20th-century] progressively began to reflect two dominant trends: on the one hand the persistent desire to create something new, and on the other, the composer's need to establish something distinctive Argentinean, that is, of their own. The tension between these two poles proved to be very productive. Composers were constantly forced to raise the questions of tradition and rupture, of the universal and the local, and of their own cultural possessions versus those of others. Although each generation may have granted different meaning, value, and weight to each term, no generation could avoid taking a stance towards them."

Gandini's position falls within the two assumptions which, according to Beatriz Sarlo, define Borges' conception of the Argentine literature: the whole Western culture's belonging to its own tradition,<sup>28</sup> and an irreverence regarding the former which the European artists could not take advantage of; artists "to whom the transgression is a more violent and exclusive act of break. The literary past, which restricts the European, offers a field of unrestrictive liberties for the Argentinean writer." (Sarlo, 2003: 107)<sup>29</sup>

Gandini is not the first Argentine composer who shaped his music with a strong reference to the European tradition. But, although other exponents from his generation as well as from the previous ones did so in a technical level, he incorporates his referents as concrete musical objects, thus recognizable in their otherness. His music, with its rereading of the European tradition, assumes a critical stance with regard to the break of some contemporary music with the past, as well as to the idea of a monological cultural identity clearly distinguishable from other traditions and identities.

Gandini stated that his interest for Schumann's piece originated mainly because of the suggestive nature of its title.<sup>30</sup> The prophecy, resistant to an interpretation that consumes its meanings potential, corresponds itself with the fragmentary form of the prelude, with its inexhaustible capability of rewriting. The prophecy names the future, a future that is always ahead, like the appearance of the artwork's autonomy, or the illusion of an unmixed identity.

**Acknowledgments.** The research presented here was funded by generous grants from the University of Buenos Aires (UBACyT F118), the National Council of Research in Science and Technology (PIP 114-200801-00254) and the National Agency for the Promotion of Science and Technology (PICT 0707-2008). I want to thank Amalia Chavarri, from Melos publishing house, who placed at my disposal the manuscripts necessary to carry out this research, and Gerardo Gandini, who kindly agreed to talk with me about his music.

## References

- Blanchot, M. (1986). El diario íntimo y el relato. *Revista de Occidente* 182-183, pp. 47-54.
- Borges, J.L. (1989). El escritor argentino y la tradición. *Obras completas 1923-1949*. Buenos Aires, Emecé.
- Camps, P. (1983). Realidad en la creación. Gerardo Gandini. *Realidad musical argentina* 2: 11-16.
- Catelli, N. (1991). *El espacio autobiográfico*. Barcelona, Lumen.
- Corrado, O. (1997). The Construction of the Otherness in Twentieth-Century Argentinean Music. *World New Music Magazine* 7: 81-88.
- Corrado, O. (2002). De Museos, Máquinas y Esperas. *La ciudad ausente* de Gerardo Gandini. *Boletín Música* 9.
- Dahlhaus, G. (1977). *Grundlagen der Musikgeschichte*. Köln, Gerig.
- Danuser, H. (1990). Musikalische Zitat- und Collageverfahren im Lichte der (Post)Moderne-Diskussion. *Jahrbuch: Bayerische Akademie der schönen Künste* 4: 395-409.
- Daverio, J. (1993). *Nineteenth Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology*. New York, Schirmer.
- Daverio, J. (2001). Schumann, Robert. §17. Unbounded creativity: Dresden, 1848-50. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2nd. ed. S. Sadie ed. London, Macmillan.
- Etkin, M., G. Cancián, C. Mastropietro & C. Villanueva (2001). Cita y ornamentación en la música de Gerardo Gandini. *Música e investigación* 9: 35-56.
- Fessel, P. (2009). Relecturas de la historia en los *Diarios* para piano de Gerardo Gandini. *Anais do XIX Congresso da Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-graduação em Música*. Curitiba, Brasil.
- Gandini, G. (1984). Estar. *Actas de las Segundas Jornadas de Música del siglo XX*. Córdoba.

- Gandini, G. (1991). Objetos encontrados. *Lulú. Revista de teorías y técnicas musicales* 1: 57-64.
- Gianera, P. (2008). La redención por la máquina. *La Biblioteca* 7: 162-70.
- Jensen, E. (1984). A New Manuscript of Robert Schumann's *Waldszenen* op. 82. *The Journal of Musicology* 3/1: 69-89.
- Krebs, H. (1999). *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Monjeau, F. (2001). Metamorfosis de una relación: Gandini y Schumann. *Punto de vista* 69: 24-26.
- Paraskevaídis, G. (1996). Los sesenta años del compositor argentino Gerardo Gandini. *Pauta* 59-60: 110-19.
- Porrúa, A. (2001). *Variaciones vanguardistas. La poética de Leónidas Lamborghini*. Rosario, Beatriz Viterbo.
- Rosen, C. (1995). *The Romantic Generation*. New York, Norton.
- Sarlo, B. (1993). *Jorge Luis Borges. A writer on the edge*. J. King ed. London, Verso.
- Sarlo, B. (2003). *Borges, un escritor en las orillas*. Buenos Aires, Seix Barral.
- Uhde, J. & R. Wieland (1988). *Denken und Spielen. Studien zu einer Theorie der musikalischen Darstellung*. Kassel, Bärenreiter.
- Vinelli, E. (2007). La persistencia de la poética macedoniana en *La ciudad ausente* de Gerardo Gandini. In: Ferro, Roberto (ed.) *Historia crítica de la literatura argentina*, vol. 8 (Buenos Aires, Emecé), pp. 141-66.

### Musical sources

- Gandini, G. (1960-87). *Diarios I-III. 36 Preludios*, para piano. Manuscript. Archive Melos Publishing House (Argentina).
- Gandini, G. (1991). *Estudios I-V (1990)*, para violín y piano. Buenos Aires, Ricordi. BA 13530.
- Schumann, R. (1887). *Waldscenen*, Neun Klavierstücke Op. 82. Ed. by C. Schumann. Leipzig, Breitkopf & Härtel.
- Schumann, R. (2001). *Waldszenen* Op.82. Ed. by E. Herttrich. München, Henle.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerardo Gandini is one of the most distinguished and renowned composers of Argentine contemporary music. His production of more than one hundred twenty works, composed since 1959, includes operas, music for piano, chamber and symphonic music. He has been teacher of composition at the Latin American Centre for Advanced Musical Studies of the Instituto Di Tella, at the Julliard School of Music, at the National University of La Plata and at the Argentine Catholic University. He won scholarships from the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome, and from the Guggenheim Foundation. He has received the National and Municipal Music Awards; awards from the National Found of the Arts, from the Government of France, and in 2008 he obtained the Tomás Luis de Victoria Ibero-American Award. Gandini is also an important disseminator of contemporary music in Argentina, and he founded in 1990 the Center of Experimentation of the Colón Theatre.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to confront Gandini's literary imaginary with the musical imaginary of the Argentine poet Leónidas Lamborghini (1927-2009), which expresses itself in the concepts of *listening* and *singing*, as well as in the relation of his poetry with other literatures in terms of *counterpoint*. Cf. Porrúa (2001).

<sup>3</sup> This association has been the aspect of his music more widely studied. See, for instance, Monjeau (2001). The relations of Gandini's work with literature are more clearly treated in relation to his operas; cf. the studies by Corrado (2002), Vinelli (2007), and Gianera (2008), centered in *La ciudad ausente*.

<sup>4</sup> Since the middle of the decade of 1980, an important group of his works constituted from elements taken from Schumann's music. The group includes *Eusebius*, in its versions for piano (1984) and for orchestra (1984-85); *RSCH: Escenas*, for piano and orchestra (1984); *RSCH: Testimonios*, for voice, piano and tape (1984); *RSCH: Elegía*, for piano (1986); some pieces of the *Diaries I-III*, 36 Preludes for piano (1960-87); the *Studies*, for violin and piano (1990); the opera *Liederkreis: una ópera sobre Schumann* (2000); and recently, *Eusebius II* for piano (2006).

<sup>5</sup> Rereadings of this piece are present in *Diaries I-III*; in *RSCH: Escenas*; in No 4th of the *Studies*; and, lastly, in the interlude of *Liederkreis*.

<sup>6</sup> Since both works have the same name, "The Profetic Bird", I will refer to Schumann's piece with its name in German, and to Gandini's prelude with its name in Spanish.

<sup>7</sup> The *Diaries I-III*, 36 Preludes for piano, constitute themselves as three cycles of twelve pieces, composed between 1960 and 1987. Gandini returns to the genre with the *Diaries IV* (1987-91) and V (Summer of 1994/95) for piano and the *Diary VI* for orchestra (1998). In 2008, as a commission for having won the "Tomás Luis de Victoria" award, Gandini composed a *Diary VIII* for piano, which was interpreted with that name in Madrid and Santiago (Chile), but which some time later he renamed as Sonata No 8. All of them remain unpublished. The manuscripts are stored in the Archive of Melos Press (Buenos Aires). The characterization of the pieces that integrate the *Diaries I-III* as 'preludes' suggests a reference to Debussy, whose music is object of numerous re-readings.

<sup>8</sup> Or to the set of preludes based on Schumann's work, which also include numbers 20, "RSCH"; 25, "Pájaro profeta"; and 27, "Arabesco" [RSCH].

<sup>9</sup> The postulation of genre of the *Diaries* tenses the elusive condition of musical representation for it imposes on it a precise referent (a musical I, fictional correlate of an empirical I). I refer more extensively to the *Diaries* by Gandini in Fessel (2009).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Blanchot (1986); and Catelli (1991).

<sup>11</sup> This relation between 'documentary' pieces and 'fictional' works can be illustrated comparing "Pájaro profeta (I)" with *RSCH: Escenas*. The prelude represents an autonomous version similar to the soloist piano part, which in number six of *RSCH: Escenas* is integrated in the orchestral texture. This relation provides an indication to date the composition of the prelude about the time in which *RSCH: Escenas* was composed. Establishing the chronology of the *Diaries* requires distinguishing two moments of gestation that correspond to two different series. One is the composition of the pieces that integrate it. This moment is multiple and elusive to chronology. The other corresponds to the conformation of the cycle and the postulation of the genre, which can be fixed in 1987.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Daverio (2001); and Jensen (1984).

<sup>13</sup> I leave out of consideration an element of rhythmic contrast, in the second part of the first section A, due to two motifs in sixteenth notes, present in mm. 9-10 and 14.

<sup>14</sup> The piece has been also identified as an instance of 'metrical dissonance'. Cf. Krebs (1999: 95).

<sup>15</sup> The expression "ready-mades" entitles one of the writings in which Gandini sets out his compositional technique in detail. Cf. Gandini (1991).

<sup>16</sup> Transposition and permutation are two of the techniques of derivation of new materials from the cut object, inspired in procedures developed by Pierre Boulez, which Gandini calls 'proliferation'.

<sup>17</sup> The first motif is repeated with a transposition that adds four pitches, and the following material, also derived from "Vogel als prophet" adds other four, so that "Pájaro profeta (I)" starts with a collection of twelve pitches. The apparition of the twelfth pitch (A) marks the beginning of a brief retrograde in the pitch sequence.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the ending of the third system, the ending of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth system.

<sup>19</sup> These sonorities, with their characteristic trill, derive from the tremolos of the timpani, at the end of the third movement ("Scène aux champs") of the *Symphonie Fantastique* op. 14 by Hector Berlioz (mm. 177-96.). The derivation does not establish itself in terms of the material's pitch content, but in terms of the gesture and the texture. The notes that form the piano part in the version of the *Studies* were added late (in pencil) in the manuscript of the *Diaries*, so as the subtitle "Escena en los campos".

<sup>20</sup> Etkin *et al.* point out, regarding works such as *Lunario Sentimental* and *Eusebius*, that "there is an effect of focus' shift, of distortion of the original text. The compositor becomes a lens that, through different compositional procedures, takes us to the quoted fragment until it becomes abstract. Thus, the materials are almost completely divested of the aesthetic of which they come from and they become part of a hospitable context in which the host is gulped by the composer." Cf. Etkin, Cancián, Mastropietro &

---

Villanueva (2001: 37). As Paraskevaïdis summarized: "The quotation becomes a symbol of the other, that fatally attracts to a process of musical gulping through the time machine." Cf. G. Paraskevaïdis (1996: 113).

<sup>21</sup> See Daverio 1993.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Rosen (1995: 92-94).

<sup>23</sup> See the interpretation by Hermann Danuser (1990) of melancholy in recent contemporary music, regarding the postmodern debate.

<sup>24</sup> Gandini, in an interview by Pompeyo Camps (1983: 12).

<sup>25</sup> R. Piglia, quoted in Gandini (1991: 63).

<sup>26</sup> The very formulation of the question for the identity indicates that it does not have a self-standing definition.

<sup>27</sup> That appropriation entails a blurring of the national intra-European differences and nuances. The idea of Europe shows perhaps more natural for the Argentineans than for the Europeans themselves.

<sup>28</sup> "Which is the Argentine tradition? ... our tradition is the whole Western tradition...". Borges (1989: 272).

<sup>29</sup> My translation. See the English trans.: Sarlo, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> G. Gandini, personal communication, April 6, 2010.