

Partilhar Denunciar abuso Blogue seguinte»

Criar blogue Inicial



MONDAY, 26 APRIL 2010

Pedro Amaral O Sonho London Sinfonietta



The London Sinfonietta premiered Pedro Amaral's chamber opera *O Sonho* last night at London's Robin Howard Dance Theatre. It's based on an unfinished play by Fernando Pessoa, the eccentric genius of Portuguese literature (pictured here). Pessoa's whole life was an art form. He's the Edgard Varèse of literature, pioneering new ways of interpreting reality and identity (see more [here](#))

Dreams exist for a purpose. They mean something, but by their very nature, they don't follow the rules of reason. Yet what is reason? Many cultures use dream as altered reality. As Pessoa shows, it's

possible to use dream creatively.



Amaral's approach is robust. His music is highly dramatic, full of assertive character, very much an active protagonist. The English translation is projected onto a backdrop, as if it's materialized straight off Pessoa's ancient typewriter, another invisible "person" operating in another dimension. Still, as in a dream, specific words don't matter so much as the overall emotional impact.

Pessoa (Jorge Vaz de Carvalho) appears. Like a master of ceremonies, he opens the show with the provocative words "I see before me, in the transparent but real space of dream, the faces and gestures of Caieiro, Ricardo Reis and Alvaro de Campos" (the personalities through which his work was channelled). They flank him, dressed like him but clearly "not" him.

SUBSCRIBE



SUBSCRIBE

-  Posts ▼
-  Comments ▼

SEARCH THIS BLOG

powered by 

SITEMETER



BLOG ARCHIVE


- ▼ 2010 (120)
 - ▼ April (26)
 - [Pedro Amaral O Sonho London Sinfonietta](#)
 - [Henze - Elegy for Young Lovers ENO Young Vic](#)
 - [New Royal Opera House Aida 2010](#)
 - [BBC Proms 2010 August September](#)
 - [BBC Proms 2010 - seriously hot - July](#)
 - [Ruttman and Eisler experimental film](#)
 - [Europe's Tragedy - Simplicissimus](#)
 - [Holland Festival 2010, Amsterdam](#)
 - [Horenstein Conducts Hanns Eisler in Global Warming...](#)
 - [Varèse 360° South Bank \(1\) London Sinfonietta](#)
 - [ENO new season 2010/11](#)
 - [London Sinfonietta Pedro Amaral O sonho](#)

Salome is a role in a play Pessoa's writing, but now she comes alive. Carla Caramujo is a force of nature, her voice adding nuance and individuality to what she sings even if the words don't make much sense. She lives in an enhanced dream state. It's a mystery to her why she's asked for something so gruesome as the head of St John The Baptist, whom she recognizes as a kind of soulmate, for prophets dream of things that have not yet happened. But is the head she sees (we have to imagine it) that of the saint or a common criminal? Salome's never quite sure, and that conflict is the essence of her dilemma.

Amaral's unusual choice of instruments integrates the ideas in the play into the music. He calls it "dédoulement", because this is more than simple shadowing. A disproportionately large number of celli, which in theory might seem unbalanced, but in practice, works beautifully. They are led by the harp, deepened by double bass, xylophone and marimba. This is Salome's music, shimmering and sensual, but with a strong basic pulse in the harp ((Helen Tunstall). Three flutes add a distinctive second "personality" - some very inventive passages there that might be developed in future works, perhaps. Amaral is still in his 30's but *O Sonho* is a surprisingly mature, assertive work. The subject matter may confuse on first hearing, but once you make the conceptual leap that meaning is "beyond" words, the music speaks for itself. One particularly well written passage interplayed conventional singing with long, wordless ululation. It was mysterious, like dream, yet also evoked a sense of the desert that surrounds Salome, where horizons dissolve in haze, and the sands constantly shift their shape.

Amaral's music is very distinctive. It's hard to describe him in terms of others because he sounds so much himself. *O Sonho* really deserves to be heard again, better publicised and in a bigger hall. The staging, by Fernanda Lapa, is excellent too, showing how much can be done with minimal resources if the person directing knows what the opera is about. The whole cast, singing and non singing, on stage and off, seem passionately committed: this really feels like tight ensemble work.

The **Gulbenkian Foundation** was created by the Gulbenkian family who were genuine art lovers. They could have made an impact in anywhere in Europe, but chose Lisbon, where the ambience fitted their cultivated, individualistic values. The Gulbenkians would be proud of what the Foundation does to promote works like *O Sonho*, iconoclastic but creative and very distinctive.

Posted by Doundou Tchil at 12:18 

Labels: [Amaral pedro](#), [London Sinfonietta](#)

0 comments:

[Post a Comment](#)

[Home](#)


[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)

- [London Sinfonietta | Pedro Amaral O Sonho](#)
- [Edgard Varèse meets Jekyll and Hyde](#)
- [Wilhelm Killmayer - Artist of the Air](#)
- [Mahler in Manchester Mondays](#)
- [Anna May Wong Piccadilly - cultural critique](#)
- [Varèse - the First Wild Man of music](#)
- [More Africa at the British Museum](#)
- [Götterdämmerung Berlin Rattle - the movie](#)
- [Before Die Gezeichneten - Franz Schreker - Der Geb...](#)
- [Il Turco Rossini in Londra ROH](#)
- [Korngold improvises Wagner](#)
- [Eleven year old's opera premieres in Vienna](#)
- [Why Jesus walks in Macau](#)
- [Mahler LPO London 2010/11](#)
- [Niccolò Castiglioni Knussen London Sinfonietta Ju...](#)


- ▶ [March](#) (35)
- ▶ [February](#) (28)
- ▶ [January](#) (31)
- ▶ [2009](#) (336)
- ▶ [2008](#) (162)

MY BLOG LIST


-  [boulézien](#)

-  [De chez toi](#)

-  [Gertsamtkunstwerk](#)


-  [Hanns Eisler](#)


- [Hanns Eisler: Music: A Virtual Tour](#)


-  [Intermezzo](#)


-  [Iron Tongue of Midnight](#)

- [London Sinfonietta | London Sinfonietta](#)

-  [Monotonous Forest](#)

-  [Opera Chic](#)

-  [Opera Today](#)

-  [SPICE OF LIFE](#)

[The Lied and Art Song Texts Page: Texts and Translations to Lieder, mélodies, art songs, and other vocal music](#)

LABELS

- [3 Choirs](#) (2)

- [Abrahamsen Hans](#) (1)

- [Africa](#) (10)

- [Agawu Kofi](#) (2)

- [aimard](#) (14)

- [Aldeburgh](#) (8)

- [Aldeburgh 2009](#) (5)

- [Aldeburgh 2010](#) (1)

- [Alden David](#) (5)

- [Alessandro Talevi](#) (4)

- [Alice Coote](#) (2)