

Stylistic highlights of the opera and operetta interpreted by baritone Octav Enigărescu

Mihaela MICUȚĂ¹

Abstract: *The baritone Octav Enigărescu, a high-profile artist of the Romanian singing school, occupies one of the first places in the baritones pleiades from the second half of the 20th century, due to his multiple artistic profile, to his versatility. He was an interpreter of opera, of lied, and oratorio, director, professor, actor, manager of the Romanian Opera House in Bucharest, one of the personalities of Romanian lyric art, that contributed to its integration into the international artistic phenomenon. He possessed a rich range of colours and vocal shades, a voice of great ambitus, clear, warm, without striderness, nuanced enough to give the substance of the roles, with a bright, sharp, well-balanced center and a fairly consistent gravity. Owing to these qualities, as well as the acquired technique, he had the ability to successfully fit into the stylistic coordinates that allowed him to address various types of roles in the repertoire of the lyrical baritone and even tenor.*

Key-words: *baritone; opera; roles; voice*

1. Introduction

Baritone Octav Enigărescu was a high-profile artist of the Romanian school of singing from the second half of the 20th century, opera interpreter, lied, orator, director, professor, actor, manager of the Romanian Opera in Bucharest (after Viorel Cosma). Singer of a rare stage intelligence, he was gifted with one of the most generous and beautiful Romanian baritone voices in the mid-twentieth century (Cosma 1996).

From 1945, when he began his work with **Fra Diavolo** opera, by François Auber, and until 1983, when he completed his solo activity with the work of **Nabucco** by Giuseppe Verdi, Octav Enigărescu embraces 56 roles and covering works from the Romanian and Universal repertoire, acquiring a vast repertoire of the lyrical work, vocal-symphonic music, concert and lied. He sang for 40 years, concerting in 930 opera shows in the country, and 400 performances abroad, and with the concert repertoire supporting 380 concerts with room and vocal-symphonic music in the country and over 260 concerts in abroad (Cosma 2008).

In the 40 years of his artistic career, he has performed numerous tours and shows, including 600 appearances on the world stages in cities such as Prague, Budapest, Berlin, Leipzig, Weimar, Kiev, Moscow, Varna, Sofia, Ruse, Paris, Rome, Leningrad, London, Venice, Dorthmund, Dusseldorf, Dublin, Varna, Ohrid, Zagreb, Novi Sad etc., being considered a world-class singer (Enigărescu 1987).

The baritone Octav Enigărescu had a long career, in which he knew how to move lightly from the Mozart score of classical music (from the years of youth) to the veris one, or to the music of Musorgski, Tchaikovsky, interfering with the romantic style, in order to approach, in the second part of the career (after 1963), the verdian creation and the modern one (Cosma 1996).

¹Valahia University of Targoviste, Faculty of Science and Arts, Targoviste, Romania, micuțamihaela@yahoo.com.

2. Material analysis

Octav Enigarescu's repertoire includes numerous main roles in Italian, German, French, Russian and Romanian operas, soloist pieces from various Romanian and universal vocal-symphonic works, as well as a considerable number of lieder and arias.

He was acknowledged as the type of verdian baritone, summing up over the years a great knowledge of professional secrets, building up his roles thoroughly. He dismissed the easy or well-known solutions, found new expressions, especially by cultivating the vocal color (Cosma 1996). The role of *Don Carlos* in **Ernani**, *Count of the Luna* in **Troubadour**, *Germont* of **Traviata**, *Rigoletto*, *Falstaff* or *Macbeth*, from works of the same name, can be remembered.

2.1. The classification of roles interpreted from the point of view of the type of voice

From the repertoire of lyrical baritone, surnamed and *baritone verdian*, he embodied characters such as:

- *Count Almaviva* in **The Marriage of Figaro**;
- *Count of the Moon* in **Troubadour**;
- *Giorgio Germont* of **Traviata**;
- *Figaro* from the **Barber of Seville**;
- *Valentin* of **Faust**;
- *Marcelo* of **La Boheme**;
- *Oneghin* from **Evgheni Oneghin**;
- *Belcore* in the **Elixir of Love**;
- *Silvio* din **The Clowns**;
- *Sharpless* from **Madame Butterfly**.

From the repertoire of the *spinto-dramatic baritone*:

- *Don Pizzaro* of **Fidelio**;
- *Igor* of **Prince Igor**;
- *Rigoletto* from **Rigoletto**;
- *Renato* of **Masked Ball**;
- *Nebuchadnezzar* of **Nabucco**;
- *Amonasro* of **Aida**;
- *Iago* of **Otello**;
- *Scarpia* from **Tosca**;
- *Tonio* from **The Clowns**;
- *The Prologue* from **The Clowns**;
- *Falstaff* from **Falstaff**;
- *Der Holländer* of **The Flying Dutchman**;
- *Schicchi* from **Gianni Schicchi**;

From the repertoire of *bass-baritone* he approached roles such as:

- *Count Tomsky* from **The Queen of Spades**;
- *Golaud* of **Pelleas and Melisande**;
- *Beckmesser* of **The Mastersingers in Nürnberg**.

- From the repertoire of the *lyrical tenor*:
- *Danillo* of the **The cheerful widow**.

From the *dramatic tenor* repertoire:

- *Canio* in the **The Clowns**.

2.2. Classification repertoire in terms of style

2.2.1. Classic repertoire

1. The Marriage of Figaro by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	<i>Count of Almaviva</i> (1951);
2. The Abduction from the Seraglio by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	<i>Selim</i> (1952);
3. Così fan tutte by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	<i>Radio</i> (1964);
4. Fidelio de Ludwic van Beethoven	<i>Pizzaro</i> (1977).

2.2.2. Romantic repertory

1. Fra Diavolo de François Auber	<i>Milordul Rokburn</i> (1945);
2. The Elixir of Love by Gaetano Donizetti	<i>Sergeant Belcore</i> (1946);
3. The Merry Widow of Franz Lehar	<i>Saint Brioche, Danillo</i> (1946);
4. Troubadour by Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Count of the Moon</i> (1947);
5. Barber of Sevilla by Gioachino Rossini	<i>Figaro</i> (1949);
6. Traviata by Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Germont</i> (1950);
7. Faust de Charles Gounod	<i>Valentin</i> (1950);
8. The Bartered Bride by Bedrich Smetana	<i>Truska Krusina</i> (1951);
9. Boris Godunov de Modest Musorgski	<i>Scelkalov</i> (1952, 1961);
10. Eugen Onegin de Piotr Ilici Ceaikovski	<i>Evgheni Oneghin</i> (1952);
11. The young guard by Theodor Meitus	<i>Oleg Coșevoi</i> (1952);
12. Queen of Spades Piotr Ilici Ceaikovski	<i>Count Tomski</i> (1952);
13. Carmen de Georges Bizet	<i>Dancairo</i> (1953);
14. The Knight of the Roses by Richard Strauss	<i>Faninal</i> (1961);
15. The Gypsy Baron by Johann Strauss	<i>Zsupan</i> (1962);
16. The Mastersingers from Nürnberg by Richard Wagner	<i>Beckmaesser</i> (1963);
17. Rigoletto de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Rigoletto</i> (1963);
18. Falstaff de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Sir John Falstaff</i> (1964);
19. Masked Ball by Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Renato</i> (1964);
20. Otello de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Iago</i> (1967);
21. Macbeth de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Macbeth</i> (1967);
22. Lucia di Lammermoor de Gaetano Donizetti	<i>Lord Henri Ashton</i> (1968);
23. Prince Igor of Alexandr Borodin	<i>Igor</i> (1971);
24. Wind of freedom by Isak Dunaevski	<i>Caesar Gal</i> (1972);
25. Aida de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Amonasro</i> (1972);
26. Ernani de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Don Carlos</i> (1973);
27. Albert Hering by Benjamin Britten	<i>Mr. Gedge</i> (1973);
28. The Flying Dutchman by Richard Wagner	<i>The Dutchman</i> (1973);
29. Samson and Dalila by Saint Saëns	<i>The High Priest</i> (1974);
30. Ero de Jakov Gotovac	<i>Ero</i> (1981);
31. Nabucco de Giuseppe Verdi	<i>Nabucodonosor</i> (1983);

2.2.3. Post - romantic repertoire (verist)

1. La Boheme de Giacomo Puccini	<i>Schonard</i> (1950);
2. La Boheme de Giacomo Puccini	<i>Marcelo</i> (1952);

3. The Clowns by Ruggiero Leoncavallo	<i>Silvio</i> (1952);
4. The Clowns by Ruggiero Leoncavallo	<i>Canio</i> (1953);
5. The Clowns by Ruggiero Leoncavallo	<i>Prolog, Tonio</i> (1954);
6. Madame Butterfly by Giacomo Puccini	<i>Sharpless</i> , (1956);
7. Gianni Schicchi de Giacomo Puccini	<i>Gianni Schicchi</i> (1967);
8. Gioconda de Amilcare Ponchielli	<i>Barnabé</i> (1968);
9. Turandot (disc) by Giacomo Puccini	<i>Pink</i> (1969);
10. Tosca de Giacomo Puccini	<i>Scarpia</i> (1972);
11. Andréa Chénier de Umberto Giordano	<i>Gerard</i> (1976).

2.2.4. Impressionist repertoire

1. Pelléas and Melisande by Claude Debussy	<i>Golaud</i> (1964).
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2.2.5. Romanian repertoire

1. The Brave Palos by Viorel Dobos and Radu Botez	<i>Straja</i> (1947);
2. Ana Lugojana de Filaret Barbu	<i>Tony</i> (1951);
3. Oedip by George Enescu	<i>Teseu</i> (1960);
4. Sunset by Mansi Barberis	<i>Stephen the Great</i> (1964);
5. Bălcescu by Cornel Trăilescu	<i>Nicolae Bălcescu</i> (1974);
6. Hamlet de Pascal Bentoiu	<i>Osrik</i> (1974);
7. The interrogation from dawn by Doru Popovici	<i>Ioanid</i> (1975).

3. Discussions

Octav Enigărescu succeeded in achieving true subtleties of musical phrase, unequaled (Florea 2006), full of content and dramatic force, controlling the music hall every time, from the first to the last reply. He was a perfect artist who knew how to balance his strength for the efficiency of the ultimate apogee. He had the ability to defeat the technical-expressive difficulties and to show, through rich nuances, the experience of the heroes that brought him appreciation not only in Romania but also in the great scenes of the world such as (Cosma 1996): La Fenice - Venice, Balsoi Teatr - Moscow, La Monnaie - Bruxelles, Staatsoper - Dresden, alongside the great names of the international lyricist: Irina Arhipova, Janine Micheau, Ugo Benelli, Grace Bumbry, Mario del Monaco, Antonio Pirino, Giuseppe di Stefano, Ruggero Raimondi, Luisa Maria Ciconi, Riccardo Cassinelli, Virginia Zeani, Renata Bruson, Katia Popova, Carla Ferario, Gloria Linal etc., with conductors such as Kurt Adler, Carlo Franci, Alberto Erede, Gustav Koslik, Michele Plasson, Francesco de Massi, Franz Konvicner and many others.

The baritone Octav Enigărescu approaches the vocal technique in the Italian style, in the belcanto style, with a lot of culture in sound, taken from his master, Aurel Costescu Duca, who at his turn, comes from the High School of Singing of the great Dumitru Popoici-Beyreuth (Voinea 2002). The sound is qualitative, natural, free, completely physiological, with natural vibrations in the sense of a pleasant, living, organic sound, creating harmonics, indispensable for the amplification of fundamental sound and equally adapting to all the anatomical cavities in which his round voice sounds clear.

Owing to the "sul fiato" singing style, as well as a perfect vocal balance with a well-weighted legato, he uses the voice with intelligence, especially when playing sounds in high positions. The sound attack in correct phonation is sustained and amplified. He controls the diaphragm's work perfectly - the movements of the muscles involved in inspiration and exhalation, doses the amount of air that comes out of the lungs, giving it lightness in the

execution of phrases, virtuosity passages, and in brightening acute exudes without force. The good control of the breathing technique generates positive effects on the equality and flexibility of the voice, vocal skills and diction, helps to tune the tone, as well as to use the whole voice, the ornaments (canto fiorito), the trille, the portrait (Husson 1968).

He knows how to master and temper his strong, rich and full voice, depending on the approached roles, from the mezza-voice to the finest nuances, so that he can then amaze us with the beauty of the sounds, as he sang for example, in the **Macbeth - Pieta risipetto amore**.

Through free emission, he makes that "arc-shaped" voice with which he can play successive gradations on the extension of the voice scale from pianissimo to fortissimo.

He mastered a perfect liaison in all registers and in all intentions, as well as an infinite palette of colors, expressing the most appropriate tone to that passage, having the capacity to render the character of the work, from the earliest measures either from the lyrical or dramatic repertoire. The sound speech brings a distinct luminosity, that does not miss the drama or lyricism of cantilena, undeniably dominating the artistic context in which it manifests itself. Octav Enigărescu knows how to give to the medium register the theatricality of the declamation of a personal color, or the high register of the penetrating force of acute, especially of the types of characters approached.

Depending on the genre - opera, oratorio, lied, operetta, cantata - he has constant consistency in the observation of the text and the scores of the works, making its way on the aesthetic and expressive line of author - auditor - public. Owing to his exceptional training and voice capabilities, he has the power and the skill to make the most appropriate interpretations. Moreover, he is the "creator" of the works, based on the fidelity between text and music, on aesthetic authenticity and on his personal capacity to offer alternatives of expressive art styles.

In a belcanto manner, he interprets not only Rossini and Donizetti (**Barber of Seville, Elixir of Love or Lucia di Lamermoor**), but also roles in other musical styles (verdian, verist), because he possessed a genuine vocal technique as well as a vast musical culture that allowed him to know all the elements that influenced the vocal styles, and implicitly the highlight of the mentality of the respective epoch. Because if Verdi partially keeps the belcanto ornaments, starting with the verisimo work, the interpretive art moves away from the Italian vocal style, from the belcanto ideal, giving place to the dramatic expressiveness, with emphasis on the declamation (sprechgesang) and the force of the voice (Florea 2001).

Where necessary, he is able to break the belcanto traditions, from subtle expressions and vigorous rhythms (*Oleg Coșevoi* from **Young Guard**) to the naturalness of his reactions and movements, to an emotional and complete range of feelings (*Golaud of Pelléas and Melisande*).

He created characters that have impressed strongly and remained in the memory of the listeners (Cosma 1996). For example, in *Scarpia* he knew how to render the image of the odious character who was hiding his vices under a solemn, godly, respectful appearance that would leave the impression of soul purity.

The interpretation of roles in works such as the *Oedipus*, the **The Mastersingers from Nürnberg, Falstaff** or *Pelleas and Melisande* demand different styles and schools that require the interpreter's knowledge, skills and qualities without which these works can not be approached.

In **Rigoletto** he depicts a complex character, very well emphasized in all moments of the work. Based on the ideas of masters Massini and Rânzescu, he manages to create from **Rigoletto**, the buffoon from the Duke's court, a profoundly human character, with his soul tormented and unhappy, but with a strong love for his daughter, *Gilda*. He creates very well

the contrast between the gentleness, love and sensitivity for *Gilda* on one hand, and on the other hand, the hatred of the courtyard brought to paroxysm (Cosma 1962).

In order to continue the ascension to the final stage of the work, special attention is needed in the dosing of the voice effort throughout the role. To accomplish this, Enigărescu manages perfectly the palette of nuances, from piano to pianissimo, from the forces to mezzoforte, to the scroll notes or bright crescendos, as well as the whole ensemble of technical-vocal means. He knows how to keep his voice unaltered by directing his effort to the climax of the end.

He resisted the temptations to tackle roles ahead of time, being true to the teachings of Master Costescu-Duca, that said the repertoire was made for the entire career, not for a season. Therefore, he pursued the natural, balanced, gradual evolution, by age, and by the respective conjuncture, ensuring his success and his long career (Enigărescu 1987). For example, *Rigoletto* should not be approached before the age of 30, because you can only have the psychic, physical and dramatic force after you have reached this age; and then, *Valentin* of *Faust*, *Silvio* or even *Figaro* of **The Barber of Seville** should no longer be kept in the repertoire. The same demands are also claimed by the roles of *Scarpia* in **Tosca**, **Macbeth**, **Nabucco** of the works of the same name, or *Amonasro* in *Aida*.

The character of *Falstaff* (one of Enigărescu's favorite roles alongside *G. Schicchi* and *Figaro*) is a complex, comic-dramatic, trap-like role, that pretends to the artist a lot of artistic craftsmanship, an outstanding expressive mobility and professional maturity, good vocal technique for printing as varied as possible, although the character does not appear to have problems of vocal difficulty at first glance. Due to the fact that he owned these assets, Octav Enigărescu had notable successes with this role, singing it with extraordinary pleasure (Cosma 1962).

He performed interpretations in full accord with the repertory requirements, while discovering the specific and the traditional in the works: **Sunset**, **The Bartered Bride**, **Prince Igor**, **Boris Godunov**.

4. Conclusions

Man landmark of the performing arts, one of the most valuable Romanian baritones, Octav Enigărescu, achieved success after success owing to his exceptional vocal skills, accompanied by a dramatic intelligence, which allowed him true scenic representations of the characters of the works approached, recording remarkable successes (Cosma 1996). Capable of responding to the style approached, he played with great responsibility, with the desire and conscience to do everything possible for playing the musical act, managing to mark his roles and every second of his listeners².

Baritone Octav Enigărescu occupies one of the first places in the baritone pleiades of the second half of the 20th century, due to his multiple artistic profile, his versatility. He was one of the personalities of the Romanian lyrical art that helped to integrate it into the international artistic phenomenon.

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²He has created characters that have impressed and remained in the memory of the listeners. For example, in *Scarpia* he knew how to render the image of the odious character hiding his vices in a solemn, godly, respectful appearance that would leave the impression of pure purity.

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