

## Midiatics aesthetics hybridations: dialogs between music and comics

### Hibridações estéticas midiaticizadas: diálogos entre música e quadrinhos

### Hibridaciones estéticas mediatizadas: diálogos entre música y cómics

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**Abstract** *Thoughts about the aesthetic experience in the contemporary mediated culture, illustrated by the identification and the analysis of productions which present a hybridisation between music and comics. The aesthetic object and the aesthetic perception in a context of cultural hybridisations and inter-culturalities. Interactions between creation and pleasure, between poetics and aesthetics of media products. A brief study of Brazilian contemporary bands of popular music that combine sounds, words and visual pictures. Using again the album *Tubarões voadores* [Flying Sharks], by Arrigo Barnabé and Luiz Gê, of 1984, that can be viewed as a paradigmatic experience of hybridisation between seeing and listening in the media context.*

**Keywords:** *Aesthetic experience; mediated culture; hybridisation between seeing and listening; Music and comics*

**Resumo** *Reflexões sobre experiência estética na cultura midiaticizada contemporânea, ilustradas pela identificação e análise de produções que apresentam hibridizações entre música e história em quadrinhos. O objeto estético e a percepção estética em um contexto de hibridações culturais e interculturalidades. Interações entre criação e fruição, entre poética e estética de produtos midiáticos. Breve estudo de bandas brasileiras contemporâneas de música popular que combinam sons, palavras e imagens visuais. Recuperação da obra “Tubarões voado-*

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res”, de Arrigo Barnabé e Luiz Gê, de 1984, que pode ser vista como experiência paradigmática de hibridização entre visão e escuta no contexto da mídia.

**Palavras-chave:** Experiência estética; Cultura mediatizada; Hibridação entre visão e escuta; Música e história em quadrinhos

**Resumen** Reflexiones sobre la experiencia estética en la cultura mediatizada contemporánea, ilustradas por la identificación y análisis de producciones que presentan hibridaciones entre la música y los cómics. El objeto estético y la percepción estética en un contexto de hibridaciones culturales e interculturalidades. Interacciones entre creación y fruición, entre poética y estética de productos mediáticos. Breve estudio de los grupos brasileños contemporáneos de música popular que mezclan sonidos, palabras e imágenes visuales. Recuperación de la obra “Tubarões voadores”, de Arrigo Barnabé y Luiz Gê, de 1984, que se puede ver como experiencia paradigmática de hibridación entre visión y escucha en el contexto de los medios de comunicación de masas.

**Palabras-clave:** Experiencia estética; cultura mediatizada; Hibridación entre visión y escucha; Música y cómics

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## Introduction

In this article we use again reflections elaborated in other occasions (BARROS, 2012a e 2013), about the relationships between aesthetics and poetics of media products and the production of meaning which is experienced in the context of reception, on the basis of Mikel Dufrenne's doctrine (1992). In this occasion, we deepen the discussion in the question of the mediatisation of culture and of the hybrid nature it assumes in present times; factors which help us to understand the creation and recreation processes of artistic productions which are present in the media. We especially focus the question of hybridisation between seeing and listening in mediatised culture, one of the perspectives which we analyse for the dossier of this edition of *Comunicação, Mídia e Consumo* [Communication, Media and Consumption].

Therefore we transit between concepts which point to the plural and diffuse nature of culture in these times of mediatic convergences and interconnection at a global level, of technological hybridisations and interculturalities. We also use again the concepts of mediations and mediatisations, which are present in Jesús Martín-Barbero's and José Luiz Braga's formulations, which can help us to establish nexuses between aesthetic experience and what we have called poetic experience in the studies of the mediatic processes and products. On the other hand, we incorporate new readings of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, of the French philosopher Jacques Rancière and of the Catalan communication scholar Josep Maria Català Domènech.

As an illustration, in this text we examine some exercises of the application of formulations about aesthetic experience we deal with, carried out in the form of short analyses of recent artistic-mediatic productions which mix popular music and comics. As a counterpoint to these new poetic-aesthetic experiences, we present one of Arrigo Barnabé's and Luiz Gê's creation of 1984, entitled *Tubarões voadores* [Flying Sharks], in a more detailed way

In the contemporary studies of mediatic phenomena the articulation between communication and visual culture has been frequent. The pro-

liferation of audiovisual means and devices which are characteristic of interconnected society on the net has created new frameworks for the production and the consumption of cultural goods, with the special presence of visual languages. But it is convenient to observe how these visualities are articulated with sonorities, which are also present in contemporary mediatised society.

In contemporary media there are many manifestations of cultural and technological hybridisation. Some means are essentially hybrid, be it in the technological aspect or in the combination of languages. We experience multimedia times of poetic and aesthetic experiences which do not fit anymore in closed categories and genres. If such complexity was already present in the cinema and in other audiovisual means, in the world of the web it becomes deepened and dynamised, it articulates information and entertainment, intensifies ludic and oniric dimensions. In this broad universe hybrid aesthetic experiences, which articulate music and comics, have drawn our attention. It is true that the combination of music and picture was already present in the video-clips which were so much propagated in the universe of television. Nonetheless the play between songs and comics well illustrates the reflections we present here about objects and hybrid perceptions of the culture which is present in contemporary society involved in mediatisation.

### **Aesthetic object, aesthetic perception: creation and recreation**

To support the discussion about the hybrid nature of contemporary culture which is present in the media and the production dynamics which is marked by constant recreation processes, we use elements of the *phenomenology of the aesthetic experience* proposed by the French philosopher Mikel Dufrenne. We remember the titles of two volumes of this paradigmatic work, published in 1953: I) *L'objet esthétique* [*The aesthetic object*] (1992a) and II) *La perception esthétique* [*The aesthetic perception*] (1992b), which well identify the two dimensions to which the aesthetic thought dedicates itself: the *work* which is produced by the artist

and the *pleasure* on the receptor's part. The dialectic relationship between aesthetic object and aesthetic perception is the essential aspect of Dufrenne's thought, which valorises the processes of interpretation experienced in the field of pleasure. According to him, artist and spectator associate themselves and share the work of art.

Hence the spectator is an active subject who experiences a new *poiesis* in the context of the *aisthesis*. He establishes a dialogue with the author and produces new meanings, always when he seeks understanding in the perspective of comprehension, beyond the mere use of the meanings the author proposes, such as it occurs in the explanation key. The receptor can be seen as an emancipated spectator, such as Jacques Rancière proposes it, since he is the agent of the processes of observation, selection, comparison, and interpretation of the aesthetic object, on the basis of his semantic field and of his representation universe:

The spectator also acts, either as a student or as an intellectual. He observes, selects, compares and interprets. He relates what he sees to what he saw in other scenes, in other kinds of places. He composes his own poem with elements of the poem which is in front of him. He participates in the performance by remaking it in his own way, avoiding, for example, the vital energy which the performance is supposed to transmit in order to transform it into pure picture and associate this picture with a story he read and dreamt of, he experienced or invented. Thus they are at the same time distant spectators and actives interpreters of the spectacle which is proposed to them. (RANCIÈRE, 2012, p. 17).

The question of the interpretation, which sets the spectator-receptor in a dialectic and dialogic relationship with the artist-sender, refers to the field of hermeneutics. If the artist interprets life, in his work on the basis of his representation field, the spectator interprets the work in the light of his life perspectives and of his social insertion. Thus the production of meanings occurs in the pleasure sphere, which, for sure, is not limited to a contemplative state – from the perspective of idealistic thought – of the spectator in front of the work. As we affirmed above (BARROS, 2012, p. 5), “pleasure implies the exercise of appropriation and socialisation of the production of meanings, which gains a collective and cul-

tural dimension”. The use of hermeneutics in the studies of artistic and communicational phenomena has increased and allowed to increase our comprehension of the production of meanings with respect to the artistic products which are present in mediatised culture. Hans-Georg Gadamer’s theories – in *Hermeneutics of the work of Art* (2010) – help us to understand the dialectic and dialogic relationship which occurs in the artist-work-spectator interaction:

In a way we are inserted into a dialogue by the work. Thus, if we have to correctly describe the apparent opposition between a work of art or a work of literature and their interpreter, the structure of the dialogue is not broadened in any way to such an extent that it becomes empty. This opposition is actually a reciprocal participation relationship. As it occurs in every dialogue, the other is always the listener who approaches, so that his horizon of expectations by means of which he listens to me, in a way concomitantly receives and modifies my own meaning intention. (...)

This also seems valid to me in the case of our involvement with the “works”. The technical term we usually use to this effect is communication. Communication does not mean: to learn, to conceive, to empower, and to make available, but to participate in the common world in which we are inserted. (GADAMER, 2010, p. 141).

Hence the work presents itself more than a *means* of transmission for the dialogue between two subjects we mentioned – the two ends – of the production of meanings. It can be thought from the perspective of *mediations*, such as Jesús Martín-Barbero (1994) proposes it, in his classical displacement, “from the means to mediations”. The dialogue, as Gadamer teaches it, presupposes a relationship of alterity. The interlocutors meet each other in a way; they put themselves in the position of others. The receptor appears with his “horizon of expectations”, which incorporates a complex set of socio-cultural mediations. The expectations with which he is confronted with the work, in a dialogue with the artist, are delimited by these mediations. Thus in the aesthetic perception, the spectator receives and re-elaborates the meanings of the aesthetic object, that can be thought from the perspective of communication which is understood as a dialogue in which the interlocutors share the meanings

which become common to them. Meanings which are also shared by the subjects with their appropriation communities, in their social contexts. Hence the creation process unfolds itself in constant re-creation, like an “open work” (ECO, 1968), in which the original authorship of the work dilutes itself at the same time as it is being enriched by the interpretations given to the work.

These dynamics of poetic-aesthetic re-creation bring to the surface the idea of “collective intelligence” formulated by Pierre Lévy (1998). The French author became well known because of his reflections on “cyberculture”, where the knowledges circulate in a network system. If knowledge in the interconnected society is the result of a “collective intelligence” – at the same time as it nourishes it – we could speak of collective sensibilities, when we refer to the universe of the arts which are available in the mediatic universe, which is dynamised by the navigations at a global level.

It is in the social context, in which the subjects of the signical processes are inserted, that the aesthetic experience is being concretised. As José Luiz Braga (2006) sustains it, we live in a society in constant mediatisation in which the meanings circulate in a constant process of re-signification, demarcated by a “system of social interaction on the media”. According to him:

Society disposes (at least potentially) of altercation processes which, due to their very plurality, in the least if there is (or were) access to this diversity, would be reflection stimulators, comparison and learning. The social devices elaborate multiple perspectives and have them circulate. (BRAGA, 2006, p. 307-308).

In this altercation between society and media the processes of meaning re-creation and production are still marked by relationships of domination and subordination. Sometimes, as we commented it on the basis of Rancière’s ideas, the spectator is not emancipated, he keeps being dull. We live in a society of “hybrid cultures”, as Nestor García Canclini (2008) describes it, where backwardness and modernity occupy the same space, with respect to conquests and resistances. Octávio Ianni pre-

fers to think that we experience constant processes of “transculturation”, when we consider the ideas of contact, exchange, permutation, acculturation, assimilation, hybridisation and miscegenation. Such denomination points out the transversal nature of these intercultural relationships, which do not always occur in a pacific way, but result from negotiations, convictions, concessions and conquests. According to Ianni, “the history of the peoples and collectivisms, of the nations and nationalities, or of the cultures and civilisations” can be read as a “history of a wide process of transculturation” (IANNI, 2000, p. 99).

### **HQ – Sequential Art – Comics – Graphic Novel**

In this text, we adopt the term “*história em quadrinhos*” [comics], in a generic way, without larger conceptual or historical discussions. Nevertheless, although we do not intend to deepen the study in the field of editorial industry, it is convenient to identify, even if briefly, some terminologies which are present in the universe of this genre of art-literature, which mixes textual narratives and iconographic language<sup>2</sup>.

The term *História em Quadrinhos* – or simply *HQ*, – is being used by various authors of the academic world. Among them, there are researchers who are linked to the *Programas de Pós-Graduação da área da Comunicação* [Postgraduate programmes of the area of communication] in Brazil. It is the case, for example, of Waldomiro de Castro Santos Vergueiro, of Roberto Elisio dos Santos, of Marcos Antonio Nicolau and of Henrique Paiva de Magalhães. The denomination ends up being used in a broad way, in order to identify from the short narratives in the comic strip format that are present in printed newspapers to dense literary works, structured in chapters, which use the comic strip language and are edited in voluminous books with luxurious binding. In this wide range of forms and dimensions, the “magazine” format is the most com-

<sup>2</sup> In the discussion of the concepts “sequential art”, “comics” and “graphic novel” we counted on Iberê Moreno Rosário e Barros’ collaboration, masters student of PósCom of Metodista – Postgraduate Programme in Communication of the Methodist University of São Paulo and researcher of the Núcleo de Estudos de Política, História e Cultura – POLITHICULT [Nucleus of Politics, History and Culture Studies], of PUC-SP [Pontifical Catholic University – São Paulo].



mon and occupies a place of relief. In Brazil, such publications, which are sold in newsstands to accessible prices, are called “*Gibi*”. They are serial-like, with narratives which are structured around characters – for the most part, heroic characters – that become emblematic.

The fundamental element in the identification of this means of communication, the comic strips, is the presence of the narrative – as it occurs with any story – structured in sequenced panels, composed of visual pictures and, almost always, verbal elements. In the iconographic language of the HQs we observe the predominance of figurative designs, which are combined with other more abstract visual elements, like the very format of the panels and of the speech bubbles that contain the verbal expressions – spoken or thought by the characters. In some of them, the graphical language mixes drawing and photography in the composition of the visual pictures. The graphical elements also exploit colours and visual textures. The very letters gain visual format, which attribute other meanings to the text.

Ziraldo’s *O menino quadrado* [*The Comic Strip Kid*] (1989) is an excellent example of this play between verbal and non-verbal elements in the comic strip. In this book, the author migrates from the pictures to the text in the course of the narrative, to the extent that the character passes from childhood to the adult age. Ziraldo has recourse to meta-language, by using more childish features at the beginning of the story – which begins with the classical expression “once upon a time...” – which become more sophisticated at the moment in which the character passes from childhood to youth. Afterwards, gradually, the pictures give way to the written words and the size of the letters diminish little by little. On the initial pages we have a comic strip; on the final pages, we have a text block, delimited by margins, in the conventional format of most books.

The comic strips have their beginnings in the caricatures and humorous drawings published in the newspapers, already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Henrique Magalhães explains it (2009, p. 45), it appears in Brazil in that same period, “with strong political and social criticism, approximating the caricature and the cartoon”. The researcher registers that

The first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the appearance of other comic strip genres, with the development of the press and the creation of distributors, the so-called *syndicates*. (...) If initially the *quadrinhos* [comic strips] suggested a critical reading and afterwards a childish one, soon they conquered the juvenile audience by vehiculating heroic and fantastic stories. (MAGALHÃES, 2009, p. 45).

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the comic strips became popularised in different parts of the world, as a product of relief of cultural industry. The narratives with super-heroes stimulated the genre very much, creating icons of pop culture, present in the cultural scenario until today. In the USA two publishers became hegemonic in the field of the comics, the *DC Comics* and the *Marvel Comics*, and they propagated their products all over the world; and with them, the ideology of the USA, in the context of the Second World War and of the Cold War, which opposed two politico-economic models: capitalism and communism.

It is in this segment that the denomination “comics” is applied and expands itself in the universe of comics. It is adopted to designate the mainstream comics (popular, proper of the entertainment industry). Originally, this modality of comics was characterised by an approach of more comic, humoristic coinage. But with time passing, the link loosened and the term began to be used in a broader way. “Comics are known to work in story segments; that is to say, the hero’s day is told and retold various times by different scriptwriters and designers, thus they lose the authorship nature present in the exclusivity of the character’s creator”. Hence new products – with the content already known – are made available on the market.

The cartoonist and specialist Will Eisner – reference in the world of comics – uses the expression “sequential art”. In his book *Comics and Sequential Art* (EISNER, 2010, p. 122), he sustains that the two dimensions, the written one and the picture are “irrevocably intertwined” in sequential art, which he considers as “the art to weave a fabric”. The idea of sequential art suggests a syntax proper to comics, which requires semantics replete with imagination, because in the passage from one panel to the other, in the interval which exists there, many meanings can

be elaborated. It is as if they were the interlineations of the verbal texts. In the aesthetic object, the fragmentation of the action in closed panels, in static pictures, causes the parts of the action to be hidden, only re-elaborated in the exercise of the reader's interpretation.

Graphic Novel is another term which deserves our attention. Graphic novels are productions with greater complexity, published in books, with denser characters and more elaborated stories. The structure of these real literary works comes quite near to that of books with chapters, forewords, etc. Besides the main narrative, such publications bring complementary information – such as “hypertexts” – about the context in which the text inserts itself. Sometimes the main narrative is intersected with other transversal narratives. Differently from comics, which are published in magazines, graphic novels maintain an authorial character on the part of the creator of the story and of the characters who are part of it. Two great exponents of this segment are Alan Moore and Frank Miller.

The genre has been increasing with the appearance of new authors and styles and they gain acknowledgment of criticism and new followers. Among recent launchings, we emphasise two works by Craig Thompson, *Blankets and Habibi* and a work by Chris Ware, *Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth*.

### **Music and comics: hybrid experiences**

Here we present four contemporary Brazilian music bands that perform poetic-aesthetic experiences which mix music and comics, sound and visual arts. They are: *Maraska*, *Loungitude 46*, *X-Sampa* and *Pedra*. Such groups insert themselves into an alternative space of cultural scenario and occupy quite characteristic sonorous and artistic territories, half underground that are situated at the margin of the commercial dynamics of cultural industry and attract a specific, predominantly young audience that is articulated by means of the relationship networks. These bands have their niches and they occupy segmented spaces of artistic creation and of listening that are independent from the means of mass communication.

These aesthetic experiences – like others which escape from the discarded formulas of cultural industry – are concretised in aesthetic objects and perceptions which mix languages and sensations and which open themselves to ludic and oniric dimensions that are present in the production of meanings, in the planes of *poiesis* and of *aesthesis*, of creation and reception.

The referred bands drew our attention due to a comment of the journalist Gilberto Dimenstein on CBN radio [Brazilian journalist, he was columnist at the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*], which was aired on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, in which he propagated a series of shows which took place at SESC Consolação – Serviço Social do Comércio [Business Social Service of the district Consolação], in the city of São Paulo and he made comments for the site *Catraca Livre* [*Free Turnstile*], which made the whole programme of the event available. On the site, and article was entitled *Estética dos quadrinhos na música inspira a série “HQ Show”* [*Aesthetic of comics in music inspires the series “HQ Show”*] and the lead – subtitle – *Evento traz bandas que dialogam com as duas linguagens* [*Event presents bands that establish a dialogue with the two languages*]. We were dealing with the thematic topic of mediatic and cultural hybridisation and, at that time, we had found again an old vinyl LP by Arigo Barnabé, with its nice insert, this is why the topic attracted us.

From the group *Maraska*, we selected the video *Contos e Cantos do Maraska: Pscircodelia*, [*Maraska’s Tales and Songs: Pscircodelia*] which presents a synthesis of his CD-Livro: *Pscircodelia*, [CD-Book *Pscircodelia*] published by Devir publisher, available on [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRnScMMDuMU&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRnScMMDuMU&feature=player_embedded#!). The audiovisual piece begins with a sound which reproduces the noise of an alarm-clock, redundant by means of textual inscriptions “bip...bip...bip”. In the design, with static pictures in sequence, the character – who never appears with his whole body – gets up from his bed, irritated with the situation and he starts performing the routines of the beginning of the day. He establishes a kind of dialogue with the spectator and with the very narrative in meta-language movements. In a determined moment of the clip there is a short note which presents the CD-Livro HQ [CD-Book Comics]

and the proposal of the very band with “a VISUAL and MUSICAL narrative. The Band Multimídia Maraska shows his tales by means of the art represented by the comics, music, videos and performances...” Quick apparitions of the band components and a synopsis of the work follow. The book HQ, which reproduces elements of graphic novel, presents the story of a comic strip writer who risks his sanity when his stories are invaded by an enigmatic clown. *Maraska's* stories-songs are haunted by fairies, fantastic beings and circus characters. The comics do not only compose the visual scenario of the songs, but they are reflected in the ludic dimension they convey.

The band *Loungitude 46* – that has in its name a reference to the localisation of the city of São Paulo – also incorporates the printed media in its musical launches. The record *Ação e Reação* [*Action and Reaction*] is accompanied by a booklet with the words of the songs, illustrated with pictures which follow the comic strip style. It is true that the idea of sequential art is less evident, since each page has a graphical composition. Nevertheless, the characters – integrants of the band – in caricature-like representations confer upon the book a comic strip character. The music is refined in melodic and harmonic terms; it mixes jazz elements and Brazilian rhythms. The words are elaborate and maintain a dynamics which is proper to games and jokes. The arrangements are clean, without complications. The climate is relaxed and reflects the informality of the comic strip universe.

The band *X-Sampa* [*Sampa* is an affectionate nickname for São Paulo] has the song-comics articulation in its productive process and in the show dynamics. On its site the exposition of songs is mixed with comic strip pictures, which are also present on T-shirts and on decoration pieces and maps which suggest strolls through the city, something which is near to the videogame universe. The musicians are also designers. Their production of comics were transformed into panels, taken to public exhibitions, where the band plays compositions – predominantly instrumental – carried out on the basis of the pictures which are exhibited. A video of the band, available on YouTube, is a good document of this productive process, which articulates poetic and aesthetic experi-

ence, in creation and recreation dynamics. The exhibition, called *Sopa Graphics* [*Soup Graphics*], gains a performatic character and reflects the band's work dynamics. The integrants relate how the music re-aliments the comics and how the comics stimulate the group's music. The video is available on: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK3IPbhNrlo&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK3IPbhNrlo&feature=player_embedded). More than a finished product, edited in CD or book, the X-Sampa production appears as a process in constant construction, full of semiotic and cultural hybridisations.

The band *Pedra* [*Stone*] more explicitly assumes the language of rock, in a re-reading of the MPB classics [*Musica Popular Brasileira* – Brazilian Popular Music] and compositions of their own. Here we selected the interpretation of the song *Cuide-se bem* [*Take care of yourself*], by Guilherme Arantes, which has a beautiful clip available on YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=rfVQpsLgQk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=rfVQpsLgQk). The piece – done in comic-strip language – has a plastic character, which marries song and picture in a harmonic and well-finished way, although it is produced craftsmanship-like. The band's interpretation – set up in the classical structure of rock bands – has intensity and weight. Besides the singer's competent interpretation, the guitar solos and the drum beats involve the lovers of the genre. The narrative of the verses of the song is illustrated with sequential art pictures, which gain animation in the produced video.

## **Flying Sharks**

It is quite probable that many of the bands' admirers we described above have never heard of the composer Arrigo Barnabé and of the designer Luiz Gê; neither of the emblematic record *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*, a vinyl LP]. Maybe most of the followers of the bands *Maraska*, *Loungitude 46*, *X-Sampa* and *Pedra* were not even born in 1984, when the referred record was launched. But it is worth considering this production in our reflection, especially, the music-comics *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*]. It is a paradigmatic work when we think about hybrid aesthetic experiences, with the combination of music and comics. It is a

work which well illustrates the idea of “collective intelligence” presented by Pierre Lévy (1998).

The influence of the cinema and of comics was already present in the atmosphere and in the language of the music of the composer of the Federal State of Paraná, who had moved to São Paulo and had joined other independent musicians of experimental music, who met at the theatre and the cultural *Lira Paulistana* [*Lyre of the City of São Paulo*] and created the cultural movement, which in the 1980s, was known as *Vanguarda Paulistana* [*Vanguard of the City of São Paulo*]. The movement, which was greeted as a great newness of the Brazilian musical scenario since the *Tropicália* [cultural movement that happened in the mid of the 1960s; it combined avant-garde art and native Brazilian folk-music along with psychedelic rock], also included names such as Itamar Assumpção, Ná Ozzetti, Tetê Espíndola and Eliete Negreiros and musical groups such as *Língua de Trapo* [literally *Rag Tongue*], *Rumo* [*Direction*], and *Premeditando o Breque* [*Premeditating the breque* (interruption in the samba for humorous observations)]. In the same wake appeared the rock bands of that period, such as *Ira!* [*Anger!*], *Ultraje a Rigor* [*Outrage in full rig* – it is a wordplay: *traje a rigor*: smart or ceremonial clothes] and *Titãs* [*Titans*].

Three blocks from the *Lira Paulistana*, in the same Teodoro Sampaio Street, we maintained a workshop of plastic arts with two friends, after graduation at the Faculdade de Belas Artes [Faculty of Fine Arts] of São Paulo. Music and painting filled that space; they conferred an aesthetic form upon our time. The advent of “independent music”, with the first phonographic productions carried out at the margins of the big recording studios drew our attention. The pioneer of this initiative was Antonio Adolfo, with the record *Feito em Casa* [*Home made*], which I still have. Among these pioneers, the group *Boca Livre* [literally: *Free Mouth*] was the one that most followed us, as a sound-track for the rest of our life. They were times of rupture, of freedom conquests and of political mobilisations: times of experimentation and of dialogues between artistic languages, in which the cultural space of *Lira Paulistana* was a point of reference.

Arrigo Barnabé's first record, entitled *Clara Crocodilo* [*Clara Crocodile*], still frequented our record player – and went on surprising us – when the second one, *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*], came into our hands, shortly after having been launched, in 1984. In the insert of the record, in magazine format, most of the pages were dedicated to the theme song of the album, *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*]. They are reproduced hereafter (Figures 1 to 6).

At each new audition-reading of that artistic production, done on the basis of the time-space in which the reader finds himself, new meanings are produced. Each reader, in interaction with his relationship groups, his appropriation communities, effectuates a new aesthetic perception at each new listening-reading experience. Hence we can justify the inclusion of Luiz Gê's comics, without larger orientations on our part, in the following pages. Thus the reader of our article will also be able to make his own interpretations. In order to complete this aesthetic experience, we indicate the video which was prepared by the musician and video maker of the State of Rio de Janeiro Jeffin Rodegheri (Jefferson Marques Rodegheri), with a montage of that creation by Arrigo Barnabé and Luiz Gê, available on: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTLInY4WSSY>.

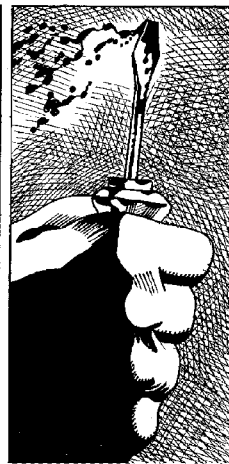
According to what the researcher Iberê Moreno Rosário e Barros writes in the article *Dodecafonía e Quadrinhos* [*Dodecaphony and Comics*], published in the blog *Quadrinheiros* [*Cartoonists*], which he signs as Sidekick,

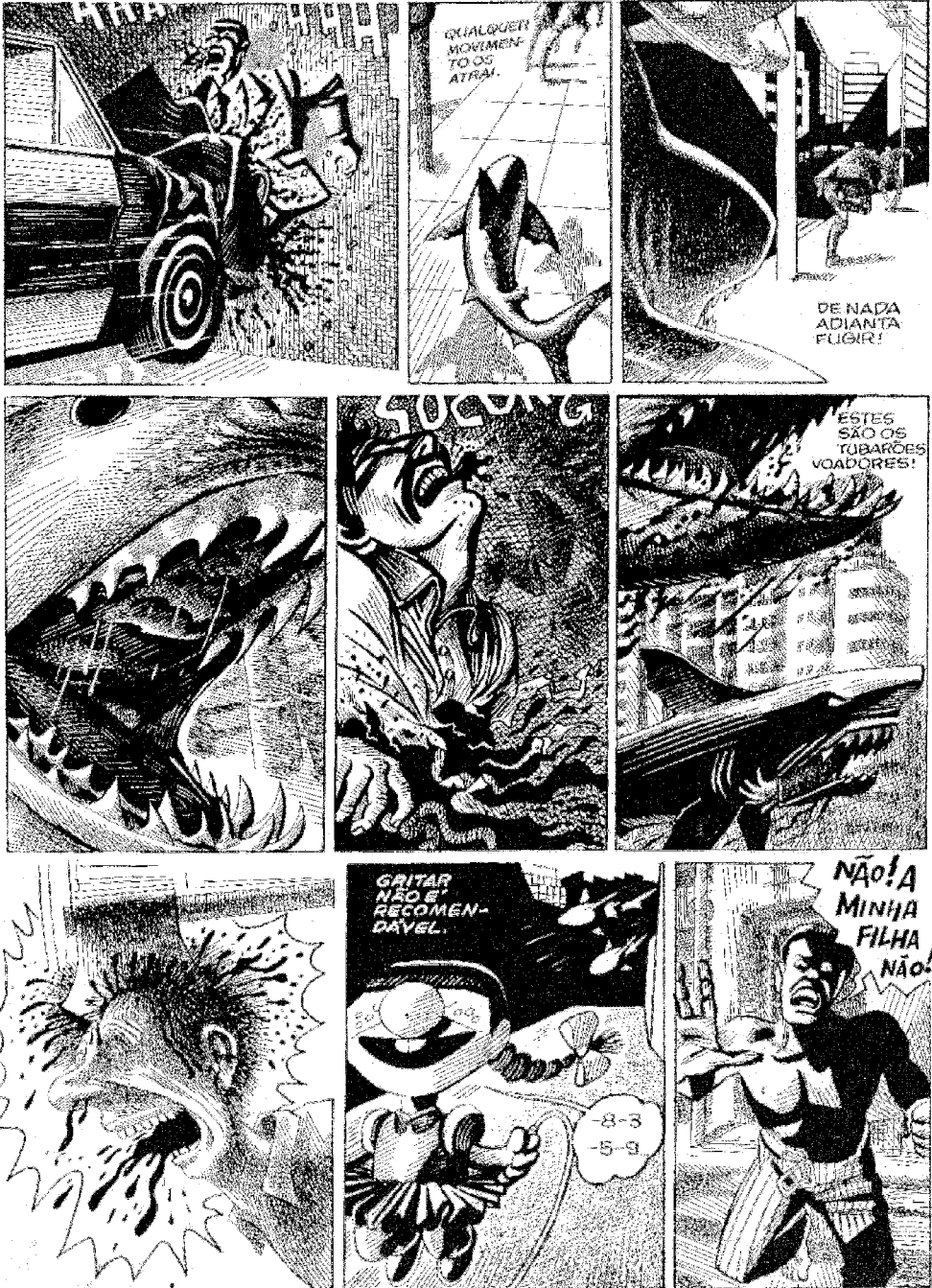
Arrigo had already determined that the cover of his second album would be done by Luiz Gê. When he visited him one day in order to define how the illustrations would be, the composer sees a comics which Gê had done on the basis of a comment of a friend of his. The comment was that of a poster which Gê owned, in which there were some planes of the *Flying Tigers* (North-American volunteer squadron who were detached in order to defend China during the Second World War). Inspired by the comment that there should be a comic strip about them, Luiz Gê had the idea to put *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*] in the middle of a city. Then Arrigo decides to set the comics to music and he calls his second album "*Tubarões voadores*" [*Flying Sharks*]. Together with the LP there was an insert with the complete comics. (ROSÁRIO E BARROS, 2012).



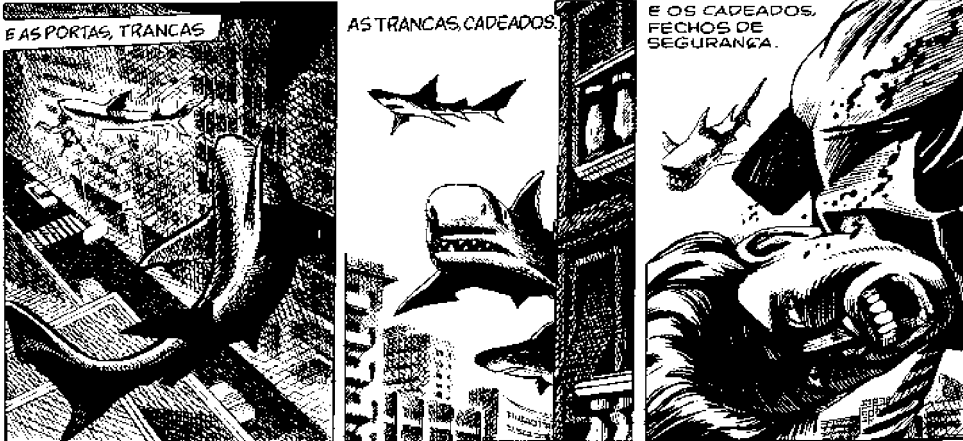
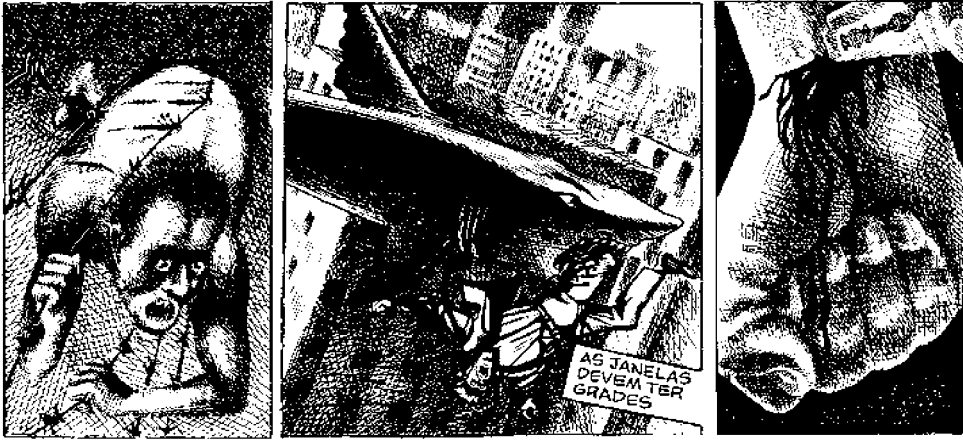
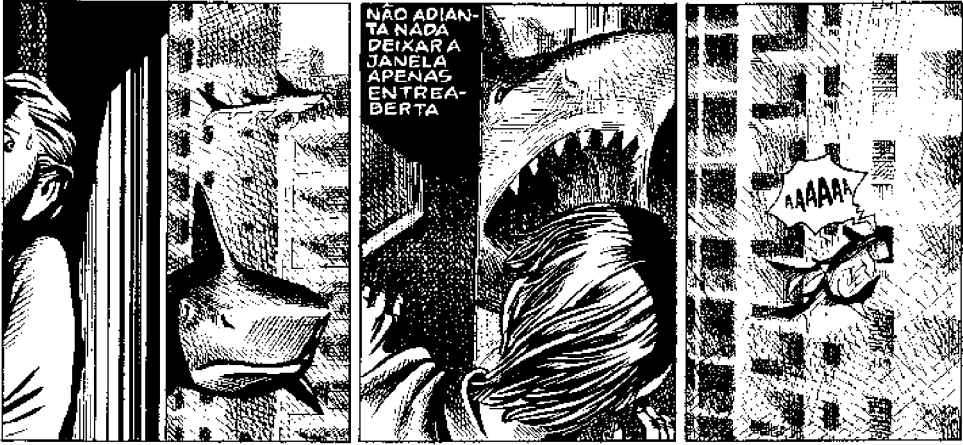


Figures 1 to 6. Comics *Tubarões voadores* [Flying Sharks], by Luiz Gê in the insert of Arrigo Barnabé's record, which has the same name.







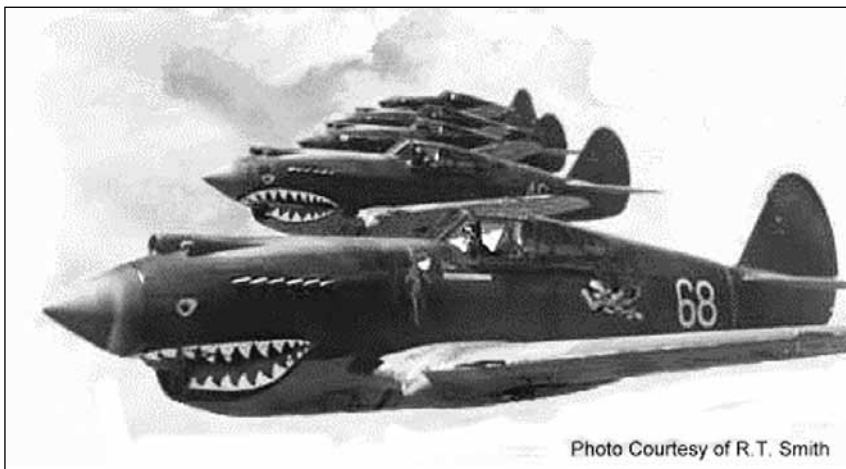


POIS NO CORAÇÃO DO PRUDENTE DESCANSA A  
SABEDORIA.



The author considers *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*] “an experience which mixes the visual with the auditory and with the characteristic surrealism of Arrigo Barnabé’s dodecaphonic music”. In the blog, he also presents an illustrative picture of the *Flying Tigers*, reproduced beneath (Figure 7).

Indeed this production, which Arrigo Barnabé did together with Luiz Gê, had really an innovative character; be it due to the composer’s musical language, which mixed melodic-harmonious references of contemporary classical music (which he had from his training in composition and conductorship at the ECA-USP – Escola de Comunicações e Artes – USP [School of Communications and Arts – University of São Paulo]), with rock elements and electronic music as well as due to the designer’s surrealistic idea when he proposed flying sharks fluctuating between the buildings, in a language which was dramatic and comic at the same time, like in a tragicomedy. The pleasure caused by this hybrid work, composed of music and comics, constituted itself in a unique aesthetic experience, because the aesthetic object permits different readings, due to its complexity. Something rare at the time in which the record was launched. It is worth noting that Arrigo Barnabé’s composition does not



**Figure 7.** Planes of the North-American squadron that was known as *Flying Tigers* (Photo by R.T. Smith).

only function as a musical background of the narrative composed in comics by Luiz Gê. Music and comics function in symbiosis, they form a unique piece. One confers dramaticity upon the other. One derides the other, like in an anthropophagic movement. The aesthetic object, so complex and full of hybridisations, creates an involving frame for the aesthetic perception; in a poetics which invites to an aesthetics of even a cathartic nature.

The creation initiated with Luiz Gê's sequential art, which was set to music by Arrigo Barnabé, gains new meanings in the band *Sabor de Veneno* [*Taste of Poison*]'s interpretation, brought by the execution of the composer's arrangement, into which every musician inserts his intentions and expressions. The main voice is Vânia Bastos' voice – she integrated the band then – and the locutions and contra-songs are of the composer. Even Luiz Gê comes to the recording; he created the “screams of pain” which arise at each attack of the sharks, at each bite or laceration: screams of pain, of fright. Everything happens in a surrealistic, rather circus-like scenario, which mixes sounds of the city, of children playing in the park and quotations of ring-a-ring o' roses songs.

In the visual narrative of Luiz Gê's comics, the realism of the scenario composed of well represented buildings, in an almost photographic perspective, contrasts with the characters' caricatured and comic feature, which refer to the cartoon language. The sharks which fly between the buildings and lacerate the bodies have also this realistic figurative feature, with competent use of the contrasts, of the effects of light and shade, which confer larger dramaticity upon them. The approximation of design to the forms that are present in the cinematographic language of horror films is evident. The pictures go beyond the panels, as if they were invading the reader's space and putting him at risk as well. It is as if he were part of the scene and of the story as a whole. The textual elements of the narrative gain graphical forms, proper to cartoon language; they are more than silent letters. They are screams and moans, noises and sonorities represented there in a way which would already produce an acoustic dimension in the reading process of the graphical piece; but



they gain new dimensions when reading is accompanied by listening to the song, in a new aesthetic experience of hybrid nature.

That visual-musical work, which had experimented different re-elaborations in the process of its production and recording – and which, for sure, was reinvented at each live execution of the band – permitted a new production of meanings as far as the listening-reading experience is concerned, when the receptor had the record and the insert at his disposition, in the form of a cartoon magazine. This happened in that cultural context and can still happen today, in another historical and social context.

This process, which was initiated about 30 years ago, marked by constant recreation, by hybrid articulations and multimedia interactions, continues being metamorphosed. The *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*] arrive at our time in a new support, the web. The video montage by Jeffin Rodegheri, we already referred to, permits new aesthetic experiences of Arrigo Barnabé's and Luiz Gê's creation.

Hybrid forms, hybrid technologies, hybrid poetics and aesthetics. Thus the contemporary mediatised culture configures itself, dynamised by appropriations, recreations and new representations, crossed by socio-cultural mediations. As we argued in a recent article published in the magazine *Contemporânea* [*Contemporary*] of UFBA – Universidade Federal da Bahia [Federal University of the State of Bahia], “in the interconnected society, to speak of musical consumption implies the adoption of another analysis perspective, in which production, circulation and consumption are articulated in a multidirectional way” (BARROS, 2012b).

The bands we quoted in this article and especially the case of the piece *Tubarões voadores* [*Flying Sharks*] – which deserved our emphasis – are examples of the hybrid and multidimensional aesthetic experience which marks our time. Certainly other contemporary experiences also use this mixture of language of the world of music and comics<sup>3</sup>. The focuses we used here reflect the limitations of our references and the

<sup>3</sup> Ed Motta's CDs very often have inserts, where the language of comics is present; they are elaborated by his wife, Edna Lopes, who is graphic artist.

specificities of our aesthetic perception. We are interested in thinking on how these manifestations of mediatised culture exploit the multimediaic frame in which we are involved.

### **Fade out**

The well-known idea of “open work” proposed by Umberto Eco (1968), can well be applied to these artistic-mediatic productions of contemporary culture. In them the aesthetic experience is not limited to the aesthetic object, but it completes itself in the aesthetic perception, in the interaction of the artist – composer, musician, cartoonist and designer – with the receptor, experienced in the interpretation processes. By proposing us a “hermeneutics of the work of art”, Hans-Georg Gadamer (2010) speaks of this transitory character and of the constant transformation of the work of art, which he suggests to be thought as a “construct”. According to him (GADAMER, 2010, p. 52), “the construct which is the work of art must always be constructed again in the reproducing arts”. Hence it is a game between the work and the receptor, of a confrontation between aesthetic object and aesthetic perception, experienced in a mirror-like relationship. According to the German philosopher,

The game of art is much more a mirror which always emerges again through the millenniums in front of us, a mirror in which we look at ourselves – frequently in a too unexpected way, frequently in a too strange way – in which we look at how we are, how we could be, what happens to us. (GADAMER, 2010, p. 56).

In this game, the spectator appropriates himself of the work and transforms it into an aesthetic object. In the framework of the aesthetic perception, he experiences a mirror-like relationship of exchange. In this sense, we could consider it as an “expectator”, who projects his expectations by confronting the aesthetic object, on the basis of his semantic field and of his symbolic universe. The production of meanings occurs in a dialectical dynamics, replete with polysemics.

The productions we used here by way of illustration, which present themselves as hybrid experiences between song, music and cartoon, illustrate our understanding that the production of meanings is something dynamic, which involves work and interpreter in a mirror-like game. In the mediatised society in which we live it is necessary to think about culture and the mediatic productions from a hybrid perspective, in constant transformation, in a context of interculturalities and intermediatic mediations, where the receptor experiences a poetic experience in the aesthetic experience. More than a receptacle of the messages which are transmitted to him, the receptor becomes the one who feels pleasure. In this sense Rancière's (2011) confrontation between the spectator's "dullness" and "emancipation" challenges us to understand the pedagogic dimension of communication, in the formation of active readers-listeners, of interlocutors.

When this occurs in the intersections between art and media, between aesthetics and communication, the freedom of participation of the interlocutors, who are emancipated then, broadens itself and the communicational phenomenon reaches its essence which is foreseen in the idea of "sharing", of "making common to many people", according to the etymological origin of the verb communicate, of the Latin word *communicare*. The aesthetic experience in contemporary mediatised culture can be dynamised as such, like a game of creative interrelations, marked by interactivity and the possibilities of constant recreations. The context of technological convergence, mediatic hybridisations and interculturalities is propitious for this rediscovery of the interactional relation of communication, especially when visualities and sonorities are used for the same poetic-aesthetic experience.

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