

THE PHONOGRAPHIC ALBUM AND THE DIGITIZATION OF CULTURE: FRAGMENTATION AND MEMORY CREATION AND COMPOSITION

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Abstract: This text, along with the images and sounds (web links) that accompany it, constitutes a hybrid "cultural production" in the form of a modest academic experiment in co-authorship. It stems from a reflexive dialogue taking place between two research processes that have been dealing with music collections and the relationship between music, memory and sociality. The procedure consisted in employing the "theoretical model" used in the doctoral thesis of one of the authors to generate the vocabulary for and the interpretative approach of the second author's work, when considered in the specific field of phonographic collections. The narrative thread is that of the "ethno-(phono)graphic encounters" which resulted in the argument essayed herein. As we understand it, the analogue LP-album format constituted a unique way of making phonograms of musical performances and, symmetrically, of creating musical performances with phonograms. We show that the articulations of technique, art, and rituality set around music-making and record-making are of equivalent complexity to the bonds involved in listening experiences and in research and re-memoration efforts, in making the albums (re)circulate. Based on this realization, we affirm that, despite what we call the "fragmentation of the analogue album" which results from the migration to digital media, a pervasive memory of the "album format" nonetheless remains, potentially shaping contemporary and politicized ways of experiencing digitized Brazilian popular music.

Keywords: phonographic album; memory artifact; digitality; fragmentation.

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O ÁLBUM FONOGRÁFICO E A DIGITALIZAÇÃO DA CULTURA: FRAGMENTAÇÃO, RECOMPOSIÇÃO E CRIAÇÃO DE MEMÓRIAS.

Resumo: Este artigo resulta de uma interlocução reflexiva entre dois processos de pesquisa que vêm lidando com acervos musicais e a relação entre música, memória e socialidade. O procedimento consistiu em acionar o “modelo teórico” da tese de doutorado de um dos autores para gerar o vocabulário e a abordagem interpretativa da atuação do segundo no campo específico dos acervos fonográficos. O fio narrativo é o dos “encontros etno(fono)gráficos” que resultaram no argumento que aqui é ensaiado. Entendemos que os LPs-álbuns analógicos constituíram um modo singular de fazer fonogramas de performances musicais e, simetricamente, criar performances musicais com fonogramas. Mostramos que as articulações de técnica, arte e ritualidade em torno do fazer música e do fazer discos de música são de complexidade equivalente à dos vínculos envolvidos na escuta e nas lides de pesquisa e re-memoração, no fazê-los (re)circularem. Com base nisso, afirmamos que, a despeito do que percebemos como “fragmentação do álbum analógico”, que decorre da migração para os suportes digitais, subsiste uma memória pervasiva do “formato-álbum” capaz de gerar ou participar de modalidades contemporâneas de experiência da música digitalizada.

Palavras-chave: álbum fonográfico; artefato de memória; digitalidade; fragmentação.

EL ÁLBUM FONOGRÁFICO Y LA DIGITALIZACIÓN DE LA CULTURA: FRAGMENTACIÓN, RECOMPOSICIÓN Y CREACIÓN DE MEMORIAS.

Resumen: Este artículo resulta de un diálogo reflexivo entre dos procesos de investigación que han estado abordando las colecciones musicales y la relación entre música, memoria y socialidad. El procedimiento consistió en utilizar el “modelo teórico” de la tesis doctoral de uno de los autores para generar el vocabulario y enfoque interpretativo del trabajo del segundo en el campo específico de las colecciones fonográficas. El hilo narrativo es el de los “encuentros etno(fon)gráficos” que dieron lugar al argumento que aquí se ensaya. Entendemos que los LP-álbumes analógicos constituyan una forma única de realizar fonogramas de interpretaciones musicales y, simétricamente, de crear interpretaciones musicales con fonogramas. Mostramos que las articulaciones de la técnica, el arte y la ritualidad en torno a hacer música y hacer discos musicales son de complejidad equivalente a los vínculos involucrados en la escucha, la investigación y la rememoración, en hacerlos (re)circular. Con base en esto, afirmamos que, a pesar de lo que percibimos como la “fragmentación del álbum analógico”, resultante de la migración a los medios digitales, persiste una memoria omnipresente del “formato de álbum” capaz de generar o participar en las modalidades contemporáneas de la experiencia musical.

Palabras clave: álbum de fonógrafo; artefacto de memoria; digitalidad; fragmentación.

1. Introduction³

This paper is the result of a dialogue-research experience proposed as part of a course⁴ shared between postgraduate programs at two universities (Unirio and the University of Aveiro) that brought together students and researchers, both academic and non-academic, around the possibilities of deepening network interactions in the creation of contemporary and intercultural ways of making and memorizing music⁵. For us, it was a question of developing a contribution to some contemporary discussions that mobilize us in our (interconnected) fields of activity, based on a very unique experience (that of Charles Gavin) with analogue phonographic collections.

From an academic point of view, this is an interdisciplinary work on social memory, which dialogues with the fields of music/ethnomusicology and anthropology; from an activist/militant point of view, it is an extension or borrowing of a certain mastery developed around techno-industrial recordings and musical crafts. When we thought about publishing the content of the classes, we didn't try to unify these points of view, but rather to put them into communication, finding a way that respected the spirit of "interlocution and symmetrization". From the outset, we discarded conceiving this work as a methodical analysis, a conceptual interpretation, or a theoretical support for a privileged case or illustrative example. Nor do we intend to prove or demonstrate a hypothesis; by constructing it between texts and records, we intend to suggest a position or common ground between our different perspectives and trajectories, and one that feeds off these differences.

Before continuing, in this introductory section, to outline the contours and content of our collaboration, and of this authorial experiment in particular, it is worth contextualizing them minimally, in terms of a set of issues and debates that are common to our various research environments and activities.

The background to our meetings and dialogues goes back to doctoral research by Sabrina Dinola (completed in 2020) on the phonographic memory and heritage of music

³. This paper was produced as part of Sabrina Dinola's activities linked to a post-doctoral fellowship project titled "Simetrias e assimetrias na digitalização da cultura: sociabilidade e memórias coletivas em torno da música popular no ciberespaço", that received support and subsidies from FAPERJ (Carlos Chagas Filho Foundation for Research Support in the State of Rio de Janeiro).

⁴ "Shared knowledge between memory and music: digitality and archives in transit", open class carried out jointly by the Graduate Programs in Social Memory (PPGMS) and Music (PPGM) at UNIRIO and the Institute of Ethnomusicology at the University of Aveiro (INET - Portugal), which have been working together since 2018 to reflect on the relationship between Social Memory and Music.

⁵ Unlike the notion of memory, *memoration* (from the French *mettre en mémoire* and the Portuguese *memoração*) suggests a type of communicational approach in terms of *memory-building processes*; thus, it must be considered as an operation which produces occurrences, practices, or devices which enable the 'permanence' or 'significant repetition' of objects, practices, knowledge, experience and values through time

in Brazil (see Dinola, 2024 [2020]). That work consisted of following and interpreting, within the framework of the changes in the recording industry in the 20th and 21st centuries and in coherence with the "modernist" lineages of music and national identity, the main productions in which Charles Gavin – a rock musician who for 25 years was a member of an immensely prestigious band (the Titãs); a record collector; and a cultural producer and researcher focused on the field of music – found himself involved (cf. for example, GAVIN et al., 2008) as an agent of musical memory, observing that his various profiles actively deal with phonograms and phonogram collections.

Dinola's thesis was completed at a time when the covid-19 pandemic, the wave of local, regional and global authoritarianisms, and the accelerated algorithmization/virtualization of many social activities of all kinds have posed crucial existential and political questions. Explosive expansions of cyberspace as a sphere of power have also been countered and cracked by 'implosive' appropriations, including, and especially, in the "arts and cultures" and in social and identity movements. In the markets of cultural goods, but also in public and other civil society's initiatives, amid the protagonism of different agents (academic and nonacademic), we have seen signs of a new relationship between social memory, music and historical perception, urging us to think about other forms, processes and, above all, projects for building and preserving collective "musical memories".

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In Section 2, we will outline the previous steps of our interlocution, in a narrative exercise of symmetrizations and mirrorings between our performance/research interests, and show how they resulted in the "phonographic essay" that will be presented. Section 3 continues the account of the dialogues, explaining the presence/absence of the records and exploring the idea that memorating them can take on a non-trivial "ethnophonographic" value; this value stems from two different aspects: the technical and semiotic characteristics of the artifact, and an ethnographic understanding of what the musicality of the sound recordings is. Section 4, while focusing on "ethnophonography" in the analogue collections of commercial record companies, proposes the central idea of our argument: that there is an ongoing "fragmentation" of musical experience/action, under the regime of mass digitization. Section 5 pays attention to the ambivalences, consonances and dissonances of our respective experiences, with an intergenerational emphasis; we highlight a current relationship, neither monolithic nor programmatic, between the veins of political identity and poetic

diversity that continue to run through and across ways of making music in Brazilian conditions.

Given the purpose of the paper, it was necessary to distinguish between terms and expressions borrowed from other authors or from common or generalized usage in our respective fields, and those terms or expressions that we used ad hoc, or in a provisional or recontextualized way. In the first case, we follow the double quotation mark convention; for the second, we use single quotation marks. Single quotation marks also appear when the emphasis is semantic rather than terminological; sometimes we also use single quotation marks to indicate that we are suggesting a conceptual reading within the confines of the text.

As an expressive corollary that allows this article to index and at the same time resemble the structure of an album, we have created two distinct non-verbal/ supra-verbal constructs: 1) a playlist or "phonographic essay", understood as a "gesture of sharing" and/or an essay of reflection and interpretation that guides and simultaneously acts in the construction of the text; 2) a small and simple 'showcase' of digital(ized) projects and products around phonograms; and 3) a "composition of images" that serves as an illustration or a mapping of the field of the fragmented distribution of performances in social space-time, indexing the sections of the text and mainly functioning as an 'image-title' for the narrated process.

2. Dialogue and symmetrization

The first phase of our interlocution⁶ took place in the form of fieldwork, during which Sabrina, in addition to her repeated (virtual) interviews with Gavin, accompanied him in his (Charles') work in a 'memory lab' project – that is, interviewing, at the studio, musicians and artists who were authoritatively linked to certain vinyl records considered to be particularly interesting/important phonographic works. From another point of view, and very significantly at that, Charles, in the role of a producer inside the studio, was also working in the field as a researcher, while Sabrina, for the purposes of producing her thesis, treated Gavin's work as a 'study-case', a sample out of a broader variety of generational experiences, which have lately found expression in the work of university professors in such fields as music, ethnomusicology, anthropology, memory and heritage.

⁶ In our narrative, the names Sabrina and Charles designate the persons who interacted in order to produce this paper, while the names Dinola and Gavin index this same work from an authorial perspective, referring to other objective works/productions of each of these persons, regarded as authors in the order of discourse.

During that initial period, a first 'reciprocal act'⁷ in the context of the interlocution took shape when Charles was invited to take part in an open lecture⁸ alongside two invited university professors, in a panel discussion on public and private⁹ (music) archives. We can understand this process in terms of a 'fore'-symmetry: Sabrina makes the gesture of inviting Gavin 'in return' for his receptiveness to her research, as well as a way to continue their interaction and expand the 'ethnographic exchanges'. However, instead of calling him to simply attend this event, set on 'academic grounds', what is significant about his participation is his position as a 'self-taught' connoisseur among 'practitioners' with other backgrounds, profiles, and institutional insertions (such as music professors and researchers), and the equivalence (not equality) that it implied between the dynamics of research, production, and preservation.

In Sabrina's thesis, Gavin's lecture/class was a "prompting ethnographic situation": a concrete (and "dense") scene taken from the field (that of the record archives) where the coherence between Gavin's multiple activities and skills became evident in both his performance and in the content of his message (as well as in the premises they shared). This took on particularly well-defined contours from a social memory perspective in terms of Gavin's role as member of a "generation" that had grown up during the "golden age of LPs" (the 1950s/60s/70s) – that is, whose musical education and culture was marked by analog phonography.

According to Dinola (2020, chapter 1), while narrating his experience with collections and archives, Gavin activated, or rather, modulated between the points of view of a musician, a cultural producer, and that of a record listener/collector, and did so in a way that seemed consistent with his practices and discourses as an agent/mediator in/for a variety of projects and products. It wasn't simply a question of rememorating (or reminiscing about) the 'contents' and 'authorships' (particularly, but not exclusively, musical) found in records from the past, but of valuing the potential and effects of the medium that transmitted them: the broadening and diversification of musical experiences, including the potential for synesthesia (the various sensory dimensions involved: sonorities, visualities, tactilities, as well as its textuality and the physical interaction with sound equipment) and its intertwining with sociality; along with the

⁷ We will leave the reasons for this choice of terminology unexplained, while stressing that it takes part of a constellation of notions that speak about "retributions", "offsets", "symmetrizations", as well as a revaluing of ethnographic interactions as belonging to the order of an ethics-politics of friendships and affectations

⁸ The open class took place in May 2018, during Sabrina's doctoral research, as part of the activities of a graduate course on "Memory and Music" offered jointly by the postgraduate programs in Social Memory and in Music at Unirio.

⁹ The panel, entitled "Public and private archives: management, policies and problems", included presentations by Charles Gavin, Clifford Korman (Instituto Villa Lobos/PPGM Unirio) and Maya Suemi (Funarte/PPGM Unirio).

potential for experimentation with forms of music use and enjoyment. (see "Image composition", in Section 5).

In 2021, this dialogue, stimulated (and strengthened) by Sabrina's post-doctoral research¹⁰, took on another dimension. Sabrina – still working as a researcher (an "academic", linked to the university) but now directly in the role of teacher, as far as developing the "Memory and Music" "discipline" (which promoted the meetings and experiences that structure some of the articles making up this dossier) – renewed her invitation for Charles to participate during classes. Dialogue and symmetry became the focus and framing of the two classes¹¹ we taught together [in partnership] in that semester.

In the course of those discussions, we reaffirmed our common perception of there being a pervasive memory present among all of Gavin's cultural productions: a memory of the experience associated with listening to music albums. When we exchanged views on a number of projects which involved music and memory (especially those developed and signed by Gavin) and on the creation of various products in the cultural goods and services market (especially those involving the recording, preservation, and circulation of musical content), we converged on the impression or assessment that these actions and products are – as a whole and in their diversity – a reflection or effect of the music album's heterogeneous and multifaceted composition.

This perspective indirectly structured the content and narrative of the classes given throughout 2021. It is not for us to try and transpose or narrate them presently, but instead to point out that during our dialog, we found in the expression album fragmentation – at least initially and provisionally – common ground for imagining and the vocabulary for (re)interpreting the transformations which had taken place in the "technological reproducibility" of musical performances, from the times of the Vinyl LP/Music Album to current streaming platforms. This understanding (to be outlined in the next sections of the paper) will enable us to reflect more directly upon the aesthetic and political meanings of "memory and heritage"-related projects that deal with phonographic Vinyl LP/Music Album collections—whether in circumstances that had already been imposing themselves on the music industry since the 1990s or in those emerging even more forcefully after the second half of the past decade.

¹⁰ Dinola, Sabrina. "Simetrias e assimetrias na digitalização da cultura: sociabilidade e memórias coletivas em torno da música popular no ciberespaço" [Symmetries and assymetries in culture digitization: sociability and collective memory around popular music in cyberspace] – post-doctoral research project, (2020-2024) subsidized and supported by Faperj.

¹¹ "Whiteflies' circulate: a research experience among the collections of major commercial record companies" and "Building memories: sound recordings and their circulation in the digital age".

In short, in this process of interlocution, our respective authorialities expressed themselves in different forms that, symmetrically, led to and interfered in the final form of the paper: a corpus of memorized records that makes this work a 'phonographic essay' and a scheme of inspiring ideas, which lends to the essay a 'theoretical model'.

This model, used here to generate the vocabulary and interpretative approach of Gavin's work in the specific field of phonographic collections, derives from Dinola's doctoral thesis (2024 [2020]) and was previously revisited by the author in a subsequent paper (Dinola, 2021). Synthetically, we draw the following analogy: on the one hand, the relationship between the vinyl record and "music" and, on the other, the relationship between the gelatinized celluloid tape of analog cinema and "drama", in the case of the film industry.

For this paper, this analogy (which is implicit in the text) functioned as a set of aesthetic-political premises based on Walter Benjamin's critique of the notions, connotations or ideologies of the idea of art (in an era of "mechanical reproduction"); we proceeded through the articulation of Walter Benjamin's theories and/or critical analyses of photography (Benjamin, 2012 [1931]) and those of Christopher Small on concert music (Small, 1998).

Benjamin (2012 [1931]) criticizes the idea of photography as a representational record or as art, and we believe that the same can be applied to phonography. (W. Benjamin even proposes modernistically "art as photography", and this inversion is also fertile for understanding the traditional-modern creativities associated with mpb [the acronym for popular (commercial) Brazilian music]).

Christopher Small's (1998) proposition is that, anthropologically (ethnographically), music is not something substantive, existing on a plane separate from life, but a corporeal-mental activity, a socio-eco-logical complex of performative actions/gestures that are not restricted to the production or composition of sounds, but intrinsically include, in equal relevance, listening and dancing, in a complex that has ritual efficacy and expressiveness. This implies an ethnographic critique of the concert halls of the Eurocentric classical tradition. For Small, "Western classical music (...) is in fact a perfectly normal human music, an ethnic music, if you like, like any other and, like the others, susceptible to social interpretation as much as purely musical" (Small, 1998, p.4). (He considers that concerts, symphonies, etc. should not be considered as "works of art", and that they are written for class rituals that associate social prestige with the enjoyment of a supposedly superior art, and this suggestion too, in our view, can liberate popular phonography from this kind of ideology). More directly, Small's proposition can be adopted in the form of practices that are critical of the notion that records and

phonograms in general constitute 'inert' technical intermediaries between "music" and listening, or that attention to music should be abstracted from corporeal and technical mediations.

Figure 1: Playlist, or A Phonographic Essay¹²

	Caetano Veloso - Meu coco (Sony Music, 2021) Documentário "Caetano Explica Meu Coco" (YouTube, 2023) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQj0VgIYcXM		Liniker e Os Camellows / Remonta (Pommelo, 2017) O Som Do Vinil, 12a Temporada (2018) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2sXEcETyG1
	Gal Costa / A pele do futuro (Biscoito Fino, 2018) O Som Do Vinil, 13a Temporada (2019) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8x_Wuta4D0		Nelson Sargent / Sonho de um sambista (Eldorado, 1979) O Som Do Vinil, 9a Temporada (2015) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KfHISrwFqs
	Novos Baianos / Acabou choraré (Som Livre, 1972) O Som Do Vinil, 1a Temporada (2007) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksm2nrWWGag		Xênia França / Xênia (Agogo Cultural, 2017) O Som Do Vinil, 13a Temporada (2019) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NojMh0WIKb0
	Áurea Martins / O amor em paz (RCA Victor, 1972) O Som Do Vinil, 13a Temporada (2019) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZmjlezTc0		Mutantes / Os Mutantes e seus Cometas no País dos Boureis (Polydor, 1972) O Som Do Vinil, 5a Temporada (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAS1_nUa330&t=6s
	Mariza Monte / Verde, azul, amarelo, car de rosa e carvão (EMI, 1994) O Som Do Vinil, 7a Temporada (2013) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AL7yAtLMns&t=131s		Zé Ramalho - A Peleja Do Diabo Contra O Dono Do Céu (EPIC, 1979) O Som Do Vinil, 1a Temporada (2007) - parte 1 e 2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzZliM2qGdI
	Beth Carvalho / De pé no chão (RCA Victor, 1978) O Som Do Vinil, 5a Temporada (2011) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKErh77B6dA		Gilberto Gil / Gilbertos Samba (Sony, 2014) O Som Do Vinil, 8a Temporada (2014) parte 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc40B_DhMIMC0&t=52s
	Martinho Da Vila / Origens (RCA Victor, 1973) O Som Do Vinil, 10a Temporada (2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeZpkiGhKE		Milton Nascimento / Minas (EMI / Odeon, 1975) O Som Do Vinil, 7a Temporada (2013) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbgC2ZlqODY&t=146s

Source: prepared by the authors (2023).

3. Different listening experiences and common projects

Our most direct interlocution (that between Charles and Sabrina), as already mentioned, initially took place via loosely ethnographic interactions while accompanying the recordings of two seasons of the television program *The Sound of Vinyl*, produced

¹² This Playlist is made up of links to some audiovisual productions that illustrate and reference some of the statements throughout this text. They are episodes of the TV show, *O Som do Vinil* [The Sound of Vinyl], including a documentary that was released/ broadcast on YouTube in 2022, which is very similar in form to the *O Som do Vinil* interviews, but with a longer duration, similar to the SdV interviews before being edited.

by Gavin (see Dinola, 2020, chapter 4). The program consisted¹³ of (edited) interviews with singers, instrumentalists, and composers on the subject of albums – considered to be musical 'works', 'oeuvres', or 'references' – chosen by Gavin and his collaborators according to their own more or less consensual criteria in terms of topicality or relevance. Therefore, in this program, records are the direct objects of [mainly discursive] memoration,¹⁴ in view of their content or significance. However, in their role as significant elements, they are indirectly also agents of knowledge and sociability, in that they motivate and afford (re)encounters (as in studio interviews, among others) with a particular musical vein of research and partnership (the show's guidelines/charts are carefully conceived to convey this), elaborated through dialogues that also hold some sort of testimonial quality, a character of musical criticism and informal conversation.

Thus, in these meetings arranged around records (and in their edited and broadcast versions), the latter hold a presence, that is, they are not referents in discourse, nor object-products, but rather artifacts imbued with 'agency' (that is, with the capacity for having active and subjective effects on others and their surroundings, for communicating intentionality and (re)producing or re-presenting experiences. On the other hand, the presence of the records is also incomplete, partial, and fragmentary. The title of the program alludes to a specific sound, which is not, however, accessible to viewers nor participants: the analog record (especially the LP) thus emerges as a concrete entity, a discourse referent, an element in/of that performance [see "Image composition", Section 5] – but it is never played.

Based on Sabrina's experience (and thesis), the TV show's fabrication process revealed a relationship between Charles (and his collaborators) and (the world of) records that was substantively similar – but quite different when it came to the final product – to the one which manifestly engendered the book 300 Important Records of Brazilian Music [300 Discos Importantes da Música Brasileira] (GAVIN, 2008). That had been the first of Gavin's productions to attract Sabrina's attention as a potential object of study. Sabrina had immediately been interested in the way that, in line with the vocabulary used by the academic heritage field, the opening pages of the book explicitly employed words like "memory" and "preservation" in relation to the so-called "Brazilian music". These were uses and appropriations of categories that Sabrina, in her master's research (Dinola, 2012) had already addressed when observing the production of documentaries about Brazilian music in former decades, released during the first decade of the 21st century. Another dialogue established between these our two distinct pieces

¹³ After 16 seasons, the program was discontinued in 2023.

¹⁴ See note 3.

of research revolved around their key ideas. While investigating the documentaries' discourse, Sabrina had observed that music shifted from the (sound)track to the screen by becoming the subject matter of documentaries – and that, in reverse correspondence with what was happening with Gavin's activities; he had gone from performing as a musician (in a rock band) on stage and in the studio to handling phonograms in/of record company collections (as we'll see in the next sections). These same 'transits' could also be outlined for the 300 book. By offering up (and presenting itself as) a 'panel' of catalogued records with information about the productions themselves, the publication suggested a kind of 'must-hear list' of "important records". At the same time, however, given the absence of the records themselves and of their sounds (emphasis was placed on iconographic elements and historical/critical appraisals), the book also enabled links with other media/ modes of access (like websites and blogs, etc., now becoming obsolete) to the sound registries it made mention of.

Thus, the presence-absence of the record as such, its once again incomplete and fragmentary condition in the book, is different but equivalent to what had been observed in the TV program *The Sound of Vinyl*. As a medium for musical content, records are directly referred to in the tome's title and cover image; however, the book's format and art/design (both its dimensions, equivalent to that of LP covers, and the treatment given to the art and writing, etc.) share visual, tactile and informational similarities (written information, credits, etc.) with much of what, in the albums, was not, in fact, the record itself. This makes its concrete absence – its silence – stand out even more powerfully.

In retrospect, this reasoning makes it all the more significant that Sabrina's first "foray into the field", her initiation into face-to-face research to accompany Gavin's activities as an "agent of memory", took place at a live concert with the band he had assembled and a repertoire which was a 'reinterpretation' (recreated arrangements) of songs released by the group Secos & Molhados¹⁵ on their two released music albums (from 1973 and 1974) – the same ones for which Gavin had already directed a remastering, re-release project in 2000 (the latter had also marked precisely the beginning of his work in phonographic collections of commercial record companies). Interestingly, during the concert, the memoration of those specific records was no longer concentrated on spoken words, illustration, or written commentary (as in the book and television show) but on the musical performance itself (also produced by Gavin).

¹⁵ In the beginning of the 1970s, the group Secos & Molhados (meaning 'dry and wet/liquid [foodstuff]') – founded by João Ricardo, Ney Matogrosso and Gérson Conrad – became a reference for Brazilian popular music (and a "phenomenon" for the recording industry) by bringing innovations in both sound and performance.

Nevertheless, as previously said, a live show does not produce the same sound as a vinyl record (just as it did not intend to have, it's worth noting, the original visual, corporeal and theatrical components/aspects of the Secos & Molhados band from the 70's). The relationship between event and record is significantly inverted here: it is now the concert (the event) that evokes the album (the record), with the original songs being recorded inside the studio. (From this perspective and in this context, the notion of memoration helps to emphasize the inadequacy of such tags as "cover" or "tribute", etc. This is not to deny, however, the range of the varieties of practices – from imitation to impersonation, from replication, or re-enactment to celebration and to reinvention –; but as we understand them, 'memoration'-type relationships do not constitute neither separate classes nor specific repertoires of attitudes and performances.

For Sabrina, looking back, it was interesting to compare this scene from the concert with the one (mentioned in the Introduction, but which only happened a few months later) from the lecture/open class at Unirio. There, Gavin had actually handled the records (he had chosen them in advance, actually having to gather them and bring them with him to the auditorium) and played them. Ironically, though – and in a way that is absolutely relevant to the issues we were about to face – "playing the records", in practice, had to be replaced (represented) by the action of opening apps for mp3 files, tracking and playing the respective digitized tracks on his personal computer. On the other hand, in the theater (or at least on stage) the record was entirely absent (the musical performance took place without its handling or any direct reference to it) and yet, Gavin was also playing it, in a very literal, re(con)figured sense.

The concert, therefore, strictly in its quality as a musical performance on stage – a result of the expression of a history and singular relationship which exists between the musician and a particular record/album – is also a part of the varied series of interactions and performances made by Gavin in the 'world of records' (the phonographic industry and culture). When performing for his 'university initiation', on the other hand, Gavin didn't use records simply to illustrate or exemplify: the lecture had a quality of the ethno-(phono)graphic account in that it was a concrete instance of his ('personal' and 'professional') experiences as a listener, collector, and author/producer of recorded music, that is, of performances and/or artifacts involving phonograms.

In these four scenes of ethnographic encounters between us (that is, Charles/Gavin and Sabrina/Dinola)¹⁶, records figure as artifactual entities; the two of us,

¹⁶ The book (*300 Important Records...*) is here being considered as a *de facto* encounter between Sabrina and Charles, insofar as Gavin, or his 'artist' persona (the famous musician), presents himself as an 'agent of memory', by having the IPHAN's [Brazilian Heritage Institute] seal (front page) and by resorting to the vocabulary and discourse of this institution, which are one of the main themes in Dinola's master's degree research (DINOLA, 2012).

from our different standpoints in relation to the research, perceived their presence and the effects they produced. In Dinola's thesis, they appeared as memory (or memoration) artifacts in the sense that they activated or 'co-moved' certain discourses and practices in the present scene; but when 'in the hands' (literally or (re)figuratively)¹⁷ of Gavin, they acted rather as musical artifacts, embedded in a density¹⁸ of meanings that we will try to indicate, being linked to at least three aspects specific to them. These are as follows: their 'informativeness' as record mediums; their significance or 'content' as (examples of) musical works; and what we will provisionally call their 'rituality', that is, their relationship with the music album's other elements.

An artifact is not just any object, some random and inert body, but instead, it is something that is 'made with art' (that is, with some degree or element of intentionality and skill). The main idea is not that it results 'mechanically' from fabrication, but rather that it is produced by an 'unsettled exchange' between the materials, instruments, skills and techniques, intentions, future expectations, and previous experiences of its makers, in such a way that the process also modifies (to some degree, even if only potentially) all of these elements – including that of the 'subject'. Therefore, in a radical sense, artisanal 'making' is not qualitatively different from 'using': the subject who makes and the one who uses converse and interpellate each other (as well as those involved in the other elements of the respective processes) and are equally 'remade' or re-produced by the interaction with 'that' (object or activity) which they make.

Thus, the record, even if industrially produced, mediates between the acts of crafting music and listening to it – the latter being dissociable from the manual and bodily activities of those who make use of it. And listening to music, insofar as it is an activity of dealing with artifacts (the records, their complements, and equipment), implicates transformations in one's skills and sensibilities. In summary: it was not only Charles' performances in specific scenes and situations but, more generally, his actions in the musical/cultural field as a whole that revealed a Gavin who was also (conscious of being) an effect of the records he recorded and listened to.

There is, however, another meaning for the word artifact, especially relevant among scientists: that of a 'spurious fact', an effect (inadvertent, unforeseen, or not conceived by the premises of the experiment) resulting from the procedures and manipulations (statistical, laboratorial, or other) carried out in order to observe some

¹⁷ See "Image composition" in Section 5.

¹⁸ We have seen that the disks, in those scenes, are not used as instruments to produce sounds (strictly speaking, they are never used in this way, in the sense that it is not their direct manipulation, but the activation of equipment, which produces or makes the sound vibrations (re)sound). On the other hand, if records are memorated, it's precisely because of previous interactions, their own and those of others (listening, partying, etc.) – in which they operated similarly to so-called "musical instruments" in the creation or production of musical events or 'scenes'.

'authentic' fact (the "object of study/knowledge").¹⁹ Here, we stress that, in the relationship between the vinyl record and "music"²⁰, the record is not just the medium being recorded inscribed by the effects of the sound waves (or light waves, in the case of film) that a performance makes. The record is a musical artifact, a 'musical laboratorial fact', so to speak, in that it engenders a piece of music (that is, contiguous and successive toned sounds and related gestures and modes of attention) that is not 'the one that was recorded' but the one that the listener 'puts on'. In other words, when the recordings are 'read' on certain pieces of equipment, it is like an act of rememoration, and a trigger of [hybrid] reminiscences of their correlated recorded performances (e.g., studio sessions), while at the same time making up another particular human-(chemical-electrical-) mechanical performance. Therefore, in their own way and in their own right (even if not in effect), the record listener is (also) a producer of this new performance. And, to the extent that he/she/they can possess records and make choices on where and when to listen to them, he/she/they become(s) more of an author of their own music (listening) scenes.

*

If listening to music records can provide authoring [sound]tracks for that which one experiences, and if musical authorship is (or can be) also the effect of the craft of other listenings (given that a musician is a listener before being an author/creator and that listening to musical artifacts is participating in the production of authored performances), then to co-memorate music records is also to memorate with them. In this sense, the act is equivalent to moving productively between the poles of reception and authorship, activating the various cycles, circuits, and experiences that engender

¹⁹ We do not mean to subscribe to an epistemology of the modern sciences and thereby substantiate a distinction between authentic and spurious fact, or true and false representations, in order to establish some evaluative distinction between live and recorded music. Much on the contrary – as one will see in the following pages.

²⁰ We have written the term with quotation marks given its wide usage in the field, following no strict definition. Throughout this paper, music in its "common knowledge" coinage is thus employed loosely, as a convenient shorthand with no theoretical subscriptions to specific or substantiated notions of music (as an 'art', 'oeuvre/artwork', 'essence', etc.). Our perceived attitude is in consonance with Christopher Small's (1998) criticism of such definitions; he proposes replacing them with the notion of a ritual process, a gestural-expressive engagement in eco-socio-mental cycles that intertwine around the emission, reception and bodily transformation of sonorities (singing/playing, listening, dancing). To further elaborate and help give a sense of the paradigmatic shift that is implied here: the movement of dancers and the attention exercised by listeners are the 'carriers' (and not just 'recipients') of expressiveness and meaning (both as personal experiences and as a collective effect). These forces cannot be reduced to their function(ality), because – when body-mind separation is not a valid assumption – the per-formation of sounds is no more ['physio-mentally'] musical than the intertwined cycles of dancing and listening (just as there is no 'more language' in the act of speaking than in the act of listening/attending to what is spoken). In other words, 'musicality' is embodied in the eco-socio-animic chains of expressive gestures, through ritual processes that communicate personal and collective values or variable states of being.

and are engendered by the artifact. This is, in a nutshell, one of the questions that Charles' practice and reflections imparted upon Sabrina.

In fact, there is a set of projects Gavin carried out (or a list of productions that he signed) which appear in Dinola's thesis (2020) as varieties of memoration of/with music records/albums. They mobilize a number of skills and abilities that are related to what is "artistic" and "technical", being present in various sociocultural cycles, and are expressed – or have been per-formed – both in Charles' objective works and processes as well as in his encounters and performances. Against this backdrop of the 'memorative' relationship with the artifact, a question emerged: does the "memory of music" lie within records or performances²¹? At this point, our dialogue took on a novel perspective, by taking a closer look at the relationship one builds with collections.

4. From the relationship with the artifact to productions made in/from phonographic collections.

At the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, the development of digital electronic technologies, when applied to the different production and circulation phases of phonogram-making, engendered a number of transformations on various scales: from the industrial, business and legal spheres to the modes (or gestures and attitudes) of music reception and listening. At first, with the optical disks (CD-Compact Disc format) of the 1990s²², and, more recently and intensely, with streaming, the advent of electronic-digital coding entailed other formats of (re)production, distribution and circulating/listening to phonograms – another 'artifactuality' implicit in the various arts and crafts, praxes and pieces of knowledge around music playing and listening. Starting with the reduction in size (LP: 30 cm in diameter; CD: 17 cm), such transformations have also implied material and formal modifications, like the reduction or elimination of the product's 'secondary' elements (such as the cover, inserts, technical data sheet, etc.) which could go as far as the complete 'separation' between them, given the 'transition' or 'migration' of content to so-called digital platforms – associated with permanent connectivity/accessibility. Of note is also the crucial aspect of listening with headphones, 'in synergy' [or in consonance] with the other 'miniaturizations' that were

²¹ This is, of course, a methodological question, posed only to be later abandoned as being symptomatic of an equivocating duality; in this respect, fields such as the "performance studies" and the "ecology of the mind" converge in their interest in non-representational symbolizations.

²² In Brazil, it was only at the end of the 1980s that the CD began to boost sales. Its vertiginous growth was only in 1996. By 1999, however, the medium was already in decline.

underway. A whole set of socio-technical-aesthetic relationships have thus been transformed: the types of interaction with reproduction equipment and the occasions and environments in which they are used; accessibility and portability, the possibilities of choice; both the expansion and limitation of available repertoires and mutual influences, etc. –all those elements and aspects entailing different perceptions and embodiments.

As part and consequence of the trend towards the digitization of sociotechnical processes (including those of the media in general) in addition to that of content, at the end of the 1990s, the “market” and the music scene were also marked by a(n) (‘uncontrolled’, from the point of view of copyright and other property holders) proliferation of activities associated with the reproduction of physical CD copies and the sharing of digital files via the internet, including those which were re-encoded from phonograms (analogue or digital) in the various compatible formats for use on personal computers. This was referred to by the music industry as “piracy”. It was in this same context that Charles’ work on collections began, namely with projects to re-release works or ‘products’ that were “out of print”. His undertakings were especially focused on the so-called “white flies”, the rare or hard-to-find record albums which were then accessible almost exclusively through copies that, in some way or another, infringed property and other related rights.

The aim of Charles’ projects was to transpose onto the CD medium/format, by remixing and/or remastering, content that was ‘faithful’ to that of the LP, accompanied by representations or similar copies of all the other elements (cover art and images, texts and credits, etc.) which had made up the album. The spirit was that of “democratizing the act of listening” and “sharing records which were only in the hands of big collectors” (Gavin apud Dinola, 2020)²³: in other words, not letting that (the value of) records considered to be culturally relevant stop circulating²⁴. The active option was updating them to the new media and equipment, but in an opposite direction to the (already accelerating) dispersion of mp3 files being played and exchanged by computers – in other words, by preserving the integrity and ‘internal layout’ of the symbolic/functional/expressive units.

²³ It is well to remember – even if broaching the subject presently is impossible – that amid this same discontinuation and digitization (of all things analogue) context, Gavin’s varied body of work is developed, anchored by ideas of the “restoration/salvage”, “preservation”, and “memory” of “Brazilian music” – categories which are both present in and questioned by heritage policies, but which were now ‘apprehended’ by and activated in his projects.

²⁴ Values are not properties which ‘reside’ in objects or subjects, they *circulate* in the field of their interrelationships. We note that the criterion being used, then, is not the musical artifact’s rarity *per se* but, so to speak, the rarefaction of its ‘presence’: of the meanings of the sounds/sonorities, words (narrative or informative), and images associated with certain performances and experiences evoked by the recordings.

It was an adaptation in that it implied some kind of (necessarily) distorted transposition of the records' 'contents': the phonograms sounded different (at least to well-used ears) because the sound being algorithmically reconstituted by processors on silicon chips was different to that re-produced via contact of an electromechanical needle in microgrooves along a plastic surface. The images, texts and layout of the cover, back cover and inserts (as well as, in the case of the occasional imitations of the vinyl record's appearance, the central label, etc.) were similar, but now reformatted, reproportionalized, and repackaged according to the technical-industrial specifications compatible with the 'invariability' of the Compact Disc patent.²⁵ To employ a metaphor: in relation to a record/album, its re-release in CD format is the communicational and functional equivalent of a facsimile – a 'transposed image' with the ambiguous semiotic value of document(ation), legacy, and testimony.

Charles' work began in 1999, and articles in the press referred to it by resorting to the "archaeologist in the collections/archives" cliché. The first of these archaeological incursions to unearth and put into circulation albums whose matrices were in the possession of commercial record companies took place among the archives of the Warner label – at the time, the same as that of Gavin's band, Titãs – and resulted in the CD re-release of two albums (LPs) by band Secos & Molhados (1973 and 1974)²⁶. For this reason, the memoration concert done in honor of one of the records, *Primavera nos dentes*, taking place several years after the relaunch itself (as previously mentioned), seems to express, from Dinola's ethnographic perspective, the 'initiatory' force of this (performative-like) identification between (and through) different phonographic generations.

At the time of the concert, Sabrina had not yet met Charles in person, but Gavin had already built up a consistent profile as a memory agent in the field of Dinola's MA thesis (2012). In the context of the "Brazilian cinema revival" of the 2000s, there was a choice of themes and subjects that often emerged 'against the grain', looking for trajectories of 'anti-consecration' – the effect, perhaps, of the intergenerational refluxes from/of aesthetic and political memories. And Gavin's work was 'reactivating phonograms' and in-forming the 'new generations' with non-conservative musical memory trails (in terms of their aesthetic-political attitudes). So, when Dinola's master's

²⁵ On this aspect of the record-album's "miniaturization", see DINOLA & ABREU, 2021.

²⁶ This reissue project was part of the "Dois Momentos" [Two Moments] series, which included 30 other albums, originally released during the 1970s and 80s. The series' title stems from the fact that each CD can contain two original LPs (a CD is almost 80 minutes long, while an LP is, on average, 40').

thesis²⁷ came across Gavin's 'heritage discourse' in his Foreword to the book 300 important records of Brazilian music, Charles had already, by that stage, become involved — among his other activities in curatorship and project coordination — in a 'quantitatively and qualitatively representative' series of works centered on the remixing, remastering, and re-release of out-of-print records (in all, there were more than 500), including series and special collections taken from various record companies and labels.

The point we make does not, however, revolve around that isolated performance; its significance lies in its meaning, its relationship with Gavin's other performances, especially that of/as a musician. In fact, this is why the image of the 'archaeologist in the collections' was appropriate at an ethnographic level, as a terminology to designate actors and agents on the field: it seems to refer to the contrast between the common sense connotations of that which is archaeological ('past', 'static/ruined', 'dead', 'encapsulated', etc. — but something which may "hold treasures") and of that which is modern ('current', 'innovative', 'open', 'in development', and with the potential for/ability of 'creating value'). This contrast, in turn, seems to resonate with a second opposition, based on common sense or art ideology: the presupposed polarity between the artist (inventive, performative, charismatic) and the technician (dedicated, instrumental, methodical), between authorship and fabrication.

On the other hand, in the picture summoned by the 'archaeological' designation, the "trade's interdisciplinarity" also resonates as the indicatory and investigative dimension: the 'finds' have a given value (that of document, testimony, inspiration, reimagining) which is only parasitically expressed or evaluated as an exchange value (that of unearthed "treasures" that become new commodities). In other words, the Gavin who had interacted (almost) directly with the original phonograms, "matrices", equipment, and technical processes which had produced the extinct or "disappearing" LPs operated with lists and indexes, but not with a set script/routine for his research and work. Furthermore, on principle, he would not submit the latter (his work/research scripts) to a commercial logic of re-releases, lacking of a critical relationship with broader cultural values (after all, the producer also has the job of mediating between the 'artistic relevance' and 'commercial constraints' of the product being manufactured). Thus, it is as if the musician's skills and sensibilities (including his social ones, such as his relations, collaborations, sponsors, and reciprocities, and his musical 'education' and

²⁷ This work (DINOLA, 2012) dealt with the memories of some composers/ performers of mpb that were labeled as "outsiders" or 'outcasts' ["malditos", meaning 'damned'] during the civil-military dictatorship (1984-1985), in the narratives of cinematographic documentaries made by another younger generation, 40 years later

'training', that is, his 'experiential baggage') had been activated and engaged in this other undertaking.

As such, Gavin's consistent and continuous work on CD re-release projects for unavailable analogue albums, concurrent to his attempts to activate the 'intrinsic musicality' and 'structural unity' of the originals, eventually became a kind of 'ethnophonography in the archives'. By this, we do not mean to say that Charles had intended making a study report of the field in which he worked, but that the objective/subjective relationship [he built] with the phonograms – as defined by the projects and experienced by the agent – was cultural (or stemmed from cultural memory), and as such, counts (at least under Brazilian circumstances) as a form of phonoethnography, that is, of 'inscribing' culture with(in) musical performances. The collections of commercial record companies thereby become somewhat like a 'field of research' that one traverses in the wake of phonograms (some of which are even 'lost', 'forgotten'): a kind of 'folklorist' enterprise, in which the research act is not focused on the recording of a certain "cultural manifestation" but on the recordings as 'manifestations' themselves.

*

Two remarks. First, it should be emphasized that the most important aspect of the activity with the collections, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, was that it dealt with (records of) sounds recorded under a private property regime (copyright and property rights, with all their implementations, implications, and derivations included) and held by commercial record companies. Thus, the marked bond in the 'work field' is no longer that with the artifacts themselves but that with (the traces of) their production process: precisely the one set in the 'interval between' the authorship/performance of the sounds and that of (the situation of) listening/performing. In short: it is not with the records (artifacts or products or 'artworks') but with phonograms that the meaningful interaction takes place. Secondly, and no less relevant, is the importance of distinguishing the technical and cultural context in which this activity took place: the (near) extinction of vinyl records, which was then (the 1990s and 2000s) in rapid progress. According to Marcia Tostes Dias (2008), although digital optical discs (CDs) had already been on the market in countries with developed economies since the 1980s, this format was only adopted as an industry strategy (of, mostly, multinational corporations) in Brazil during the 1990s: it meant ceasing the production of records and magnetic cassette tapes, forcing consumers to adopt the new format. Given these circumstances, we understand there to be another level of social memory involved

beyond that of the memorization of records as the avatars of works and performances – because these were now records that were silenced or disappearing.

4.1. “Musicking” with phonograms

By the second half of the 1990s, the only physical medium for selling recorded music on the Brazilian market was the CD. This transformation can be understood as a process of music packaging – “imprisonment” is the term used by Marcia Tostes Dias (2008) – inside a physical medium and also as yet another form of the industry’s “interference” on the aesthetic aspect of phonographic production: “if there is an intertwining between the technical and artistic spheres, it is the former that gains the privilege of commanding the process” (Dias, 2008, p. 63). A similar assessment was emphatically expressed by music producer A. Midani in his book *From the vinyl to the download [Do vinil ao download]*:

Gone are the days when record companies were run by people who loved music and who were also good administrators (...) artist contracts were becoming too complex and costly to leave the running of the business in the hands of people with a passion for music. The first victim of the technocrats was the record cover, which shrank from 30 cm to 17 cm when the CD was released; the harmful impact went unnoticed at first. The illustrations on LPs, often sophisticated, were a prelude to the pleasure of listening to the record, a graphic introduction to the magical world of the artist and the gateway to a universe of music, poetry and dreams. The LP cover enchanted the eye. The CD cover was given only a single purpose: to inform. The indispensable element of playful pleasure was sacrificed in the name of maximizing shelf space in record company warehouses and record stores (more products in less space) as well as reducing manufacturing costs. The technocrats were just technocrats (Midani, 2015, p. 225-6, emphasis added).

These converging considerations by an academic researcher (Dias, in the previous paragraph) and a music producer with active participation in the phonographic field/market at the time of the transition (Midani) point to the extrinsic, forced nature of the shift to digital phonography. According to both accounts, there was a unilateral rupture of some ‘creative and dynamic balance’ (which was still underway) between technical/commercial aspects of music-making and artistic/cultural ones. This description/evaluation also converges with Charles’ experience not only as an active player in the same field as Dias and Midani (including that of a musician), but also as a listener-adept-cultivator of the album-listening experience – and, as such, someone who values the album’s integrity and ‘aesthetic multidimensionality’. Thus emerges an

evaluation on the phonographic album's 'specific musicality' in defined contours, which is not only consistent but also in resonance with the orientations that Gavin's work with the collections had taken. In other words, it is the idea (in line with a generational experience) that the album, by being discontinued as an industrial product, also became unavailable as a musical artifact, a mediator of communication and sociability (cf. Mammi, 2014).

This is one of the nodal points in our common (and intergenerational) perception about this transition: it is certainly interesting and relevant that the musician has become (a producer with the persona of) an archaeologist/ethnographer of (analogue) phonograms; but the main thing to note, as we see it, is that, in principle, this is an 'archival' activity that is symmetrical and contemporary to that of research/experimentation done with the field's 'musical manifestations', 'in vivo'/on site, no 'antiquarian' relationship implied. The critical factor and additional relevance is that, with the 'decreed extinction' of albums (in the format in which they became stabilized over time), the analogue production-authorship of phonographic performances has been directed towards an endeavor of 'keeping phonograms in circulation', despite all the losses involved (not only aesthetic, but of research-experimentation).

When continuing our ethnographic dialogues, Sabrina did not 'borrow' from Charles, nor make him adopt, the theoretical concepts that, in her works (Dinola, 2020; Dinola & Abreu, 2021), she had 'applied' to interpret Gavin's performances as a producer. Instead, she proposed an image or imagination shift: from the 'fragmentary' memorization of records (see Section 4.2) to a permanent (but discontinuous) "musicking with phonograms".

This expression is enclosed in double quotation marks to emphasize its semantic instability and how it appropriates other people's words. In a pragmatically-oriented approach, to music simply indicates the broader and more general sense of 'making or taking part in music'. The same simplicity and generality applies to the preposition with: it can be understood in the widest possible range of senses – not only that of 'instrumentality' and 'medium', but also of 'company' or 'contiguity', of 'mode' or 'condition', of 'sum' or 'mixture', etc. Thus, the various dictionary meanings of the verb to music – 'to accompany with music' or 'to compose music'; 'to sing', 'hum' or 'to play a musical instrument'; 'to give [something] a musical form or character', etc. – become achievable, composable, or imaginable "with phonograms".

Let's imagine it like this. The various 'competences and performances' embodied in Gavin's works /roles – that of a music producer, cultural producer, publisher, collector, researcher, memory agent and, not least, of a rock band musician – can be seen as an

assemblage of different jobs/trades in the production-circulation cycles involving musical phonograms.²⁸ On stage, in the studio, on either side ('behind' or 'in front') of the microphone and soundboard; by composing and rehearsing; record collecting, touring and getting to know other music scenes; mixing or 'directly manipulating' sound records; editing books, DVDs, and interviews on the subject; or simply putting on records, writing/talking/listening about them and their stories — all are occupations that can be described by the expression "musicking with phonograms" (in the breadth and multivalence of meanings mentioned above).

This imagination has created a paradox — but only apparently so. On the one hand, what is highlighted is the process of a (renowned) rocker becoming a producer' (of the memory of Brazilian music): with/by means of phonograms, it is possible to 'make' or "produce" music (authored by other people) with the same quality and intensity of engagement as those of its own authors (via industrially reproduced phonograms whose property rights are held by others).²⁹ On the other hand (in a reverse, not contrary, sense), authorship as a whole is 'weakened', as it were, insofar as this loose sense of music-making-with implies that it [the authorship] is a functional fiction or an 'emphatically subjective' part/modality of (the participation in) music's technical-commercial-aesthetic cycle. In other words, in their relationship to phonograms, authors (be it musicians, composers) are no 'more' 'musickers' than the arrangers, instrumentalists, listeners, etc.

Thus, a symmetry or pendulum movement is to be found between the author/performer/creator and the researcher/producer/memorator — not as an individual attribute but as Charles' condition as a 'phonographic native'. For Sabrina, in social memory terms, this refers directly to the "historical materialism" (in the Benjaminian version) of 'proto-cyborgues' (cf. Franklin, 2002) that are capable of perceiving or experiencing — intellectually or visionarily — the condition of the modern urban masses, whose bodily movements and animic life (gestures, perceptions, affections, concepts) take place in constant (sub-altern[ate]) interaction with stimuli, behaviors, and 'languages' which are hybrids, composites and intersections of humans and machines.³⁰ The message or advice of learning to see "the author as a producer"

²⁸ By the expression "musical phonograms", we mean to say that these are the recordings of sound events considered to be instances of "music" in the sense that the latter holds in common sense reasonings or certain conceptions/specific preference. As we have seen, in terms of the theory which inspires us — Christopher Small's notion of musicking — in order to acknowledge the existence of phonograms and other musical practices within a cultural environment, it is not necessary to postulate the existence of such a thing as *music*.

²⁹ And this is what gives ethical-(political)-aesthetic meaning to the variety of roles/activities and the kind of memory that is at stake. See Section 3.

³⁰ Here, we understand machines to be a recurring and controlled series of causal chains that may be the subject(s) of different scientific disciplines (mechanics, chemistry, optics, electromagnetism, electronics).

(Benjamin, 2012 [1934]) seems to pragmatically converge with the idea of making/taking part in music with (by means of) phonograms, when expanded/amplified by the linguistic notion of the verb to music. As noted in the previous section (and to be dealt with again below), Gavin's performance and his discourse, when considered in the field of cultural production, signal a vindication (reactivation) of the analogue mode [of doing things], that is, of the singularity of the musical (or musicking) relationship with the cycles of analogically coded and reproduced phonograms. They stand, thus, not against, but in resistance to and in composition with "the digital", that is, with the regime of the producer as author (Bacal, 2016 [2010]).

4.2. The fragmentation of the album and (mutating) phonographic actions

Talking about the album's fragmentation is a way of noting the subjective socio-aesthetic dimension of this generational experience of discontinuity, caused by the objective socio-technical trends of miniaturization and the (f)ra(c)tioning of productive/managerial processes in the phonographic industry (as indicated, for example, in the excerpt from A. Midani's memoirs, quoted in the previous subsection). In our view, this experience can be well defined by observing (according to Sabrina's note, read and accepted by Charles) that, in Gavin's work, the task of dealing directly with archived analogue phonograms (in the circumstances outlined above) has been refracted or distributed over/into a variety of further jobs and products (to be briefly examined below) where phonograms are digital files. They (such jobs and products) are no less phonographic (musical) nor less authored than the albums recorded by Gavin (in his role as musician) and those remixed/released by him.

Having the dialogue between the authors of this paper as our starting point, we find there to be, in Gavin's projects (when thought of as a whole), on the one hand, an instance of the unfolding forms and actions of phonography as well as, on the other, the characterization of what we have named the album's fragmented condition – a result of its discontinuation by the industry and of the continuous expansion of digitality. Under the memory of phonographic musicking, the diffusion of digital phonograms and acceleration in their circulation began to spur other varied types of actions and, consequently, the production and circulation of other, different products: books, documentaries, series, weekly TV program.

Figure 2: Fragmentation-enactments-products



Source: prepared by the authors (2023).

Faced with this set or suite of roles-products', one can see how all these practices, both separately and as a whole, refer directly to the idea that musicking without sticking to evaluative distinctions (or ethnocentric definitions of 'music') takes in, as Christopher Small suggests, "all the activities" and engagements that "affect the nature of that event which is a [musical] performance" (1998, p.11).³¹ Nevertheless, one must pay attention to the fact that, beyond this understanding, different modes of engagement with the 'musicking of others' are operating or manifesting themselves within this list/set – modes that are partially simultaneous or overlapping, and with the clear 'mediating function' of dialoguing with and articulating between the musicking of professional musicians and those of the amateur listening public.³² Therefore, talking about the album's fragmentation refers to what is concretely portrayed by the musician-producer's 'trajectory' in the 'world of phonography': a 'dispersion' of the(ir) skills, sensitivities, and abilities, as well as a 'disaggregation' of the(ir) performances, fabrications, and

³¹ We remind the reader (see footnote 18) that, from Small's perspective (1998) (in a symmetrically equivalent way), the bodily-mental-social character of what is usually called music goes through a set of activities which don't have to deal directly with the production of musical sounds: he/she/they who sing(s) or play(s) has/ve expressive gestures (and interactions with 'endo- and exosomatic artifacts') and not just instrumental actions.

³² In this case, to call listeners amateurs is not to ignore the presence of the professional musicians among them; instead, it is precisely to say that, while/in musicking, they are a priori 'indistinguishable'.

manipulations, which had been previously concentrated on the creative-(re)productive process of records/albums.

In other words, the fulfillment of these different products can be understood as an unfolding of the artifact's heterogeneous composition and as a memory of its 'poetic integrity' (in the sense of poiesis, that is, something to be differentiated from a simply mimetic completeness) claimed by the discourse of the 'LP generation'. The different technical-organizational-authorial skills that were once involved in a type of phonography – of which the album is the main format – are reapplied and redistributed in the musical projects of the post-LP-extinction moment. We are talking about 'products' that interfere creatively in the new attitudes around 'music crafting', new ways of (re)producing and consuming sounds, that is: a whole set of actions, social performances, chains of gestures and transformations of meanings are herein implicated, in which new ways of musicking³³ are engendered but in and by means that (in the narratives/analyses of A. Midani and C. Gavin, Marcia Dias, Lorenzo Mammi) do not encompass the entire range of processes that beget analogic records/albums.

5. The digitization and digitality of culture: creating other interactions with the analogue universe

Throughout this text, we have tried to articulate an intergenerational vision on the effects of the discontinuation/fragmentation of the set, repertoire, or 'format' of socio-technical and socio-aesthetic experiences provided by the interaction with the analogue multi-artefact that is the phonographic album. Now would be an opportune moment to deepen our discussion on the album's uniqueness as a 'means (more than a tool) of musicking', or on the shape of this experience (also in order to account for the sense of loss which emerges when perceiving these effects). However, this is also a point of bifurcation, or a possible turning point. The fact is that the continuation of the research interlocution took place amid the context of social distancing during the first two years of the Covid-19 pandemic – a distancing made massively and intensely possible, for entire portions of the world's population, by electronic-digital means of communication (the internet, digital platforms, networks, clouds; smartphones and the transit between devices; access to algorithmic tools for operations and interactions in practically all

³³ It was in view of the virtualization (digital electronics, via platforms and apps) of so many presential meetings and performances that had become unfeasible – that is, in view of the concrete predicaments of music performances in a context of authoritarianism, pandemics/ lockdown, and 'cultural disinvestment' – that our research projects took the turn that resulted in the present paper.

spheres of individual life; etc.). The significance of this fact goes far beyond saying that working and musicking conditions have changed, or even that the premises of what it means to work and to make music have changed.

Thus, we note, specifically in the cultural goods and services circuits, a moment of intense "virtualization" of culture — both in productive relations and in 'convivial' ones, where 'creation' and musical 'fruition' are involved — as well as an inventive (and explosive, but not necessarily democratic) appropriation of cyberspace. Streaming services have not only started to boost consumerism but have also began operating in the realms of 'discovery' of recorded music, offering 'unlimited' (on-demand and 'personalized') access to vast music collections from any online device.

In general, the displacement of agents (and agencies) into cyberspace and their transit within it has been directly or indirectly linked to the way in which actors and researchers from different cultural and artistic manifestations have interacted with, turned to, engaged in, or adapted to digital media. By becoming a place for performances where new networks have been formed, in addition to the growth in dissemination and distribution, the online digital medium has become home to many more channels and collaborative activities. With the emergence of lives, other experiences and rituals/ritualities (gestures and attitudes of expressive symbolization) were produced and associated with musical performances as well as with algorithmically mediated encounters and with the relationships of time and space surrounding them.

Faced with the generational 'diagnosis' on the impossibility of 'digitally reconstituting' the complex phonography of the record/album, or [the impossibility of] reintegrating the density of aesthetic and behavioral attitudes which this type of socio-techno-aesthetic provided into digital environments, the question arose of the 'prognosis' of the multiplied possibilities enabled by digitization. Therefore, let's add more (auto)ethnographic reflexivity to the text, in order to redraw the (dis)continuities that this section is dealing with.

5.1. Intergenerational transits and interlocutions based on 'post-phonographic' experiences

Sabrina's socialization took place precisely during the 'transition' or 'crossover' period from LPs into CDs. In other words, there was a 'maximum availability' of LPs for everything that had been current until then, alongside the CDs' exclusivity for 'access' to new trends, tastes, and attitudes. The simultaneity of the 'phonographic literacies' of the

album and the CD meant that, in Sabrina's experience, the 'listening partition' between side A and side B didn't become an incorporated Gestalt; much in the same way that, for Charles, there was no 'conditioning' of the kind that Christopher Small, a member of the previous generation, had come to observe in himself:

When I play my new, magnificent CDs with the old workhorses [of the classical repertoire], every four minutes I still have the spontaneous impulse to lift and turn the side of the 12-inch, 78 rpm record. (Small 1998, p.15)

On the other hand, since Sabrina is not an mp3 'native', she also had experienced a similar impression to Charles': that of the dispersion or 'volatilization' of what used to be the listening experience with grasp-able/handled records (LPs or CDs). As if a 'mixed socialization' from the outset now allowed her to (re)cognize – *a posteriori*, in her past experience – this 'diffuse enchanting effect', so difficult or perhaps impossible to emulate in/for other media, and vaguely common to albums in LP and CD format. After all, there are albums that become entities in themselves, whose listening is for the person something like a 'bedside read' or a recurring vivid dream. Certainly, the aesthetic "integrity" that "doesn't fit on other mediums" is directly linked to the close (but loose, not schematic) contiguity between the physical components of the album as well as with its listening and handling environment: a contiguity (simultaneous or not, sequential or interspersed, etc.) of the multiple 'stimuli', 'codes', and 'gestures' involved, and the chains and combinations or 'compositions' between them. We may regard it as a kind of primitive audiovisual or multimedia object, not unlike how cave paintings composed a primitive cinema with/through body movements and light (and chants, percussion, etc.).

But that's not exactly where the album's magical effect seems to come from, because (as Gavin and Midani take care to emphasize: see above, Section 4.1), the CD – with characteristics of a distorted miniature, so to speak – is too weak to produce 'synesthetic' associations like those of the album³⁴; and furthermore, most albums, being limited to the basic LP + cover/back cover layout, also lack such 'profusion' or density of heterogeneous elements which may distinctly provoke this 'ensemble' effect, if not through repetition and inter-referentiality.

At a certain point during our conversations, Charles showed Sabrina an excerpt from an interview in which another rock drummer – Ian Paice, from the band Deep Purple

³⁴ But perhaps strong enough to afford aesthetic-cognitive-symbolic associations that aren't too dissimilar to those enabled by the analogic medium, as Sabrina 's generational experience seems to indicate

- answers a question about the pressure or anxiety he and his bandmates felt about going a long time without scoring a hit song:

I don't think we were worried about having success in the first place. It was a time when pop bands made singles and rock bands made albums. As long as we continued with albums that people seemed to like, we weren't worried about having a Top40 hit.

The interesting thing — or at least relevant, in this (con)text — is not the 'schismogenic' pop/rock division³⁵ nor the potential (in)appropriateness of this categorization, but the distinction between being a 'singles'-type of artist or band (producing 'individual' phonograms) and an album artist or band (producing 'transindividual' phonograms?). The distinction is not conceptual or theoretical, but ethnographic: it informs us on the different phono-'graphologies' — the different 'personalities' and 'creativity constellations' — existing in the cultural industry. It indicates a field that is basically the same as the one which A. Midani recalls and comments on when associating 'technocracy' and 'formula/manufacturing of successes' as something that is distinct from (and lacking) artistry (see Section 4.1).

If we consider the logic of market segmentation, it appears that while until the mid-1990s the phonographic industry was founded on the complementarity between the sales of "marketing artists" ("singles"-artists/bands) and investments in "catalog artists" ("album"-artists/bands) — an enterprise which took shape in the 1970s (cf. Dias, 2008) — the sets of "catalog" pieces would prove to be more commercially durable over time, especially with the emergence and explosion of a parallel "piracy" market provided by mp3 technology. It was not by chance that Gavin's search for phonograms was directed around this catalog of artists and works of 'long[er]-lasting' commercial success. In other words, the way albums appear in the self-perception of a British rocker from the 1960s-70s (and how it resonates in that of a Brazilian rocker from the 1980s-90s) indicates that they (that is, the albums; but also, after all, "the rockers" themselves, authors and producers of such albums with dedicated listeners) could mediate and even incorporate (materially, functionally, and symbolically) an effective communication between "audience" (and producer) and "artist", at the same time as 'formatting it' socio-

³⁵ Two remarks. The fact that the example used (for ethnographic purposes) is taken from an international (or rather, multinational) context is significant; the assumption is that, regardless of the substantive content or musical style, a similar 'dynamic distinction' was also active here, especially in 'market' or commercial contexts. In addition (this is the second remark) , there is also the cosmopolitan factor.

aesthetically: the 'integrity' of the album is significant on the circuit's various sides or strands.³⁶

What is implied here is worth further elaboration. Here, a shared premise seems to reveal itself: that, in an album 'conceived' as being distinct from a collection or an aggregate of singles, a collective, creative process is/was underway (even if its authorship lies, supposedly, with an "individual artist"). This process has different temporalities which are associated and intertwined: the singles are being produced-distributed like memes associating and competing with each other, while the albums can reach the point of 'organic' duration (rather than a 'repetition of singular units') because each part is only ready to be performed when that is the case for the entire set. The former (the part) has, thus, a 'natural history' in common with it (the album).

It is therefore worth drawing attention to these duration-like aspects, with their variable, multi-cyclical, non-linear temporalities. An album can be conceived-produced-received as being 'not portable' into singles.³⁷ There is a non-decouaged time in which rehearsals and concerts, trips, notes, improvisations, composition sketches, studio sessions, as well as 'dead (but vital...) stretches of time' between activities, combine or (de)interfere with each other, a time that also converges with or comprehends that of other meaningful experiences (not just musical ones) inside and outside the studio. Another 'series of temporalities' also exists: the one in which the process gradually 'defines' itself as an album and intertwines with the conception (understood in different senses) of a product and its realization, which is also distributed, in turn, into phases, experimentations. This process can also be intertwined with the creation-conception-production of the album's other elements (cover images and design, liner notes, etc.), which may be restricted to the most basic, simple, and informative, or, at the other extreme, constitute ultra-developed 'signic' components, the result of technical and aesthetic processes with their own unconfined dynamics and styles).

The key point to be made is that this complex temporality is not exhausted with the product's completion, i.e. that the album – not just due to its multi-signic characteristics, but because of the specific materiality and sociality of the signs and relationships which constitute it – can be a particularly suitable way or format of communicating musical practices and expectations which value this complex and

³⁶ Discs-albums are not exclusive in this aspect of 'formatted' communication, and concerts in particular (as well as radio and other media) naturally also play a part – but it is on the album (just as much or even more so than on concerts) that a significant part of the 'artistic' emphasis seems to fall (i.e., on the album as a work of art, regarded as being 'more and beyond' than a record of performances), and this emphasis can be more or less concentrated/distributed among the album's various elements: sonic/musical, graphic/imagetic, verbal, etc.

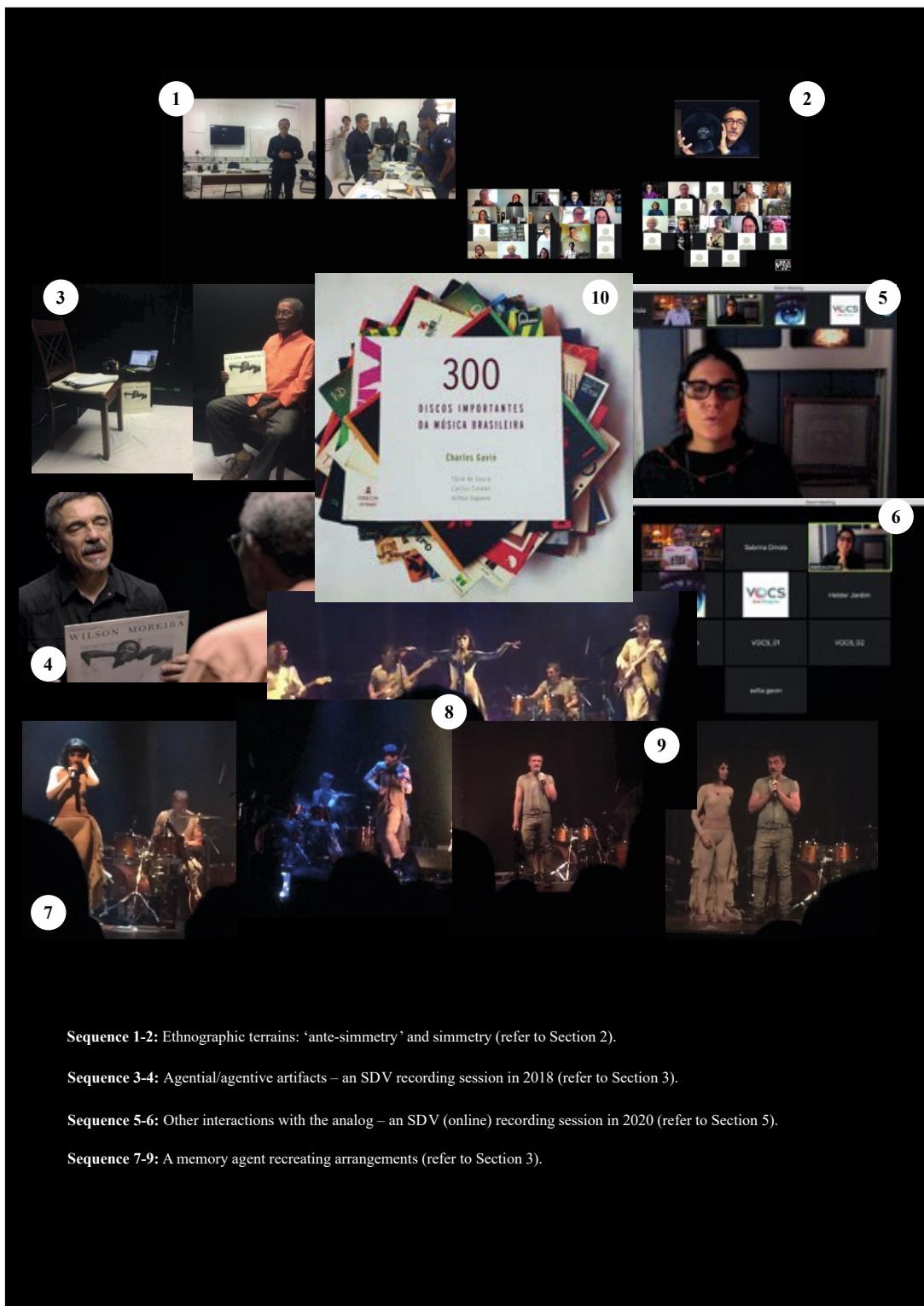
³⁷ Or, from a complementary point of view: an album (due to its multi-signic characteristics) can be a particularly suitable way of communicating musical practices and expectations without indistinction or separation between expressiveness, research and fruition, with neither indistinction nor separation between expressiveness, research and fruition.

'durative' temporality. Thus, the various mixtures between technicality and control, and inventiveness and intuition, on the various levels involved (from composition to arrangements, design, etc.), as well as the necessary degrees of refinement, mastery, control, and intentionality upon the employed resources and technical effects, and the mobilization of experiences and sensibilities from various arts and crafts – all of this helps us understand that the album, viewed from this perspective (however differently) by its author- protagonists, professionals, and amateur and professional listener-participants, can be associated with a notion or connotation of an oeuvre or work of art.

This (provisional) point of arrival in our text is perhaps where the aforementioned interdisciplinary "theoretical model" mobilized by Sabrina (see Dinola, 2021) differs most from some of the premises and vocabulary of Charles' fields of activity and interlocution. At the same time (and hence this experimental co-authorship), we coincide in the strong impression that both the model and the activities make more sense when we shift the emphasis to the potential for reimagining and even reinventing what is popular and Brazilian, based on the intercessions between memory and music.

Making music with phonograms has an aesthetic-political power that has found in analog albums a kind of integrity (or authenticity), in which a connotation of 'art' or 'artistic making' was evident, which however must not be seen as essential, but rather as processual.

Figure 3: "Image composition"



Sequence 1-2: Ethnographic terrains: 'ante-symmetry' and symmetry (refer to Section 2).

Sequence 3-4: Agential/agentive artifacts – an SDV recording session in 2018 (refer to Section 3).

Sequence 5-6: Other interactions with the analog – an SDV (online) recording session in 2020 (refer to Section 5).

Sequence 7-9: A memory agent recreating arrangements (refer to Section 3).

Source: prepared by the authors (2023).

6. Concluding remarks

This paper – made up of text, links and images, and which we prefer to consider as a 'hybrid cultural production' or an experiment in co-authoring a phonographic essay based on the available repertoire of phonograms memorized by Gavin – resulted from a reflexive dialogue between research processes that have been dealing with musical collections and the relationship between music, memory and sociality. Throughout the process, it was possible to develop the understanding that compositions of sounds always have a research/social experience dimension and, correlative, that the observation and documentation of musical performances is itself a musical performance. Thus, musicality and sociality, research and performance, art and knowledge are mutually implicated and are being reconfigured.

Based on the interpretative approach of one of the authors in the specific field of phonographic collections and musical memorization, and using the "theoretical model" of the other author's doctoral thesis, which dealt with the work of the former, we consider albums as multidimensional communication artifacts that formed/formatted musical sensibilities and sociabilities of several generations throughout the 20th century.

We understand that analog LPs-albums were a unique way of making phonograms of musical performances and, symmetrically, creating musical performances with phonograms, and we suggest that the articulations of technique, art and rituality around making music and making music records are of equivalent complexity to the bonds involved in listening and in the work of research and re-memoration, in making them (re)circulate. Based on this, we affirm that, despite what we call the "fragmentation of the analogue album", which results from the migration of sounds (and images) to digital media, there is an active and pervasive memory of this "phonographic format" and that it is capable of shaping modes of experience of digitized music that continue to deal with digital or digitized versions of phonograms and all the other constituent elements of albums. We call this active memory "making music with phonograms".

In this way, the playlist made available (in Section 2), while in itself already indicating the emptying of the iconic, indicative and symbolic values of the phonogram as a result of its (only apparent) 'dematerialization', also expressed the celebration of an 'aura of phonography' by capturing, in a kind of 'lasting snapshot', the permanence / continuity of a 'phonographic tradition' that connects generations, so to speak, under the technological gap that opens up between them. The presence of this list serves as an (authorial) gesture of sharing, insofar as it makes available a 'mini-repertoire' of 'acts of

remembrance'. The (ethnophonographic) effect is greater, stronger and more complex than the sequential sum of the episodes.

That's why, finally, we emphasize that ethno/phonographic sharing, as an exercise in the sensibilities of listening, performance and research that were formed along with the collections, ritualized around the 'presence' of record albums, can be available for intergenerational inflections and ruptures. And to 'alert' us, without anachronisms, to the insurgence of musical/music-making narratives from other socio-cultural genealogies, of new protagonisms, attitudes and empowerments, for which the record album can ideally and dynamically reconstruct itself as a 'memory artifact'.

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