



What separates doing from thinking? When is it teaching, facilitation, provocative mediation? What is the difference between a student and a researcher artist? What about educator, creator and researcher? What relationships are established based on how I establish myself (with)in? Which instances of power are articulated when in (inter)action? What may be, or even, who may be? In the transit between studios and classroom, these questions and its derivatives have been following me for a while already. I recognised myself as an artist when studying to become a dance teacher. Paradoxically, throughout seven years of career, rare were the times when I actually stepped into a school to guide a “dance class”.

Being part of dance companies, groups and art collectives, I have already been in the shoes of the ballerina, dancer, director, teacher, researcher, choreographer, educator, creator artist, interpreter, performer, provocateur... Nowadays, I understand myself as a gatherer within what I have been calling art Gathering *Abrindo a Sala* (Opening the Room). The notion of art gathering comes out of a need to exercise different calls<sup>1</sup> in order to precise the aesthetics of an Invitation Poetics<sup>2</sup>. Hence, art gathering can be understood as the creations (products or processes) elaborated by temporary communities gathered for actualising/performing specific/situated events.

The Invitation Poetics, therefore, is a shelter for contradiction within the art practice. Formative and performative, in its paradoxes, the poetics is often creating and displacing time-spacial *sfumato*<sup>3</sup>. These may con|fuse contexts - creative, educative, artistic - sometimes in fusion, sometimes in confusion. Occasionally, an overdose of forgotten world-words is activated to unbind perceptions and, therefore, to excite sensations. Occasionally, a delve into the depth of arid concept-words that drain themselves out to expand relational, synesthetic, poetic spacetimes. I have been visiting (sometimes dwelling) the potential of unknowing as a generative of marginal and eligible knowledge.

Despite the rightful differences that separate pedagogical practices of arts

<sup>1</sup> call as “the naming of things” and call as “the invitation to participate”.

<sup>2</sup> In its etymology, the word invitation comes from the Latin *invitare*, with the exchange of the prefix *in-*, “em”, with *com-*, “together (in Portuguese)”, plus the missing verb *vitare*, meaning “to want” (exchange that would have taken place under the influence of *convivium*, “banquet”). In other words, to invite is to want together.

<sup>3</sup> *sfumato* is an art technique that uses subtle and minute gradation of tone and colour used to blur or veil the contours of a form in painting. not only a technique, but a device to melt contours and, therefore, smooth human expression. also related to smoky manners. in this text, a device for playing with different modes of embodying notions and concepts. This idea is borrowed from the practice of the artist researcher Cecilia Mori (BR) and her *Lying Cabin* (2014).

from the art practices, this diversity, personally, embody the connections and articulations that entangle the art teaching within the art practice and its modes of thinking-making. To say, I can not unbind the act of creating from the act of teaching. Moreover, I do not see teaching without learning. This is the grounding of an invitation poetics: we are creating, potentially we teach and we have always something else to learn. I do “believe in research paths wherein the body, when learns, do it so by creating” (TRIDAPALLI, 2008, p. 12).

Within this logics, I propose epistemological trans/formations<sup>4</sup> through two perspectives: we are, more and more, further from the logics of paradigms and towards a logics of paradoxes (VILLAR, 2013); and teaching (in the realm of the art teaching) needs to dwell, more and more, into autonomous journeys of un/learning (unsettling normative learning) as a trans/formative practice: the formative practice that happens in transit.

To follow this proposal, I hold hands with some people. The first is Cindy Foley, Assistant Executive Director and Director of Learning and Experiences at the Columbus Museum of Art. In a lecture at TEDxColumbus (2014), Foley presents some problematisations of art teaching which I use to construct the discussions proposed here. I invite you, reader, to follow Foley's thoughts translated (perhaps betrayed) in my words and reorganised based on the propositions of this poetics here shared.

During dance education, we often find ourselves focusing on content such as: art elements, art history, fundamental skills and techniques - essentially things that we can test and evaluate. However, what if we dedicated ourselves to teaching dis/apprentices to think artistically? Here I provoke that a dis/apprentice is anyone who wants to learn by allowing them to displace learning. Oxygenate points of view, insist, repeat, give up, reexist, trans/form perceptions.

Thus, I raise a first possibility for trans/formation - *formation in transit between what I already know and what I can come to know when I allow the unknown*. We turn our approaches to provoking apprentices who are curious and creative, who question, develop ideas relying on fun and desire as guides

<sup>4</sup> As a matter of exercising new approaches to call, for now on, on this text, I invite you to read “formation” as a word that shelters both the creative-compositional-performative aspect of it as well as a pedagogical-educational-formative layer of meaning, where, as mentioned before, creating and teaching-learning mangle in one notion. This fusion is rooted in the Portuguese word *formação*, which carries both above mentioned meanings and, therefore, I freely translated to the word formation.

for autonomous research. In this sense, the practice of Improvisation in Dance, in this epistemological perspective in which the Invitation Poetics has developed, is a powerful way to prepare ourselves apt to unknowing. Here I hold hands with another artist and philosopher, Erin Manning (2016) who, when speaking of Dance Improvisation and its minimal gestures, considers

movement as decisional (...) decision defined here not as external to the event but as the cut, in the event, through which new ecologies, new fields of relation are crafted. Non-conscious movement is decisional in the sense that it is capable of altering the course of the event in the event. Elsewhere, I've called the attunement, in the event, toward decisional movement, choreographic thinking, emphasizing the ability of movement to cue and align in spacetimes of composition in ways that open experience to new registers. (MANNING, 2016, p. 19)

I propose that the Dance Improvisation in the Invitation Poetics also considers that an invite is, in its nature, always acceptable, refusable and counter-proposable (generating other invitations) at the same time. It is not as much about participation as it is about decision-making on *how* to participate. By opening two-way trails, “the event engages performers and spectators in a shared atmosphere tangled by a common space, contaminated and contained, generating experiences that surpass the symbolic.” (FERNANDES, 2011, p. 17) More than signs and senses, we actualise embodiment by sharing experiences.

Mangled within the unknown, the *trans/formation through shared desires* resonates to the weaving process of identifying personal interests (motion) at the same time as recognising collective interests (commotion<sup>5</sup>). Marina Garcés (2013) proposes that engaging in this discovery is

individual and collective: it is irreducibly its own and, at the same time, it concerns others. Occurs in a paradoxical relationship between the happiness of the encounter and radical loneliness, between the appearance of shared concerns and the need to assume its consequences of life itself. I can't say where my voice starts and ends within others. I do not want to know. It's my way to thank the presence, in me, of what is not mine. (GARCÉS, 2013, p. 10.)

A key aspect of the Invitation Poetics is its self-reflection nature: when inviting, we are asking for other's wants. It is about asking for one's genuine wish of if and how to engage. The invitation is interested in dialoguing and negotiating while assisting and seeing an art experience. When opened to an invitation, we face “here and now” decision-makings. It is about constant pro-

<sup>5</sup> This is also a rough translation from Portuguese “comoção”. We use the word “comover” to describe something that affects us in a sensitive manner as well as the action of moving with - every time we add the prefix co- to a word in Portuguese we add a sense of “communal” experience, an experience that happens with one else.

positions between spectator creators<sup>6</sup> engagement and the artwork itself, created through encounters: through invitation we might “promote experiences by which contents are elaborated” (FABIÃO, 2008, p. 243) activating discussion toward production and reception poetics and politics in contemporary art.

In that way, the Invitation Poetics is attentive to these shared wants, establishing itself by the ethics of what is transitory, dynamic, mobile. It assembles disruptions, structuring displacement and contextualising variations of belonging. It is about exercising the ability to re/make connections. Those connections lead us to other relationships within perception, allowing other understandings of knowledge. It is about articulating compositions of contexts that welcome contradiction and ambiguity. It is about engaging with what perishes yet being accountable for each other's agency. Fernando Villar (2013) proposes that

complementary to the great areas of knowledge of Sciences and Philosophy, Art navigates through seas of creation that should be free from exclusionary paradigms, to navigate between the wonders of the paradox and the infinite options of poetry. A great possible lesson of the Arts for other areas of knowledge and for our societies is the possibility of coexistence of diverse, opposing, contradictory poetics. (VILLAR, 2013, p. 2.)

Being comfortable with the ambiguity opens up space to smooth dichotomies. Those, therefore, may be seen only as extremes of a dynamic and variational *spectrum*. What is read as an ending point in a context might as well be a starting point to another. The ability to read contexts alongside the intelligence of playing with them might bring us closer to less plastered practices of knowledge. The artistic thinking is made by the ability to question: to question the normativity of the world, to question modes of reading, to question politics of time, operative modes and ethics of work. It is also about trusting what it is there and might not have been named yet. It is the potential to re/configure ideas by what it is or might be. It is about perceiving resources (and the relationships as resources themselves) in order to embody artistic ideas. In my practice, I call it “choreographic materialisations”, evidencing my choreographic perspective before the artistic organisations that I strive for.

Materialisation would be a conscious organisation of materialities with(in) choreographic thinking. It is a way of understanding-making choreographic compositions that may be embodied beyond conventional structu-

<sup>6</sup> The transit between the creator who spectates and the spectator that creates.

res of choreography. Thus, based on choreographic thinking in contact with the most diverse materialities, a choreographic materialisation would be an attentive composition in regards to the specificities of each materiality, always concerned with realising which types of relationship may be created within the choices one makes. These structures may (be) embody(ied) as a show, a performance, a choreographic installation, a collage, a text, a conversation, a travel or any other formats that can situate an aesthetic event. Understanding these structures as configured situations has allowed the (dis)placement of contexts for coexistence to happen. Thus, we visit (im)possible relationalities in regards to choreographic composition when sharing reconfigured times and spaces of/ in each aesthetic event.

Facilitating times and spaces in which people may feel comfortable to allow ambiguity builds up a place where interests and ideas lead to un/learning<sup>7</sup>. Interests and ideas can be catalysts for investigations based on curiosity, leading to a notion of research as a search for something that can deepen your knowledge about what interests oneself. This leads us to another trans/formative instance that the Invitation Poetics has allowed me to explore: *the formation that takes place in the transit between the multiple perspectives of the world*, commonly known as transdisciplinarity. Foley (2014) approaches transdisciplinarity as research that serves our curiosities. How would it be to use the knowledge of different areas at the service of our ideas? It is not about educating everyone to be an artist, but promoting situations that trigger people to think artistically, regardless of the career they choose to live for. It is about creating spaces for trans/formation in which ideas reign and curiosity leads. How do we un/learn by creating and reinventing notions of collective as well as by valuing encounter between people and relying on the transdisciplinarity of languages, formations and perspectives of art?

Within the art gathering *Abrindo a Sala* (Opening the Room), we have been exploring this perspective by creating interfaces between dance and non-arts fields. I share, as an example, the Art Residency *Alimentança*, when I invited a nutritionist from Itajaí/SC to live with dance and performance artists for 10 days and, thus, investigate what choreographic creation has in common with(in) the practice of conscious eating. This experience is a good way to illus-

<sup>7</sup> From here it is important to emphasise that both formal or non-formal contexts of learning are understood as an actual learning field. Unsettling the normative approaches of learning may provide aesthetic, ethical, poetic, political learning, leading to questions such as “what can you learn and where can you learn?”

trate a situation in which the Invitation Poetics has unfolded going through the different instances of in-transit formations.

In a context of art residency, we (are) face(d with) a problem created by ourselves in which, in identifying a shared desire [to learn what dance and conscious eating have in common], we launch ourselves in the face of un/knowing. We knew that this crossing was necessary for us, although (still) we did not know why or how.



Figures 1 and 2 – Investigations in Art Residency Alimentança. Asa Sul, Brasília/DF, 2019.  
Photos by Ingrid Beatriz.

Through friction, our ways of understanding and dealing with the body and food rebuilt connections to investigate perceptions of art and food beyond the “processed”. We realised, together, a common issue: dance, in a common sense, is often reduced to pre-conceived techniques eager for results made up by the ideas of beauty and health, disregarding the integral and individual experience of each body in the act of moving. Eating, on the other hand, has been reduced more and more to a consumerist practice that “must be solved

quickly” rather than experienced.

However, eating is also an aesthetic and political experience. Our personal interests ended up creating a shared desire identified by that temporary micro-community: the crave to “re-aspire” the pleasures of whole body and food. As a result, questions such as: What do you eat? Which gestures feed you? What industry do you feed when you choose your food? How to move? How to think of a time-spatial shift so that both food and movement can become experiences that amplify perception and integration between body, being and food itself?

Therefore, the ethical, aesthetic and political issues raised by the experience of living together resulted in the meal-performance *Diaita*. At the interface between dance and conscious food, *Diaita* emerges as a hybrid between product and experience that is understood as an art performance of cooking and eating courses. Embodied in a context of art residency, it ended up also being configured as a site-specific work, reconfiguring itself in each environment that it has since occupied. Another transitory evidence that it triggers is the possibility of changing its scope to each context (in) which (is) re/created(s/d).



Figures 3 to 6 - Site specificity of *Diaita*. On the left, performed in a house in Asa Sul. Photos by Ingrid Beatriz. On the right, at the Canteiro Central/Setor Comercial Sul bar. Both in Brasília/DF, 2019. Photos by Humberto Araújo.

At each presentation, the work proposes a nutritionally thought out and artistically prepared menu. The performance is structured around a basic program of actions [pre-preparation, preparation, dish presentation and banquet] culminating in the meal as a poetic act. For its realisation, people-creators-[non]artists come together organising themselves in order to broaden perceptions, shifting ways of seeing, making and thinking (im)possible worlds. Thus, at *Diaita*, the encounter takes place by invitations from movement practitioners to food artists, bringing together artists, farmers, nutritionists and cooks to prepare meals as performance. This is also a way we found to engage collaborative networks in order to make visible various stages and processes of feeding.

This transdisciplinary character has allowed us to experience cracks in [non] artistic contexts, allowing us to taste art outside art, outside the common places of "art consumption". The art of the garden and the art of the fair. The art of home cooking and the art of the restaurant. Cooking and eating as an ethical, aesthetic and political act. To perform the (extra)ordinary by invading restaurants and bars. Perform the meal as a way of bringing awareness to food and art. Sensitise issues that make up food gestures, from planting, harvesting, preparing, cooking, eating and returning to the land.

Based on an aesthetic that is built through relationalities, we compose a network of actions that co/move to survive. A network that includes producers at different scales, cooks, families, stories and memories, from those who harvest to those who eat. When inviting as a poetic, our role is to bring these people together, highlighting (im)possible po/ethical layers that move this cycle of nutrition. We also take the opportunity to confuse art and food, choreographing food and feeding choreographies.



Figures 7 to 10 - Cooking gestures: extra/ordinary poetic. Occupation Teatro Bar, at Canteiro Central, Setor Comercial Sul de Brasília / DF, 2019. Photos by Humberto Araújo

They are proposals to open space for choreographic materialisations that are more attentive to the exchanges established between artists, as well as between artists and spectators (which I propose to also call creators) through choreographic structures and systems that support listening and autonomy in regards to choreographic composition. In the Invitation Poetics, it is important to understand that the choices are schools. It is about looking at the encounters between people as potential choreographies. It is about inviting us to ask ourselves how we relate and are interested together, in order to collaborate (share elaborations) from our formation, life history, memories and ways of seeing / thinking / making the world. It is about creation and formation, always through the experience of encountering.

With each new iteration, the open work has allowed us to expand the practice of the invitation as a poetic that highlights the need to constantly re-think our work ethics. As a relational art, it is alive and never contained by a closed recipe. The notion of ethics, in this sense, is confronted by the very action of relating. Who can say what one can, or when one can, but the rela-

tionship itself? So, for example, we have to deal with attentive listening in order to perceive (until) when a way of operating (still) nurtures a given relational context. Ana Carolina Mundim (2015), suggests that thinking about choreography as an invitation is, among others, the possibility of inviting “to look at the world with more affection and poetry, to cause more encounters, to make small transformations (...) linking logic to intuitive perception ”(2015, p. 45)

To look, to perceive, to live in affection. To affect, to be affected. Connected with our minimal gestures, we daily un/learn to re/cognise the personal and collective interests of each context, within each context. It is often necessary to realize that each context announces an urgency. These urgencies are dynamic, transitory and that is why it is so important to open ourselves up to updating our drives: between interests and availability. That is, in this configured context, what announces as desired? And what announces as available? What I desire is not always what is available. Sometimes what is available is not exactly what I want. And the exercise of un/learning is there: in the ability to displace my interests and availabilities, to move between what moves and what co/moves. Sometimes desires and availabilities coincide and when that happens, we are attentive to be able to live them.

For these practices to be sustained, it has been necessary to practice conversation in the most diverse stages of the processes. We have been in dialogue since the beginning and many times this dialogue requires beyond-speech modulations: it is about learning to listen with actions, putting oneself in full body awareness, and exercising negotiations and conversations through the different ways that shared spacetimes demand from us. There is this: in an Invitation Poetics we need to understand dialogue as a characteristic that permeates each and every stage of the process. The dialogue takes place in speech, but it takes place mainly in listening, proposing and buying into others. Dialogue, when we come together, is the engine in all structuring instances of choreographic thinking.

As a way of attuning our listening, however, we have practiced an after-practice on each Diaita's evening. We used the conversation based on the “valuation” procedure, inspired by the RSVP Cycles<sup>8</sup> of Anna Halprin, a North-American<sup>9</sup> choreographer. Valuation is the moment when we echo percep-

<sup>8</sup> RSVP cycles are a strategy for organising creative thinking developed by Anna Halprin and Lawrence Halprin.

<sup>9</sup> Here I choose to use the term North-American instead of American to remind us that there are three distinct Americas which we all should be able to be named by it.

tions and outline choices from our personal experiences in each practice. We translate into words the perceptions within the experiences of each participant in regard to the event. We echo syncopated appearances of chants of experience, using Larossa's (2014, p. 10) metaphor. It is through these valuations that we base reflections raised from practices and we can, thus, carry out more collective decision-making, or at least more plurally consonant and diverse autonomies, finding common ground among us. In this work's ethic, each short journey has become the possibility of an autonomous journey of un/learning. Relying on personal autonomy we rely on collective autonomy.

For concluding this writing, I would like to address some invitations that remain eager:

to us, directors and choreographers, to reflect that our creative processes are spaces of formation. Let us ask ourselves, then, what we have in/formed, re/formed, de/formed, trans/formed between the practices and the discourses we operate;

to us, dancers and creators, to occupy our spaces of accountability, choice and personal & collective trans/formation in a constant search for aligning our interests with the interests of those whom we work and/or relate with;

to us, educators, to problematise our plans and truths towards trans/formation through more flexible thoughts and availability to know un-knowing;

to us, un/apprentices, to take for ourselves the responsibility of autonomous and daily learning, putting at risk the exposure of our ideas and validating our curiosities as content of trans/formation.

I invite ourselves to trans/formation.

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