



Contemporary performance as an ecological ethic of confrontation – dissident initiatives to rethink gender notions from the viewpoint of “Waste Archeology”

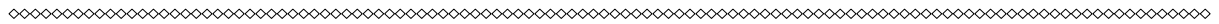
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Abstract

This text aims to debate the issues of gender, existence, ethics and creation from the viewpoint of the initiative “Waste Archeology”, a drag queen program proposed by a non-binary cross-dresser. I use the ethical discussions brought up by Suely Rolnik (1990) in dialogue with Félix Guattari (1989). I seek to understand how contemporary performance art acts as a tool for the affirmation of dissident existences and how the confrontation of ethical paradigms can foster performative actions.

KEYWORDS

Dissident genders. Existence and performance. Ethics-esthetics.

A performance como ética ecológica do enfrentamento – iniciativas dissidentes para repensar as noções de gênero a partir da ação “Arqueologia do Lixo”.

Resumo

Esse texto visa a debater as questões de gênero, existência, ética e criação a partir da iniciativa “Arqueologia do lixo”, programa de montagem drag proposto por uma travesti não-binária. Utilizo-me das discussões de ética tecidas por Suely Rolnik (1990) em diálogo com Félix Guattari (1990). Busco entender como a performance age como um dispositivo para a afirmação de existências dissidentes e como o friccionar dos paradigmas éticos potencializa as ações performativas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Gêneros dissidentes. Existência e performance. Ética-estética.

In this article, I try to report a performance that took place in March 2019, which I decide to call “Trash Archeology”. This practice presents itself as a way of discussing gender and ecology through the process of assembly. The action comprises a series of programs in a Master’s research in the Postgraduate Program in Arts at the Federal University of Ceará (PPGArtes-UFC). The macroproject aims to debate gender, ecology and creation through performative methodologies, seeking to find new paradigms for existence. Thus, research and performance are understood here as a process of affirmation and perception of existence. These practices operate in the search for a demechanization of body-space connections, seeking other ways of being in contact with the world and with ourselves.

Ethic here is discussed, mainly, from the texts “For an ethics of the Real” by Suely Rolnik (1990) and “Artivists performances”: Incorporation of an aesthetic of dissension in an ethics of resistance” by Rui Mourão (2015). With these, I build a frictional trajectory between art, ethics and aesthetics from life and performance, dealing with my own experience as a trans person and artist.

In this sense, the subjugating ethical paradigms and contemporary notions of existence are at odds here, especially those that highlight dissident, blurred, monsters, discontinuous and experimental experiences (COHEN, 2000). Research, for me, operates as an engine of initiatives to rethink norms of existing and socializing. Specifically here, I try to scrutinize a specific experience of “drag” - by transfiguring myself/yourself through makeup and clothing. It is important to note that I consider drag here as the process of dressing and makeup as well as sharing-contagion of this process with the city. This sharing took place during a collective cleaning of the Dunes in Fortaleza/CE¹, organized by several socioenvironmental collectives from the city. The cleansing referred to is part of a series of collective initiatives of the socioenvironmental movements / collectives in Fortaleza. The perspective, in addition to carrying out a direct action with a positive impact on a weakened area, which is the dunes of Fortaleza, is to sign an educational and denunciation action regarding the environmental pollution of the area. Besides this, the aim is to understand the materials that make up the waste dumped in that territory and to prospect their origin².

¹ The mentioned Dunes are sandy vegetated parks, forming a specific biome. This was the second action taken, bringing together the collectives Fortaleza Pelas Dunas (CE), Instituto Verdruz (CE) and Greepeace Fortal (CE).

² An example of this is that, in the first and second cleanings promoted by the collectives, almost 50% of the weight of the materials collected were remains of civil construction material, such as broken walls, bricks, cracked cement, among others.

The performative program (FABIÃO, 2013) that composes / invades this cleanliness was carried out and designed as an action supported by Coletivo Cabeça, a Fortaleza-based troupe that, since 2017, has been studying the relationships between interparties, performance and education³. In this writing, I try to highlight my experience as a trans person / drag within a narrative that privileges a specific moment in the program⁴, which is the encounter of my being in drag with one of the volunteers, which I will call Mariana⁵ here. The meeting took place through a doll that Mariana found in the middle of the Dunes and right after lost the same doll.

I see drag montage as a performative program, an artifice for the derou-ting of the body, space and relationships. Here, I use the instigations of the concept program that Eleonora Fabião brings along her academic and artistic trajectory, mainly in the text “Performative Program: The Body in a State of experience” (2013).

The program is the engine of experimentation, because the practice of the program creates bodies and relationships between bodies; triggers membership negotiations; activates unthinkable affective circulations before the formulation and execution of the program. [...] Through the realization of the program, the performer suspends what is automa-tism, habit, mechanics and passivity in the act of “belonging” - belonging to the world, belonging to the world of art and belonging to the world strictly as “art”. (FABIÃO, 2013, pages 4 and 5.)

In this writing, Fabião proposes action in performance by a relational and directed notion in order to reinvent the possible connections between body and environment. It is important to note, however, that the term here does not operate as a direct and exclusive import of Eleonora’s propositions, it creates itself as it rubs with society through our body-action.

Thus, I propose that the genesis of the term-program does not occur in the perspective of building a structure that incarcerates it in its own definition, but that moves through different spaces throughout the creation processes. So, every time someone comes into contact with the term, they continue to build

³ Coletivo Cabeça was founded by me and others, involving students and teachers from a public high school, located in a pe-ripheral space of the city, in 2017. Since then, the Collective has developed research and crea-tion processes in several artistic languages, having as a pillar the performing arts in all their plurality. This spe-cific action was composed by Mateus Falcão, Vitória Helen, Matheus Melo, Levi Mota Muniz. I decide, howe-ver, that I will not dwell on the discussions about the Collecti-ve or its narrative. This is precisely because I understand that, although the practice was built collectively, the text talks about singularities of my performan-ce process.

⁴ Whenever we speak of “program” here, we will be referring to the performative program, initially founded by Eleonora Fa-bião (2013) but continuing to be invented by a series of performers-researchers (as), including my-self.

⁵ I use “Mariana” here as a fictitious name for the woman who found the doll.

it, modify it, create it. In this text, we intend to work mainly with the processes of gender singularization, understanding life as a becoming generator of possibilities for it. In this sense, gender, more than established in its binary and representative sphere, operates as an enabling zone of agency tensions and desires - gender in its performative sphere.

In this sense, I also feel that it is worth noting that there is a historical difference in the understanding of what drag is and what is being trans. In my trajectory, however, these singularities mix and compose me as long as I am frictional and indiscernible⁶.

Thus, the text impels itself both as a narrative about the experience, and as a proponent of new experiences from a reading-performative writing, that is, the one that leaves gaps, instigations and sensations to be completed by the reader-writer (PEDRON, 2013). For Denise Pedron, the performative possibilities of a text come together precisely because they deal with it as, in addition to a narrative of ideas, a generator of sensations. For this, the author will point out the possibilities of joint invention that performance writing suggests, for example, in the purposeful inclusion of gaps in its (dis) structure. Thus, I emphasize the presence of these gaps not as absences caused by negligence, but as an intentional choice in the creation of this writing.

⁶In the article "Weaving a possible trajectory to understand gender studies and fluid genres - Considerations based on the performance of a non-binary couple 'Gender Soup and the Destruction of Buildings'" (ADRIANO / MUNIZ / MELO, 2019) I explain a little more in detail about my uniqueness as trans / drag along with my partner, who is also a non-binary person. I decide not to re-address this issue more densely here, but I recommend reading this text for a complementary understanding of what I am considering as a genre, trans, drag and montage.

Methodology



Figure 1 - Some records made during the “Garbage Archeology” program. Image of Mateus Falcão and Levi Mota Muniz (Non-Selected Collective), 2019.

In the process of building performance programs (FAIBIO, 2013) and texts from / in dialogue with these programs, I intend to take a chance on what Jota Mombaça will call undisciplined submodology (MOMBABA, 2016). I affirm the space of submodology because I understand that, unlike the scientific canon and even the great artistic-sociological methods, the montage is an engine of subversion and a counter-device of the subordinate / subalternized. Thus, a text that focuses on the creative processes triggered by the act of mounting a trans person is an undisciplined way that an abject body finds to reinvent the parameters of what is research. We also meet Fernando Pocahy (2016) when the author talks about the urgencies of inventing other ways of doing research and ways that we create in dialogue, including, with other languages, with noise, dirt and sputum within our materiality for creation.

In this case, I understand that the research, in addition to this text, presents itself in the very act of setting up, choosing the clothes and visuals; and also in photographing and photos as an artistic language and gender technology. This notion of artistic works as a research in itself follows the opportunities of performative methodologies, which seek to rediscover substances other than words or numbers in doing research.

In this sense, we highlight here the propositions of Brad Haseman (2015)

and Jota Mombaça (2016), in the texts “Manifesto for Performative Research” and “Traces for an Undisciplined Submethodology”, respectively. Haseman’s text is an important pillar for us to understand how this new way to think methodologically about our research also generates other demands for his presentations, including impelling us to rethink how to write a text. Other materialities are becoming urgent for textual invention. Thus, this article will also be composed of different images taken during the day, edited and recreated, continuing a process of creation and search. The images are not pointed out in an illustrative function, but operate themselves as an invention and research. The archaeological perspective is presented in these images, which are always presenting a perspective of tracing, excavation, search.

I perceive the urgency to gradually build a new structure for the world, less violent with our ways of being, living and researching. A new ethics in which violence does not fall centrally on dissident bodies. Thus, the methodological and epistemological creations invented from a denormatization of the classic academic character are a way of making viability, in this space, for transgressing individuals, potentiating the political bias proposed for the action.

Archeology of garbage - report

On March 31, 2019, the Fortaleza pela Dunas⁷ movement called on the population to clean up the Coco Dunes, especially in the vicinity of Av. Padre Antônio Tomás⁸. The movement is formed by several sectors of civil society interested in the socio-environmental movement, as well as NGOs from Fortaleza. The call was made by social networks, especially the Facebook site. We, at Coletivo Cabeça, learned about this meeting through various publications and decided to go as a group to action.

⁷ Movement formed by the various collectives already mentioned in footnote number 2.

⁸ Fortaleza Avenue inserted in a neighborhood with a high concentration of income.

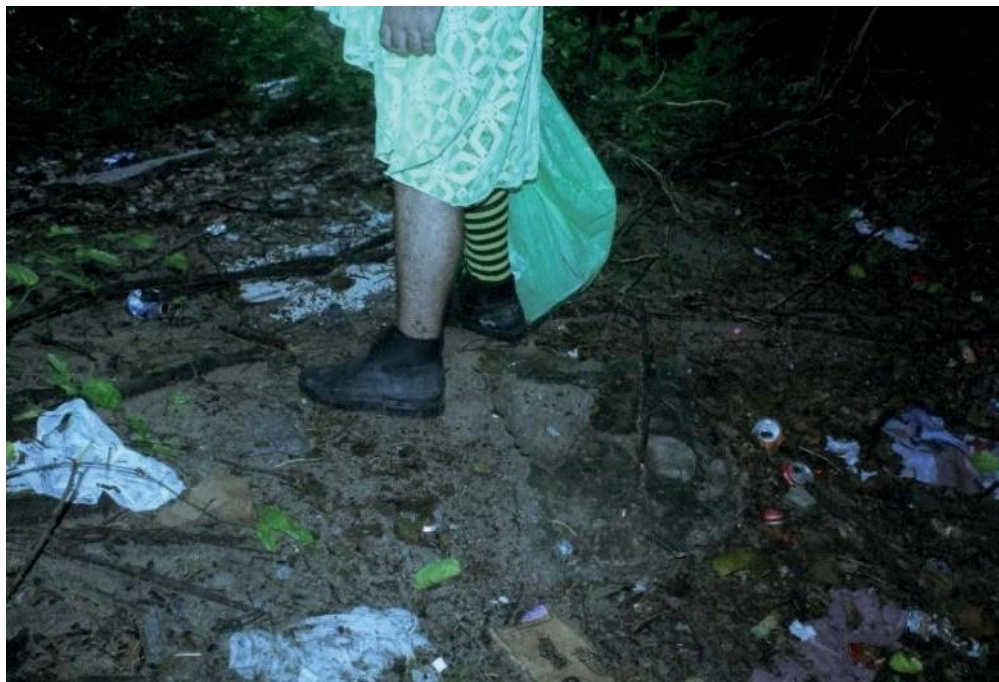


Figure 2 - The striped sock. Image of Mateus Falcão and Levi Mota Muniz (Non-Selected Collective), 2019.

At that meeting, I decided to go “in drag” to the territory⁹. The practice of doing drag is not an escape from my identity construction to the construction of an external identity. It is an encompassing of possible gender and visual experiences that add to my own construction as a being, thus making my identity always be another identity¹⁰. Another identity as an action, “othering”: leaving yourself to build yourself. For me, the “othering” is part of a corporeal, affective and spatio-temporal narrative that destabilizes my own self in order to put it in staggering contact with the city. I let myself unlearn how to walk confidently in the footsteps and allow myself (un) balance again due to the relationship with the city. Far from ceasing to be me, is a search for me. Mia Couto in her text “The path burner” (2011) talks about the immanence of nomadism in the history of mankind. He builds his text based on the relations between the Mozambican citizen, the visit to distant relatives and an indication of the territories

⁹ It is important to note that the notions of a performative program differ from strictly momentary and / or im-pending actions, read while spontaneous. “Program” operates on a multiple basis and does not need to be de-fined, being able to propel itself as a strategic action, built through processes. So, I think of a program here not only as a shared performative action cell, but also as the strategic, socio-political, affective and artistic assem-blages that make up the process of creating the action as a whole.

¹⁰ The choice to use the term “identity” is a political position. Within the artistic space, in contemporary times, a series of other terms were and are being invented, operating in a cohesive way with what we raise here when we talk about identity. This is the case, for example, of “singularity” and “processes of singularization”. The relationship between these terms is proposed by researcher Paula Ávila Kepler in the text “Identity: Singularity: Concepts present in art” (2015). The term “identity” is also presented in its plurality in the article “On the con-cept of identity: appropriations in studies on teacher education” (FA-RIA, TREVISAN, 2013), in which the au-thors point out the perspectives of construction of this terminology from different thinkers in history.

where he walks through the fires, proposing these as a performative practice: this one that not only marks the space, but is marked in the space¹¹, building an intervention narrative. At the beginning of his text, the author proposes the term fire ecology, without scrutinizing it too much.

The ecological notion for performative-interventional action is very interesting to me. I feel that the performing body is also suggested as an ecological body. In his actions, he not only passes through space¹¹, but also compose himself with it, developing activation relationships through the frictions provoked. When Mozambicans set fire to their trajectories, they do not do this to alter the external, but to project themselves into the environment, marking their existence in the process. There is an autopoietic and somatic nature in this setting. Fire is built as an other, as if we were able to spread in the undergrowth like flames, doubting the psychophysical structures that are limited to us in the epidermis. A flaming body, projecting itself from cultural practices that are the practices of life itself, as Artaud (2002) proposes. For Artaud, culture is nothing but life itself operating. Mia Coto was impelled to convince nomads to stop their practices: he did not succeed, and do not became sad about it. He rejoiced in the failure.



Figure 3 - A lot of glasses found in the vegetation of the Dunes. In total, we collected more than ten thousand plastic cups. Image by Levi Mota Muniz and Mateus Falcão (Collective Non Selected). Fortaleza, 2019.

¹¹In the text “Milton Santos: conceptions of geography, space and territory” (SAQUET; SILVA, 2008), several considerations are made about the word “space”. In the end, space is understood as a zone of living connections and still in dispute, far from being just a geographical term that deals with rigid territorial limits. Thus, space is built in the political-political relationship.

I feel that drag for me has also been an “ecology of fire”. An action that is projected in space as a scorching and violent practice. Mounting itself can be configured as a violent act. New shapes are marked on the body, transforming it into an anti-structure. For that, it is necessary to doubt our small our limits in the creative processes. From passing a darker base to mark the cheek bone to tightening your internal organs with a corset, an act of conscious violence is provoked. The violent act is enhanced in its relationship with the city. So I understand one of the possibilities for montage: I drag myself to tension relationships and reunderstand violence.

I have been operating, since mid 2018, the action of drag as a performance program. This happens, as has been reported again, driven by the propositions of Eleonora Fabião, especially when the author suggests that “the conception and execution of programs makes it possible, in addition to specific genres or techniques, to search for capacities, properties, specificities of the body, to investigate body dramaturgies. Programs tone the artist’s body and the artist’s body ”(FABIÃO, 2013, page 8). I understand that my practice as a drag being has expanded the powers and singularities of my body, putting it in a state of movement. Drag as an engine becoming of transfiguration of the body-gender.

There is a development of statements in the creation of makeup, in the choice of clothing. There is an intention in the colors, in the use or not of the lenses. Especially, there is a profound relationship between the process of understanding me as a drag, the space that I will be dialoguing with this other of mine and the purpose of the initiative. In “Archeology of garbage”, the most simplified statement can be presented as “participating in drag in a dune cleaning session and capturing images of the garbage layers”. This statement, however, does not fully disclose the various strategic layers of the initiative, which demand and propel a series of actions for its commitment. The clothes I chose, the socks, the way I built the makeup, the non-use of the white lenses I normally wear: all of this made up the action. The statement, therefore, should not serve as words that enclose the performative program for a unique practice guided by the word centered. Just as Virginia Kastrup (2018) proposes the term “idea”, the statement is a materiality that changes in contact with the action itself.

On the day of waste collection in the Dunes, I was asked repeatedly about the use of that garment. A black belt around the abdomen, a neon green dress,

short in the front and long in the back; stylized black galoshes with several lines; two different socks: one medium and white and the other long, imitating the patterns of a bee, with a little flower on top. Red eye makeup, with glitter on the edges; small false eyelashes; light brown lipstick, read as “nude”; hair dyed only on the side, in a gradient that went from the marsalla at the top to the yellow at the beard.



Figure 4 - Sitting on the garbage throne. Image of Mateus Falcão and Levi Mota Muniz (Collective Non-selected), 2019.

The looks showed a mixture of incredulity, desire and surprise from the people who were there. From that, I had the opportunity to talk to several people about the intercrossing between gender, ecology and artistic creation. The conversations were important for the construction of the action and for rethinking my practice, in addition to capturing other people within the initiative. The most significant moment was when one of those present, Mariana, called me because she had found a doll in the trash.

Mariana and the doll in the trash

When she stopped her task to call me, Mariana started to build her own archaeological narrative. Here we call archeology the action of historical and ecological prospecting of things. The archaeological practice, in this event, was also a performative initiative: my relationship with space took place through prospecting, the game of capture (of photos of things and of search). And it founds a new way to connect and be in the world.

The moment Mariana called me we decided to look for the doll again. She had put the toy in her garbage bag, which would then be taken out and put together with the other bags the collecting process. For me, the doll would have a different trajectory: it would be placed in another bag, in which I was carrying various materials to take home. We went through Mariana's bag for about 15 minutes: me, her and Mateus Falcão (another researcher at Coletivo Cabeça). In the process, we took several photos, especially of tens of thousands of plastic cups found there.

The doll, however, was never found. The fact is that we've tried as much as possible, including removing all the garbage from the bag in question. It would forever be something I would lack. I remembered the considerations of Didi Huberman (2010), this look that is a loss, the material lack caused by vision. The vision does not account for the performative force of things. There is not enough weight in seeing, but there is a great weight - this metaphysical and sometimes somatic - caused by the lack that seeing can cause.

In this search, not finding the doll weighed on me like a "missing emotion". I wanted it, it would be important not only as materiality for that moment, but I thought about the works that we would invent together. She could accompany me throughout the Master's process, sitting next to me during the defense of my dissertation and beyond. She would be my companion in anxieties and I would even drag her like a drag daughter. The doll was also another of mine: a performed projection of how I saw myself at that very moment, an archaeological drag of garbage.



Figure 5 - Leaks. Image of Mateus Falcão and Levi Mota Muniz (Non-Selected Collective), 2019.

Most likely, however, the weight of the lack caused by looking without having it as a thing and as a material body in dialogue with me potentiated all the emotions detailed in the previous paragraph. Perhaps this doll, if found, was going to, together with the other prospected “objects”, be trapped within the tangle of programs that make up the processes of creating this research, and also in the tangle of things that accumulate in my house, in my car, in my room.

Not finding the doll, on the day, seemed to me a much more interesting sensation than having it. There was a gigantic weight in this flawed prospecting. I created narratives inside my head: was she on the run, running from the plastic bags through the holes in the glass, trying to stick in the dunes where she was for I don't know how long? Was it a claustrophobic doll or was she allergic to plastic? Would the doll be an immaterial being, would it be an ubiquitous being, being in all spaces at the same time, like Ulysses' dead mother in the narrative analyzed by Huberman (2010)? Was the photo that Mariana showed me a truth or had she taken it the other day and shown me a fiction projected while real? I think about that possibility at the very moment I write. Was Mariana, in this last alternative, a creator of selffiction, just like me with my drag? Was I, in fact, the doll itself found and lost right after?

The gaps pointed out by Denise Pedron (2013) regarding the performative texts, enhancing the creation narratives, also project yourself in the dramaturgies of existence. The gap created by the doll's absence, therefore, potentiated my other drag. I was captured by her presence in a photo and by her absence in material, losing a little bit of myself in the process. A piece of me, part-doll, would be in some bag. Me contaminated with garbage, and me contaminating the garbage, being carried by the truck, giving birth as a fungus in a landfill, with my long hair matted in manure. I would be taken to the landfill in Fortaleza while going to my house, and going on with my life. I was capillarized, crossdressing the city of Fortaleza as a whole, starting with my epidermis and contamination in desires, amidst the non-binary, fleeting gender self. A self different from me, like a unplugged body, without having ever being in touch, by the memory of an absence, by the mourning of a look.



Figure 6 - When will I be thrown in the trash? Image of Mateus Falcão and Levi Mota Muniz (Non-Selected Collective), 2019.

Performance as ecological ethics of confrontation

In this section, based on what has been reported, I make some more targeted considerations regarding how ethics enters the discussions evoked by performance.

Suely Rolnik, in the text “For an ethics of the real” (1990), raises the new ethical paradigms arising from an ecological view of the world, in dialogue with the text “The three ecologies” by Felix Guattari (1990). In both texts, the concept of ecology is not the most widely operated in society, it is commonly linked to the domain of biology, with a focus on fauna and flora. Ecology, far beyond that, is an area of studies and practices that aims to research the processes that took place across the Earth. Guattari will focus on three primary ecologies to understand life in contemporary times. Rolnik points to the author’s text: “here Guattari goes further in its ecology. It unfolds in three, inseparable: ecology of the environment, mental ecology and social ecology. Three dimensions of reality that suffer the same effects of degradation - three targets of struggle, today ”(ROLNIK, 1990, p. 1).

In his text, Rolnik, in contact with Félix’s ideas, looks at how ecological degradation in different areas compels us to develop other mechanisms to understand world issues. Including here the aesthetic creation and the ethical implication within the artistic processes. For Rolnik, we need to reunderstand

ethics not from an idealized or utopic world, which she calls the ethics of the ideal. It is necessary to understand how contemporary ethical paradigms are in friction and how this leads us to think of an “ethics of the real.” For her:

[...] in place of this type of ethics (the ethics of the ideal), what is proposed here is an “ethics of the real”, where solidarity remains a value, but taking into account conflict, alterity, the difference (or, as Guattari says, becoming both solitary and increasingly different); just as the will to change is always possible whenever it is necessary, but taking into account finitude and multiplicity. (ROLNIK, 1990, p. 3.)

Thus, it is necessary to understand, including about existence, that there are more bodies and singularities than a single and ideal ethical position can encompass within our political action. Certain bodies, such as the one pointed out by Jeffrey Cohen (2000), are unlikely to be assimilated as the standard critical subject expected by various political left groups. However, the performative action of these people will not be detached from a progressive ethics, but they do it in a different way from that expected by traditional political militancy. Rolnik continues:

Guattari manages not only to make this criticism but, more rarely, to think about other parameters, to effectively shift from the traditional political position, both in terms of a conceptual practice and in terms of a multiplying practice - he succeeds effectively carry out such displacement. Here lies all the richness of the proposal of micropolitics, which in this book is improved with the vision of the three ecologies, which Guattari groups under the term “ecosophy”. (Ibidem, page 4.)

In this sense, I propose here that we understand the performance and dissident formations as artistic, political, ecological and ethical practices to confront social norms. Thus, the “Garbage Archeology” program is propelled as an aesthetic initiative enhanced by a perception of ethics other than that which is allocated within reactionary norms or classical progressive action. We entered into a regime of operation of micropolitics and dissidence that gives us the nickname of what Jeffrey Coen (2000) will call a monster. The monster, for the author, will be everyone that escapes, in a given space / time, from the ethical-aesthetic-social paradigms of the read / legitimized as a subject. The construction of the monster then serves to affirm the subject (before certain norms and standards) as an ideal ethical being.



Figure 7 - Archaeological finds in the Dunes. The sign in the first photo is configured as a piece of door, with the writings “I want to fuck an ass, suck a (drawing of) a very large cock”. In the third photo, several burnt and ash cans indicate the use of crack on the site. Images by Levi Mota Muniz and Mateus Falcão (Non Selected Collective). Fortaleza, 2019.

The performance of a trans person, in drag, in the Dunes, carrying a green garbage bag and a photographic camera, certainly presents another regime for us to think about political and artistic practice. And this is one of the potentialities that performance brings: inventing other regimes for action, derouting social connections, restructuring (anti) methodologically society.

In our case, it is important to think mainly about how this action evokes a discussion of new perspectives for artistic-ecological making and for the notions of what can be considered gender. We seek to break free of a representative / figurative sphere of the genre, which is found in the affirmation of manwoman binary, with its respective socially standardized performativities. In the performance in question, a new way of being-in-the-world is suggested based on an aesthetic-political operation. The relations between artistic-aesthetic creation and ethical implications are pointed out by Rolnik in the text already quoted, but in a timid way.

In the text “Artivists Performances: Incorporating an aesthetic of dissonance into an ethic of resistance”, the researcher Rui Mourão (2015) will analyze how the aesthetic enjoyment of artistic works throughout modernity and contemporaneity is linked to political-ethical movements. This is even due to the legitimation of what art is and how much this art is going to be worth (value beyond monetary perspectives, but pointing out as historical, political,

social and even ethical value). The author weaves considerations about how these relations occur within communist systems, with the direct legitimation of works that criticize the capitalist system; and capitalist systems, with the validation of those works that have potential for sale (that is, that please that layer that can buy).

In the text, Rui builds a parallel between the fields of art and activism, proposing a re-structuring of these from an “artist” notion. This evokes a perception of the political notes of the work without leaving aside the invention and the possibility of different sensations caused by the aesthetic experience. In this sense, the relations between ethics and aesthetics come together to the point of mixing, building, for the author, a policy of artificial resistance, or an ethics of resistance.

In this sense, I choose to affirm, based on this program and other actions that make up my research, an ethics of confrontation. We, subordinates, transvestites, dissident bodies, need to face our existence beyond a state of resistance, but also to conceive of ourselves as agents of confrontation, capture, and struggle. We speak here of performance as an artistic-ecological confrontation action through our own existence. The initiative worked on here does not end with the end of garbage collection, but echoes from my body in the frictions that I develop in my existence. This existence is marked by waste, by the margin, by non-binary living, by the performative action, by the lipstick in my mouth and the brush that comes out of the mouth of others when looking at me. We speak here of an ethics performance of non-binary transvestite existence.

On the existence



Figure 8 - What is the ethics that makes our bodies killable? An archeology in search of Dandara and Érica. Images by Levi Mota Muniz and Mateus Falcão (Non Selected Collective). Fortaleza, 2019.

Several layers of wet sand, roots, cups and plastic bags, construction material, among others. The search is an archaeological journey to find the self that was lost there. The self under the trash, the self inside the trash. The self among the remains of the city's construction. The self that, being a subordinate, is denied participation in the construction of structures. In this sense, the performative program is at the same time a methodology for affirming its existence as an action required by the feeling of its emptiness. Michael Foucault (2004) proposes that the aesthetics of existences are the attempts to invent (often personal) a new epistemology insubordinate to classical ethics. Although short the text "An aesthetic of existence" (2004) operates as an invitation full of gaps for creative action. These gaps are continually filled and excavated again by performative and artistic actions.

From another perspective, the notions evoked by Schopenhauer, without opposing those of Foucault, place us in a paradigm of compulsiveness for an existence that is only possible in an unbridled action, instigated by the feeling of emptiness. In a text that is also short - coincidentally, with the same number of pages, five - the author already seems to point out the severity of the action as a generator of the sensation of (in) existence. "Again, there is the insatiability

of each individual will; every time it is satisfied, a new desire is engendered, and there is no end to its eternally insatiable desires ”(SCHOPEHAUER, 2014, p. 2). It seems to me that, for the author, there is a certain decadence, unhappiness or despair in the action of existing, since ex-istence is an expression of emptiness.



Figure 9 - Mounting resulting from the performance program “Archeologia do Lixo”, during the process of cre-ating “O Parir de ambiental drags”, a program carried out days after this first one. Works that continue to be done. Image by Levi Mota Muniz and Mateus Falcão (Collective Non Selected). Fortaleza, 2019.

Was this whole program part of that? A fear of emptiness? A desire for emptiness? An expression of emptiness? From the close feeling of being the doll itself non-existent? Or is it a creative attempt to invent other methodologies to exist? An existence in constant state of (de) assembly, (de) assembly?

Final taunts

For some years now, I have faced gender non-binarity (and, consequently,

in my case, drag) as a shot in the void. Especially for those people who assume a more dissident and fluid performance. The absence of classical and normative gender figures as a reference, the linguistic eviction, the non-belonging in the cisgenerity segments. Lighter, but still hurtful, the accusation of LGBTI + binary groups that our bodies are “confusing” the gains that the trans movement has achieved. The scorn on the part of the right-wing socio-political groups and a reaction similar to several organized movements of the left, for not seeing our being as adequate or critical for their speech. Our extensive experimentation being boxed in the figure of the monster. The lack of social, affective, sexual legibility; the exoticization of existence; the pathologization of our actions. The violence with our bodies, the self-harm caused by social exclusion, the need to report each moment to explain why we are who we are.

These and several other factors lead me to conceive drag as a performative action that operates in my experience in several ways, of which I would like to highlight two. The first is the acceptance and affirmation of the bizarre / the strange as aesthetics / ethics for the encounter. Performative creation of a body infected by the hostility-disagreement relations of the world with you. Thus, drag works as an assimilation of the archaeological layers of my self that lead me to disengage from the social norm. This assimilation leads me to act in order to add even more layers to this strangeness, making me even more inserted in the reading as bizarre / monstrous. This happens, as already stated, because drag itself is a research, and, thus, it also reaches stages of complexity in its trajectory. The handling with makeup, the creation of clothing, access to visual technologies for self-creation, learning in the areas of photography and design, the notoriety I gain from each new venture with the city are just some of the factors that make me see the progress of drag myself as a capacity for affection in this trajectory.

In another sense, I also see drag as an invitation: I invite you to dig our own void together with me. An invitation to decode the visual references, to understand why, and, as is the case with Mariana and the doll, the action in the programs that I propose in this process. An invitation to affect me, to be affected, to want me or to be disgusted with me. It is an invitation, even, to find the action unnecessary, as it happened a lot on the day of the “Archeology of Garbage”, but also an invitation to vibrate with the encounter of this strange being in the middle of the Dunes and so many other spaces. Invitation to dialogue generated by the strangeness, by “Why did you come dressed like this?”.

A invite for questioning the limits of the bodies, about the performativities as actions of approaching or distancing from the prevailing binary figures and their respective normative expressions.

So, I invite you to enter my emptiness. However, a void is never anyone's property: the void is inappropriate, inalienable, incapable. To enter someone's emptiness, even if it is for the duration of a conversation, is to invent a collective emptiness, which escapes the logic of building a closed self or private property. To enter the void is to re-understand ethics. There must be no moralizing and subjugating prohibitions in the construction of these voids: on the contrary, here, they become possible nameless affects, or that do not lack the language to restrict them, since they cannot be groped by filling in a name. Empty places and vacuous, suction pumps that urge us to perform action: this is to establish new possibilities to live and exist. Thus, a new ethical and aesthetic perspective for existence is assimilated.

Summoning me in drag, even to collect garbage collectively, is my way of inviting be-ings to a void of ours, singular and multiple, fluid in their (est) ethics, archaeological in their methodology, transgressor and transvestite in their invention .

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