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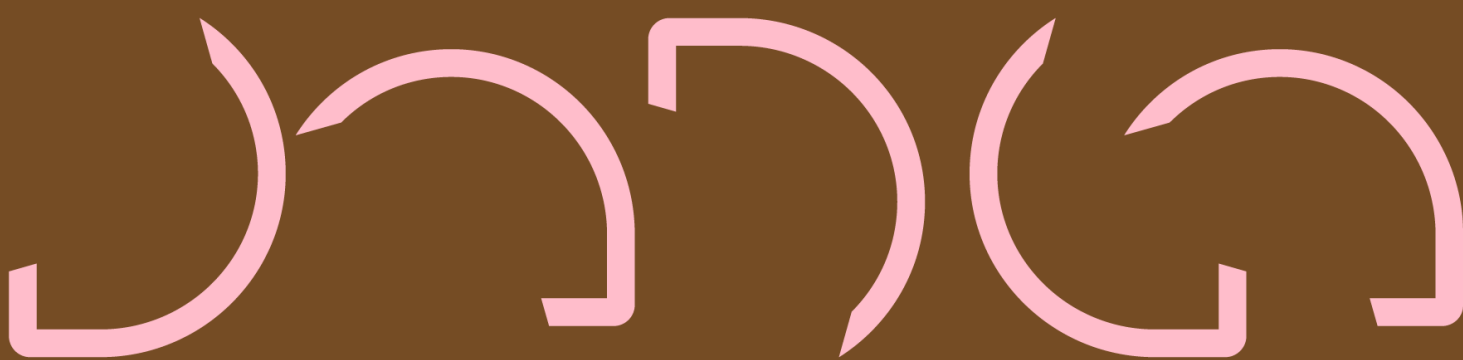
isLands

poetics and politics among dances,
cities and women

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RESUMO

Este artigo parte da pesquisa de doutorado, *Danças, cidades e ocupações: poéticas e políticas do agir da dança contemporânea em espaços urbanos*, na qual investiga-se práticas da dança contemporânea em espaços urbanos e suas relações entre cidade, corpo, dança e performatividade. Nesse recorte é trazido para análise a vídeo-performance *iLhas* (2021) de Marina Guzzo junto a um coletivo de mulheres na região da Baixada Santista (SP), relacionando-a às reflexões geradas e movimentadas pelo doutorado com os estudos de uma cênica feminista (Romano, 2023), do feminismo descolonial (Lugones, 2014) e da coreopolítica (Lepecki, 2011).

PALAVRAS-CHAVE Dança em Espaços Urbanos; Dança e Política; Cidade; Cênica Feminista; Feminismo Descolonial.

ABSTRACT

This article is part of the doctoral research, *Dances, cities and occupations: poetics and politics of contemporary dance action in urban spaces*, in which contemporary dance practices in urban spaces and their relations among city, body, dance and performativity are investigated. In this article, the video performance *iLhas* (2021) by Marina Guzzo and a collective of women in Baixada Santista (SP) region is brought to analysis, relating it to the reflections generated and driven by the doctorate with the studies of a feminist scenic (Romano, 2023), decolonial feminism (Lugones, 2014) and choreopolitics (Lepecki, 2011).

KEYWORDS Dance in Urban Spaces; Dance and Politics; City; Feminist Scenic; Decolonial Feminism.



isLands: poetics and politics among dances, cities and women

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When we ask ourselves how city spaces are formed - how do people, beings and things inhabit them? What corporealities do cities produce? How do the ways of being and living in locations come about? -, we recognize the countless choreographies that have already been traced in their constitution. Choreographies that tell us about permissions and prohibitions, hierarchies, controls, resistances, in crossings over ways of being and living in city areas, around the world.

Cities, especially metropolises, are products of modern thinking that draws up the political-kinetic fantasy of mobility, rationality and neutrality of spaces. We would be free to come and go, preferably motorized, on supposedly regular, flat and neutral ground. We know that this ideology of freedom of use and access propagated in the urbanized city is a fallacy, and that the possibilities of mobility, appropriation, access and rights are socially constructed, and with openings to injustices and inequalities in relation to the different populations that inhabit it. It's not everyone who flits around quietly in the recesses of cities.

As Canadian researcher Leslie Kern (2021) points out, cities are built from a male perspective and as feminist geographer Jane Darke says, "any settlement is an inscription in space of the social relations in the society that built it. Our cities are patriarchies written in stone, brick, glass and concrete" (Darke, 1996, p. 88). These are designed with reference to men's corporealities, and their buildings are based on the idea of a "standard person" who's "standard" is often the average body size of an adult man (Kern, 2021). In addition, cities are becoming more and more vertical, in which the skyscraper is a symbol of power and "development", in a movement of urbanization in which we gradually have fewer spaces for socializing (squares, parks, etc.), which deprioritizes the circulation of people along the streets and sidewalks, neglecting the maintenance of roads and public lighting. These processes show how the administration of cities, particularly metropolises, have neglected to increase everyone's access to these spaces, moving away from the production of space based on the sharing of a common world.

Milton Santos (2014), when discussing city spaces as places of coexistence, disputes, negotiations and violence, points out that different corporealities live different experiences of city (Santos, 2014). Women, black people, indigenous people, LGBTQIAPN+ people, people with disabilities, the elderly and children suffer the difficulties of living in urban spaces designed according to the patriarchal capitalist rationale; cities are not designed or conceived for diversity.

André Lepecki (2011, 2017), a dance theorist, explains that the concept of choreography, reaffirmed in modernity, echoed the project of the modern city in its mobility plan, based on the ideology of an ontology between dance and movement, which proposed remaking the body so that it "represents itself" as a total "being-for-movement" (Lepecki, 2017). In addition, this concept of choreography is based on the illusion that the ground on which one dances should be flat and neutral, a thought inaugurated in the French classical ballet created by King Louis XIV, which he adhered to aesthetically in his colonial project (Lepecki, 2017). Although, as the author points out, there is currently an exhaustion of the notion of dance as a pure display of uninterrupted movement, critical of the ways of disciplining subjectivities, the disciplinary apparatuses engendered in modernity still continue to haunt contemporary contexts.

That's why it's important to question the dance and the city: in both projects, the burial of colonial, patriarchal and racist heritage is supported by these ideas of neutrality and hypermobility. This way, historical floors are the foundation of Western scenic dance, which is often based on forgetting a society built on racism and colonialism, a symbolic-material smoothing that guides both the dancing body and the urban space.

With these questions we can ask ourselves: On what/which floors do we dance today?

Following these questions, it would be important to look at places and dances as co-constitutive, intertwined in the significant web of social and political relations. According to Lepecki (2011), dances generate epistemologies capable of:

Theorizing the social context in which it emerges, questioning it and revealing the lines of force that distribute the possibilities (energetic, political) of mobilization, participation, activation, as well as passivity, would bring a particular critical force to this art. (Lepecki, 2011, p. 45)

When we think, as Lilian Vilela (2013) conceptualizes, about dance as a pronunciation of the world, in which the dancing bodies are subject-bodies of their experiences and their dances (Vilela, 2013), which express ways of being in spaces in their existential, political and poetic dimensions, dance would thus be an "active epistemic operator of politics in context" (Lepecki, 2011, p. 46).

In addition, Lepecki (2011), in the direction of these reflections on urban kinetic regimes and dance, shows us that urban choreographic arrangements can be seen in an ambivalent movement of bodies. He discusses the politics of movement through two concepts: "choreo-politics" and "choreo-polices". On the one hand, pointing to the police of movement and its ordinances, a choreo-policing of urban spaces, formatted to moderate gestures and rhythms to establish states of control and surveillance, stabilizing consensus for a hegemonic power. On the other hand, proposing a choreo-politics, that is, the possibility of other perspectives of mobility and stillness that create dissonant gestures and displace kinetic sharing, in line with a "politics of the ground" that, attentive to the constitutive resonance among places and dances/dances and places, is also in relation to the horizon of the ground of the concrete events of cities (Lepecki, 2011).

This author proposes bringing dance studies closer to political theories and allies himself with Jacques Rancière's perspective (2004) by frictioning art and politics and placing them as co-constitutive activities of each other, a perspective in which art would be responsible for sharing the sensible, the sayable, the visible and the invisible, activating new collective modes of enunciation and perception, creating modes of life and subjectivation (Rancière, 2010, p. 173). For example, in his text *Movement in the pause*, produced during the covid-19 pandemic, Lepecki (2021) stresses how it was the pause, the stop, the

posture that emphasized life, the common care for the collective. While movement is what can affirm dominant power, control and surveillance, it also has the power to generate and open cracks, gaps, ruptures in what is hegemonic, and in this way, we can question ourselves:

How to dance a dance that changes places, but at the same time knows that a place is a historical singularity, reverberating past, present and (political) future? How can we promote a different kind of mobility that doesn't reproduce the kinetics of capital and the machines of war and police? How can we choreograph a dance that cracks the smooth floor of choreo-politics and cracks the subjection of the subjects regimented by choreo-politics? Dance to crack the ground of movement, dance on the cracked movement of the ground, crack subjection. (Lepecki, 2011, p. 56)

Compositional action in the city

These concerns presented prompted the doctoral research *Dances, cities and occupations: poetics and politics* of contemporary dance *action* in urban spaces, in which we propose to delve into contemporary dance processes and works that invest in urban spaces in their *compositional action*, raising questions and reflections that problematize these contexts based on the encounters between dances and cities and their poetic, aesthetic and political reverberations.

This research is a continuation of the investigations carried out during Clara Gouvêa do Prado's master's degree. Her dissertation focused on the artistic production of *Cia Damas em Trânsito e os Bucaneiros*, a contemporary dance group from São Paulo, of which Clara is a dancer and co-founder. The group has been working in urban spaces for 18 years, in which improvisation in dance and music, contact improvisation and somatic practices are key elements of their work. The practices of dance improvisation in the street, its *compositional* plans, have driven the reflections that culminated in the concept of *compositional action*.

We call *compositional acting* the synthesis of the group's assumptions and scenic procedures, as well as the way of mapping the processes, to highlight the devices and strategies launched in the encounter with urban spaces, especially when *acting* in the city

of São Paulo. The dance that is in urban spaces, that goes into them, chooses the public space, that is, the "common world" as the public sphere of appearing, recognizing and differentiating oneself, the space of the political event of action and discourse (Arendt, 2013). The "common world" is the place of sharing what has been bequeathed materially and symbolically, the knowledge, the stories, the languages that extend over time (present, past and future), understanding the sphere of politics as a human experience which relates and binds the entirety of the matters and interests that unite human beings.

We are talking here about the "common world", a joint realization that brings together practices of collaboration and coexistence by creating bonds based on democratic, community values and the shared power to act, especially artistic action, as Marina Guzzo (2021) shows us when she says that art can propose changes in the sensitive hierarchies of apprehending and living in cities by promoting experiences for people from different sensitive universes (Guzzo, 2021). The perspective of acting compositionally in dance places it as situationally contextualized, acting in the world in its ethical, aesthetical, poetical and political dimension, as constitutive of knowledge.

Therefore, *compositional acting* is the conceptual articulation that comprises the poetical-political-cartographic conjunction in critical-reflexive analyses scenic pieces of dance/arts of the scene. "Acting" and "composition" are placed here in the perspective of the "common world", they take place in public spaces, in the streets of the city, in common exchanges. . Hannah Arendt (2013) proposes that we think of acting as a public event that takes place in encounters and relationships between people who, by acting together, take forward or not an action initiated by someone else (Arendt, 2013).

In this way, we understand that, in the context of dance, acting highlights its relationship with the compositional and relational dimensions, which are intrinsic to each other; when we act, we open ourselves up to composition with others, with the space, with people, with other beings, with architecture, etc. Here, in this research, the compositional nature is a condition for acting,

especially in the spaces practiced in the street. . In this field, what is revealed in the encounters are the singular and plural pronunciations, acts, sayings, speeches, gestures, postures, presences, experiences, sensitivities that are shared.

In addition, it is important to say that the notion of choreography is increasingly being revisited and destabilized, expanded to other compositional forms; and artists and collectives who have performed in urban spaces are part of artistic movements that seek to re-establish the relationship between scenic dance and its contexts, its floors. Marina Guzzo presents:

Many artistic movements have exploded this notion, creating other contexts for choreography, inventing ways of relating to different spaces and to the body, proposing different ways of making dance that are connected to the city, abandoning the idea of *image* and *representation* as a mean of performing . When thinking about dance produced in the city, on the streets or in spaces not traditionally recognized as stages, we can indicate a dance of contexts, of provisional realities and allegories of this very city. Choreographic action and performative practice are now conceived as the construction of an experience of being with people and places, creating spaces for aesthetical, ethical and political creation. The proposals made in and with the city don't always resemble the format of what we traditionally recognize as *dance*. Aspects of performance, the visual arts and, above all, the relationship with time and the flow of movement of the artists, as a counterpoint to the city are brought to the scene to play with the bodies of those who dance. (Guzzo, 2021, p. 5)

Acting and composition shape the action of dance, a dance that is attentive to the historical floor of places, the corporealities that inhabit them, existences, body-subjects in/of the world sharing a common ground. This concept, which is still being developed, resonates with the "hypothesis that dance, when danced, that is to say, at the moment it is embodied in the world of human actions, inevitably theorizes its social context in this act" (Lepecki, 2011, p. 45), thus positioning dance in the field of the social theory of action or in action.

From this perspective of dance and politics, this article seeks to bring the doctoral research investigations closer to the reflections generated and moved in proximity to the studies of a feminist scenic¹ and decolonial studies. In this movement, Lucia Romano's

¹ The reflections in this article were triggered during the course "Diversity and counter-hegemonic proposals for interpretation in the expanded scene" taught by Prof. Dr. Lucia Romano at the PPG-Artes at IA/Unesp-SP in the second semester of 2023.

article (2023) on the feminist scenic and Maria Lugones' (2014) on the perspective of a decolonial feminism were important references for broadening these discussions.

With this in mind, the aim is to delve into the processes and works of artists and groups who investigate the relationship among dance and the city, who articulate relationships between art and communities, especially women's artistic collectives. Therefore, at this moment, we are studying the work developed by dance artist and researcher Marina Guzzo with a women's collective in the Baixada Santista region (SP). Guzzo has been developing art and community work in the context of the Body and Art Laboratory at the Federal University of São Paulo/UNIFESP - Baixada Santista Campus, in partnership with the Procomum Institute.

We believe that the dance artist's propositions in her compositional action surround the perspective of a feminist scene, as proposed by Lucia Romano:

[...] it is a question of emphasizing a feminist way of creating and reflecting on the scene, but without any assumption arising from a feminine taste or talent, or from practices more suited to women. What drives this feminist character in the way of making theater and thinking about it are precisely the social structures and conditions that in the arts of presence, as in other environments, make women subject to discredit and hinder their professional and personal fulfillment, but which also mobilize them as a class of women in theater. (Romano, 2023, p. 8).

In Marina Guzzo's creations, our interest lies in the reflective possibility of the works in their relationship with the actions of women in the city, in how they experience the territories, their gestures, movements and struggles, in other words, the *compositional action* mobilized in the works of these artists and workers with the eminent difficulties of transiting and appropriating the spaces of the city. Particularly in *iLhas*² (2021), the video-performance featured in this article, the journeys made by women, sometimes by land and sometimes by sea, reveal the conditions of exclusion to which they are subjected their moves seek to resist and fight the conflicts and disputes imposed by the relationship between the city and its inhabitants. . In her propositions, Guzzo also addresses issues related to the climate crisis, the Anthropocene, or

² See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spPNYTk7nUY>. Accessed on: Aug. 12, 2024.

rather the Capitalocene as proposed by Malm and Moore, taken up by Haraway (2016, p. 144), which is the geological period that marks human and capitalist action in its extractive project of unbridled exploitation of the planet, humans and more than humans.

iLhas

iLhas is a video-performance project directed by research artist Marina Guzzo (realized during the period of social isolation resulting from the health crisis caused by covid-19), which portrays five journeys over the islands of Santos, São Vicente and Guarujá³, based on the body/memory/history of five women who live in the Baixada Santista region (SP)⁴, a group made up of black, white and Brazilian northeastern women, from different social classes, with and without experience in artistic processes and dance.

Nalva dos Anjos, Marília Fernandes, Maria Lisboa, Eleonora Artysenk and Kidauane Regina make their journeys across the sea to get to the city center or other places in the city by boat, on foot, by bicycle, across bridges. Daily, everyday journeys in which imagination and reality mix with the social choreography imposed by territories and their powers. Crossing is the movement necessary to access places of work, health, education, leisure and culture⁵ in the so-called Baixada Santista, a region made up of cities close to the sea, where Santos is the seat of the metropolitan region. In the video, each performer, at different ages, recounts their own journey from their town/neighborhood to the center of Santos, with memories and protests on the spaces of crossing and how the

³ The Santos Basin is part of the so-called Baixada Santista Metropolitan Region. A large part of Santos belongs to the island of São Vicente, on which the cities of São Vicente and Santos are located.

⁴ The Baixada Santista region is made up of 9 municipalities (Bertioga, Cubatão, Guarujá, Itanhaém, Monguagá, Peruíbe, Praia Grande, Santos and São Vicente). It is located on a small strip of coastal plain bathed by the Atlantic Ocean and bordered by the Serra do Mar (Atlantic Forest). Its hydrographic network is made up of six different rivers and Santos is home to the largest port complex in South America. The region has excellent road and rail access and is close to the capital São Paulo, with summer tourism being one of the main factors in urban growth. Source: http://planejamento.sp.gov.br/static/arquivos/audiencias/caracterizacao2020/BAIXADA_SANTISTA_Caracterizacao.pdf. Accessed on: Aug. 14, 2024.

⁵ See: <http://cargocollective.com/marinaguzzo/i-L-h-a-s-Islands>. Accessed on: September 25, 2022.

distances have reaffirmed the movements of exclusion and social vulnerability. In the journeys/performances, each one carries a blank poster in their hands to walk through different parts of the island.

1- *Frame* from the video performance *iLhas*



In the image, the map of the Santos Basin region. Santos, 2021. Source: Taken from the video-performance *iLhas*⁶.

To create the video-performance, Guzzo used as a reference the work *Blank Placard Dance*⁷ (1970) by Anna Halprin⁸. The performance *Blank Placard Dance* (1970) took place on the streets of San Francisco (USA) and consisted of a group walk in which people carried blank placards. This march was escorted by a fanfare/band. During the journey, the group performed different occupations and joint compositions in the streets. The performance involved dancers and non-artists. Unlike Halprin's collective performance, in *iLhas* each performance is carried out individually by the performers, who have, in their crossing gestures,

⁶ As indicated, the video is available and open on YouTube.

⁷ Video of one of the *replays* of the performance today. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y9yJWjhNOU>, accessed on: May 10, 2024.

⁸ An important artist in the vanguard of postmodern dance in the USA and a pioneer in bringing somatic practices to dance. Her interest in the body, somatic knowledge (anatomy/kinesiology), pedestrian/everyday movement, improvisation and collectivity influenced many artists of the 60s/70s.

experiences of their urban “corpo-graphies” (body-ographies):

Urban corpo-graphy would be a kind of cartography carried out by and on the body, in other words, the urban memory inscribed on the body, the record of its experience of the city, a kind of urban graffiti, of the lived city itself, which constitutes the body of those who experience it. (Britto and Jacques, 2008, p. 79)

Throughout the text, we will delve into the singularities of each journey, considered to be a central performative device in this *compositional action*. Unlike drifting, the crossing over journey reaffirms a defined route, inscribes the memory of the movements of/in the city, of the spaces lived in, and reiterates the moving grounds that demarcate the paths.

What struggles can a crossing over journey carry? What dances do these journeys unveil?

The city of Santos is part of the island of São Vicente. Like Eleonora, Marília, Maria, Nalva and Kidauane, many people live in surrounding towns and work or study in Santos. The sea and some rivers are present on the outskirts and borders of Santos and to get to this city people need to cross streets, bridges and canals to move around. Eleonora crosses over the suspension bridge to ride her bike back and forth from Praia Grande to Santos; Marília takes the ferry across the Santos port canal, which connects Santos to Vicente de Carvalho; Maria lives in the northwestern part of Santos, on the Vila Gilda Dock, and takes a boat to get to the city center; Nalva lives in the Pouca Farinha area, a neighborhood in the city of Guarujá, and crosses the Santos port canal by ferry; and Kidauane crosses the Barretos Bridge, which connects the mainland area of São Vicente to the island. In these regions, most of the population suffers from the pollution caused by the port of Santos, the lack of basic sanitation, the unhealthy housing - in other words, they live with the consequences of environmental and social exclusion.

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6- *Frame from the video performance iLhas*



In the picture Kidauane Regina. São Vicente, 2021. Source: Taken from the video-performance *iLhas*.

In this image, Kidauane, in her gesture of carrying the blank sign on the “*Ponte dos Barretos*”, dances across this bridge that connects the mainland of São Vicente to the island; a bridge built thanks to the struggle of this resident population, most of whom are migrants from the Northeast of Brazil, who struggle for the right to access health, education and decent living conditions, and which dates back to the colonial heritage of the first Brazilian village, Vila de São Vicente⁹, and the perpetuation of the cycle of exploitation of labor and the environment, which today revolves around oil. Kidauane and the bridge are the same age, 26. Just as María Lugones says:

⁹ The city of São Vicente is considered to be Brazil's first official town. Its foundation is recorded in 1532 with the installation of colonizing elements such as the church, town hall and pillory. There was habitation by indigenous groups prior to this period, before the official foundation. São Vicente was chosen to be the first town because of its location and the geography of the territory, a place that was highly coveted at the time as a strategic point for supplying ships and defending the territory under Portuguese rule. The city went through periods of wealth, abandonment and exploitation as a place where Brazilian products left through the port of Santos. Source: <https://www.saovicente.sp.gov.br/historia>. Accessed on: Aug. 14, 2024.

As coloniality infiltrates every aspect of life through the circulation of power at the levels of the body, labor, the law, the imposition of taxes, the introduction of property and the expropriation of land, its logic and effectiveness are confronted by different tangible people whose bodies, relational beings and relations with the spiritual world do not follow the logic of capital. (Lugones, 2014, p. 948)

To cross over is the choreo-politics that exposes coloniality and at the same time fractures and moves it. The performativity of these women's dance and their displacements tell of the persevering struggle it takes to keep crossing over continuously.

The performativity of their journeys crossing over inscribes this *compositional action of dance* in places, an aesthetic-poetic-political action, blurring boundaries between languages, in which the body in performance is the place of appearance, of knowledge production and ways of being in the world. In line with what Leda Maria Martins (2003) brings from the perspective of Afro-diasporic performances:

My hypothesis is that the body in performance is not only an expression or representation of an action, which symbolically refers us to a meaning, but primarily a place where knowledge is inscribed, knowledge that is written in gesture, movement, choreography, vocal solfège, as well as in the props that performatively cover it (Martins, 2003, p. 66).

Another performer, Marília, talks about her childhood journeys to meet her mother in the city center of Santos on the "Pae Cará" ferry. Marília says in the video that she imagined an indigenous origin for the name of the boat, but a friend had revealed that it was a name of African origin, possibly from an Afro-Brazilian religious leader, coming from the name of an important orixá priest in the Velho Itapema region, however, erased from the memory of the place. Pai Cará transformed into Pae Cará, Pae-Pai-Cará in de-memories of the spelling. Thus, the daily movement of crossing over on the ferry also contains traces of the erasure of histories, reveals unknowns and a lack of belonging.

7- Frame from the video performance *iLhas*



In the picture Marília Fernandes. Vicente de Carvalho, 2021. Source: Taken from the video-performance *iLhas*.

During her narrative, Marília tells us how her corporeality is integrated into this crossing over, as when she says about the tired body that molds itself to the seat of the ferry, or when she recalls the memory of when she was a child crossing over by ferry with her mother to go to the city center, or just "the city", as her mother called it. At times in the video, Marília plays with the paper of the poster that flies, jumps around while crossing a bridge in the central area of Santos, or sings an excerpt from the song by the band Raça Negra, "The blue of the sea. And the force of the waves, coming and going. Brings to mind. Longing for you. The desire to see you". Her actions are like jokes that subvert the imposed choreo-polices.

Maria's performance talks about some of her boat journeys (Barquinha), when the city's sewage is exposed by the action of low tide, when the sea reaches its lowest point, and the shallows show the dirt covered by the sea water. She says that she must face the unhealthy conditions of the route to escape the traffic and the flooding of the paved roads on rainy days. To get out of the flooded roads and cross into the sea. Maria reveals to us the politic of exclusion on the poorest bodies when she talks about the "bodies pushed to live on stilts, on the landfilled mangroves, on the banks of the rich city". Bodies that share accesses and spaces with cargo and containers during crossing over journeys.

8- *Frame from the video performance iLhas*



In the image Maria Lisboa. Santos, 2021. Source: Taken from the video-performance *iLhas*.

In her performance, Nalva speaks out against the contamination of the beaches while at the same time imagining and dreaming of what it would be like if they were clean. She reveals that "crossing over is very good. Coming and going". This path constitutes her, it creates "corpo-graphies" (body-ographies) (Britto and Jacques, 2008), the wind that hits her body, the rain, the movement of the tides and the rocking of the sea. The gestures of nature rocking and informing her body between the woods and the sea.

9- *Frame from the video performance iLhas*



In the picture Nalva dos Anjos. Guarujá, 2021. Source: Taken from the video-performance *iLhas*.

Gestures and discourses come together in this video-performance to say that crossing over journeys constitute us, triggering violence and inequalities. Our colonial heritage of exploitation and consumption is ingrained in the exclusionary structures of cities and, for the populations living on the urban fringes, this heritage is linked to the environmental crisis. Malcom Ferdinand, a Martinican theorist in *A decolonial ecology* (2022), exposes this double colonial and environmental fracture of modernity, and relates how the colonial project includes both the exploitation of environments and populations. In this way, Ferdinand (2022) says that the environmental fracture stems from this modern understanding of the dualistic opposition that separates culture and nature, environment and society, establishing a scale of values that places "Man" above nature:

It is revealed through the technical, scientific and economic modernization of the domination of nature, the effects of which are measured by the extent of the Earth's pollution, the loss of biodiversity, climate change in the light of gender inequalities, social misery and the disposable lives generated (Ferdinand, 2022, p. 24).

In the video performance¹⁰ landscapes, movements and narratives intersect the dimensions set out by Malcom, exposing vulnerabilities, the exploitation and use of natural resources, and showing how the experience of cities reveals these processes, colonialism, the climate crisis, environmental racism, gender and social inequalities. For example, Kidauane tells in her narrative about the journeys of her family and local residents, migrants from the northeast of the country who came to São Vicente in search of work and better living conditions.

The pedestrian dance that takes place in the video-performance shows that the movement of crossing itself reveals the choreographies imposed on these women, at the same time as it

¹⁰ This work was triggered by the Score 6 launched by Meander International, which proposes a way through the climate crisis. See: <https://meanderinternational.org/scores/score-6-propose-a-crossing/>. Accessed on: Aug. 18, 2024.

becomes choreo-political in the event of each performance, proposing other sensitive regimes. Crossing over serves to keep memory alive (Guzzo, 2021).

In the article "The personal is political", Cecília Sardenberg (2018) points out the importance of bringing women's personal stories as a political tool to raise awareness of the problems and issues of womanhood. She recounts that this possibility of looking at the politics has helped the feminist movement and its empowerment, as well as expanding methodologies and methods of academic research. It became a way of recognizing that problems and pains that seemed singular were shared by groups of women.

Knowing each other's stories is part of the process of creating coalitions, as María Lugones (2014) proposes, by reaffirming our ways of existing as resistance to the ideologies of capital:

You don't resist the coloniality of gender alone. You resist it from within, from a way of understanding the world and living in it that is shared and that can understand someone's actions, thus allowing recognition. Communities, rather than individuals, make doing possible; someone does with someone else, not in individualistic isolation. The passing from mouth to mouth, from hand to hand, of practices, values, beliefs, ontologies, time-spaces and lived cosmologies constitutes a person. The production of everyday life within which a person exists produces them, insofar as it provides clothing, food, economies and ecologies, gestures, rhythms, habitats and particular, meaningful notions of space and time. But it is important that these modes are not simply different. They include the affirmation of life rather than profit, communalism rather than individualism, "being" rather than undertaking, beings in relationship rather than beings in constant dichotomous divisions, in hierarchically and violently ordered fragments. These ways of being, valuing and believing have persisted in opposition to coloniality. Finally, I mark here the interest in an ethics of coalition-in-process in terms of being-being and being-in-relation, which extends and interweaves its populated base. (Lugones, 2014, p. 949)

The process of creating the video-performance experienced collectively by these women is also an exercise in an ethic of in-process coalition, of "to be by being" and "to be being in relationship". It is a *compositional action* that invests in the process of creation in a group, in a network, as a device for belonging and sharing.

Final considerations

iLhas dances/performs exclusions that are common to several women without losing the singularity of each story lived through journeys crossing over spaces. The group of performers are women of different ages, origins, social classes and races, black women, white women, from Brazilian northeastern families, who experience colonial differences in singular ways (Lugones, 2014). The video-performance exposes their resistance to gender coloniality, as Lugones (2014) points out. At the same time, the author stresses the importance of not erasing the recognition of colonial differences, for example, that black women do not experience these processes in the same way as white women, and thus states:

What I am proposing in working towards a decolonial feminism is that, as people who resist the coloniality of gender in colonial difference, we learn about each other without necessarily having privileged access to the worlds of meaning from which resistance to coloniality arises. In other words, the decolonial feminist's task begins with her seeing the colonial difference and emphatically resisting her own epistemological habit of erasing it. In seeing it, she sees the world renewed and then demands of herself to let go of her enchantment with "woman", the universal, to start learning about the others who resist colonial difference (Lugones, 2014, p. 948).

Lugones' perspective is based on intersectional feminism, which considers and criticizes the different forms of discrimination and oppression experienced by women according to their gender identity, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and other social or identity groups to which they belong. Intersectional feminism proposes a joint and integrated analysis of these categories, which influence each other, generating different experiences and reflections, taking differences into account, seeking to move away from an ideology of feminist universalism. Given this, we believe that *iLhas*, in making each woman-performer's journey available, does so from a point of view of colonial difference, as Lugones suggests, from the perspective of intersectional feminism.

By looking at each performer's trajectory, narrative and action during the video, we can identify issues that are common to all of them and specific to each of them, considering racial and

social differences. Resistance to gender coloniality is affirmed in each crossing over journey which, despite being apparently lonely, reiterates the posture of resistance of crossing over collectively. In this case, this pedestrian mobility reaffirms the subversion of the hegemonic powers that insist on increasing access barriers to maintain its privileges.

In this process of creation in a network, corpo-graphies are shared, they dance their journeys together. And so there is an exercise in belonging when in the performative act we inscribe memories, experiences, sensitivities, ways of being, in a collective belonging, of this group of women expanded to the women who preceded/initiated these struggles - mothers, grandmothers, aunts, friends, companions, etc.

In this way, the action of carrying a blank poster, despite being empty, provokes the performer and the viewer to unveil the struggles/manifestos that could be written on it. The blank poster generates a mirroring action: I imagine what could be written on it in relation to the performer carrying it and at the same time I can imagine what "I", the person watching, could say on it.

The crossing over journeys were made on foot, by bicycle, on the ferries, sometimes on the buses, sometimes waiting, sitting, leaning to balance on the rocking boats, feeling the water sway, walking between bridges, holding up and showing the paper/poster so that other people could see it, letting it fly a little with the wind. The corporealities escape, find detours, recognize the floor on which we move, which is not flat and neutral, but which reveals accidents in the terrain, cracks and fissures. And the performers, as they move, encounter the landscapes along the way, experience the inequalities in their gaze, and, as they compose with these landscapes, they also exercise imagining other possible worlds collectively, creating choreo-politics that are attentive to the ground that supports us.

Marina Guzzo is interested in the imaginaries that practicing and dancing in the city activate. Imaginaries that also confront the violence to which we are exposed. Therefore, dreaming and imagining can be a tool for struggle and change. Donna Haraway (2016) sees the importance of feminists

exercising leadership in imagination, theory and action, by saying that we need to imagine a world without capitalism, by problematizing that we often imagine the end of the world, but not the end of capitalism. It's necessary to dream to make changes.

Finally, throughout the text, as we navigate *iLhas*, we try to trace its *compositional action* as a critical-reflexive analysis of an epistemology that is active, poetically and politically, in the very event of the work. We also risk a movement of synthesis and openness in order to take future research paths. This *compositional action* is based on corporeality as its axis, the experience of the body, "the body as the locus of embodied knowledge" (Romano, 2023, p. 15), in which the poetics of movement are impregnated with corpo-graphies (Britto and Jacques, 2008), cartographies of urban life inscribed on the body, which reveal the ways of being in the world, in the cities crossed by these five women.

Thus, the performative dance practices activated in *iLhas*, in their compositions of gestures and movements in their crossing over journeys, reveal belonging as a means of collective consciousness, of the movements that constitute us, in our expressions, memories, desires and imaginaries. A relational and contextual poetics exposed in the experiences of inhabiting, dancing and performing places in order to say something about us and also about spaces, located in historical processes, fractures and dissensions.

The political dimension that runs through dance in urban spaces is expanding and blurring the boundaries between languages in which the body in performance is a place for producing knowledge and ways of being in the world (Martins, 2003).

Based on these mobilizations, we can say that the *compositional action* opened by this video-performance contemplates the dimension of a feminist stage, as proposed by Lucia Romano (2023), and points to the dimensions of imaginaries, shared subjective and objective experiences, including dreams. It assumes socio-political contexts as the *locus of the embodiment of an ethical, poetic and feminist practice from*

which the analysis of phenomena and the construction of knowledge in the performing arts are based, weaving epistemologies.

In this way, we have tried to interweave theoretical reflections and practices driven by artistic research. The reflections are still bubbling and driving new movements in which we understand that theory and practice feed off each other, and in which decolonial turns need to be increasingly cultivated and integrated into research and practice.

Through *compositional action*, we set out to navigate with and between the waters and lands of *iLhas*. Thus, we crossed over territories, situations and contexts with the women performers, we landed on quays filled with poetic journeys that, through the artistic happening, embodied the political dimension of action that moves knowledge, exposes singular and collective experiences, historical processes that trigger exclusions and the many forms of violence perpetrated by gender coloniality. It is through each performer's journey that *iLhas* tells us about the epistemic floors inscribed in both the colonial project and the resistance to it. And so we walk together in the same action that seeks, in an exercise of belonging, corpo-graphies as a choreo-political rearrangement. An act that summons ancestral memories to manifest themselves in a present time that carries with it the dream of other possible worlds.

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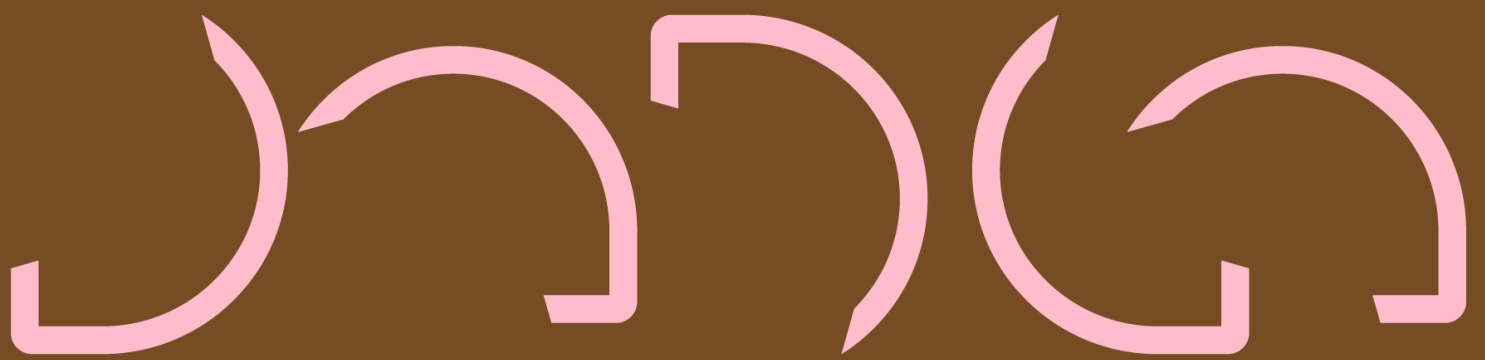
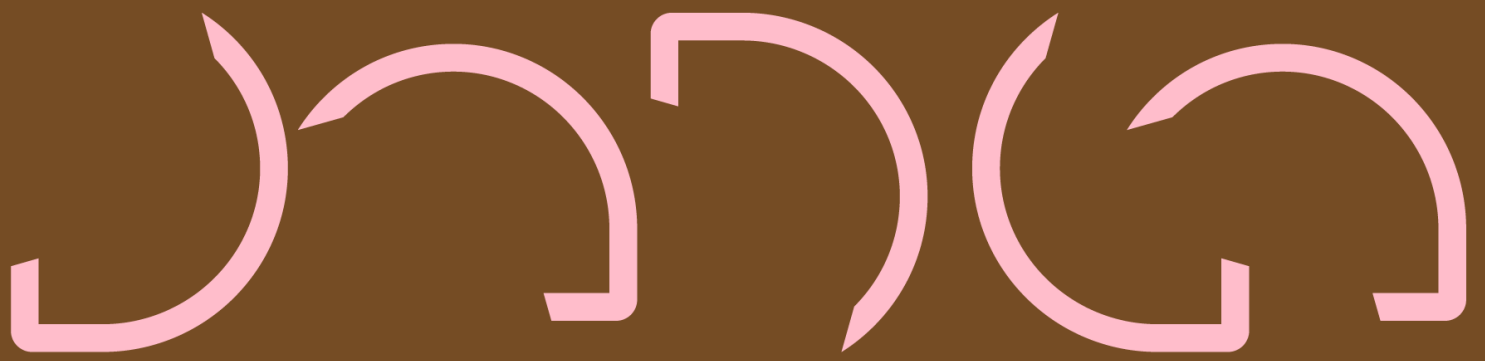
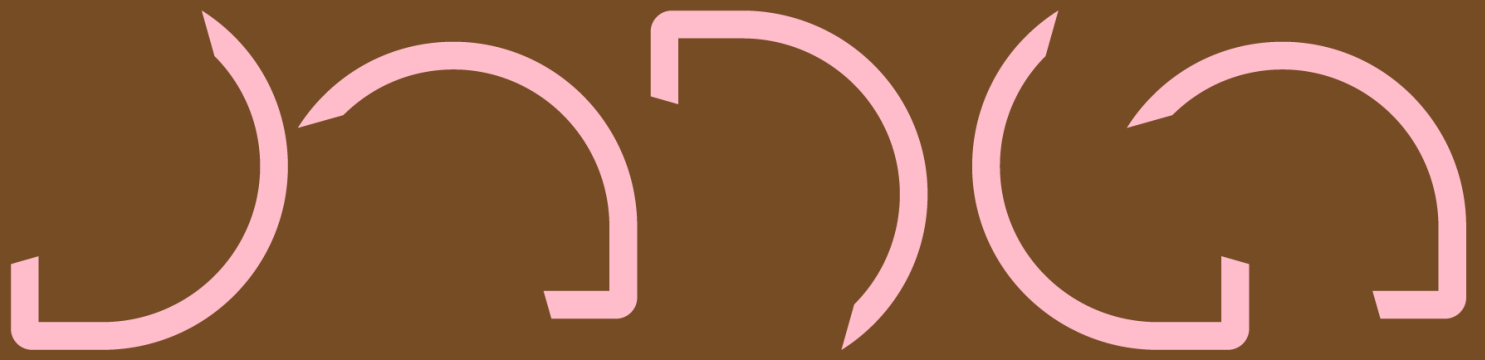
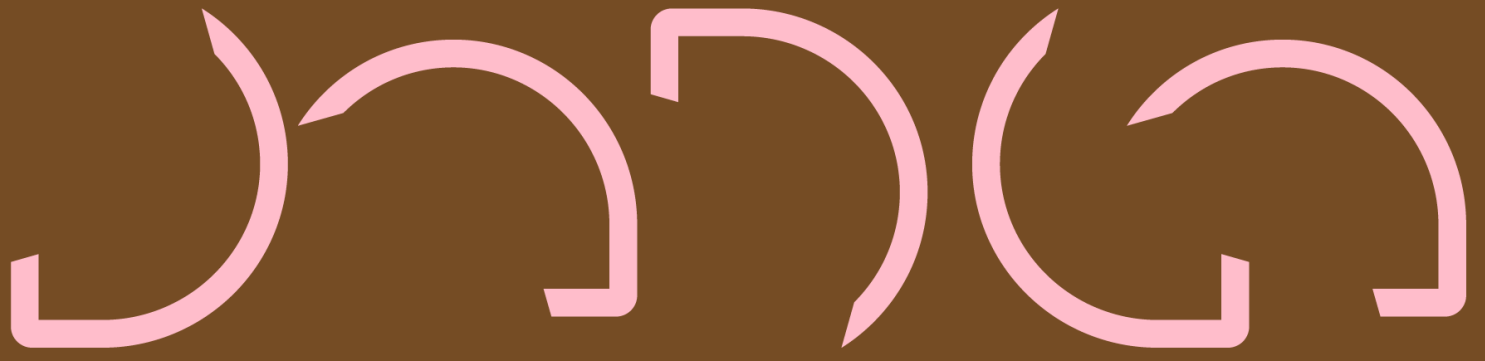
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