



## **Cartographies in Morro da Conceição: opening breaches in the body of the city**

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**ABSTRACT – Cartographies in Morro da Conceição: opening breaches in the body of the city** – The article is constituted through the drift lines of a dance research group in Morro da Conceição, located in the port area of Rio de Janeiro. The drift and the affective occupation in-with the space are affirmed as gestures-fissure in the space-time of the city. It is proposed a research in dance that weaves the edge with other knowledge and practices, in the transit zones of the body with the world, and that affectively occupies some spaces of the city, creating new body-city *graphs*.  
Keywords: **Cartography. Body-City. Dance Research. Space.**

**RÉSUMÉ – Cartographie dans le Morro da Conceição: ouvrir brèches dans le corps de la ville** – L'article est constitué par les lignes de dérive d'un groupe de recherche en danse dans le Morro da Conceição, situé dans la zone portuaire de Rio de Janeiro. La dérive et l'occupation affective dans-avec l'espace sont affirmés comme des gestes-fissure dans le espace-temps de la ville. Nous vous proposons un mode de recherche en danse qui tisse le bord avec d'autres connaissances et pratiques, dans les zones de transit des corps avec le monde, et qui occupe affectivement certains espaces de la ville, la création de nouvelles graphies corps-ville.

Mots-clés: **Cartographie. Corps-Ville. Recherche en Danse. Espace.**

**RESUMO – Cartografias no Morro da Conceição: abrir brechas no corpo da cidade** – O artigo se constitui através das linhas de deriva de um grupo de pesquisa em dança no Morro da Conceição, localizado na Zona Portuária do Rio de Janeiro. A deriva e a ocupação afetiva no-com o espaço são afirmadas como gestos-fissura no espaço-tempo da cidade. Propõe-se um modo de pesquisa em dança que se tece na borda com outros saberes e práticas, nas zonas de trânsito do corpo com o mundo, e que ocupa afetivamente alguns espaços da cidade, criando novas grafias corpo-cidade.

Palavras-chave: **Cartografia. Corpo-Cidade. Pesquisa em Dança. Espaço.**

## Introduction

This article intends to follow the wander lines<sup>1</sup> of a dance research group composed of women in Morro da Conceição, located in the Port Area of Rio de Janeiro. Following the threads-paths of the research, we can find the drift and affective occupation in-with the space as gesture-fissure in the space-time of the city and as a micropolitical action that disrupts the social organization imposed on the bodies.

Opening, tearing, cracking the space-time of the city and gestating, giving birth to new gestures and new ways to occupy spaces with feminine presence seems to us a political act, since the woman's body is culturally connected to home and passivity and suffers from alienation in relation to public life and politics. The street woman, the woman who wanders through the corners of the city is the disqualified woman, skank, streetwalker. We affirm these qualities of the woman's body as resistance to social standards that slaughter bodies in predetermined models. We affirm a dance that is done on the border with other knowledge areas, in the zones of transit and drift between the body and the world.

The Center for Research, Studies and Encounters in Dance, linked to the Undergraduate Programs in Dance of Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), proposes a way to do-think the dancing through the creation of a space for theoretical-experimental investigation organized in a collective and collaborative way, in which horizontal exchanges are created as a formative practice that favors the autonomy of the researchers. We propose to follow creative processes in dance that take place in the zone of indiscernibility between art and life, in an affective cartography of the movements of the body in the spaces inside and outside the University. We propose a research in Dance that is not engaged in presenting choreography, but which affectively occupies the spaces of the city, creating new body cartographies in the city. In this article, we will approach the moment of the research concerning the *affective occupation* of Morro da Conceição.

Throughout our theoretical derivations, the encounter with the Cartography Method as Research-Intervention was a bridge of access to theoretical contributions that understand the research as process monitoring, creation of realities and worlds and not as representation of a preexisting object and of a certain way of knowing reality. The Cartography Method

proposes research as monitoring of experiences, in which the researcher is affectively involved in the processes that always take place through connections and networks. This Method created by Brazilian researchers is highly influenced by the work of the French educator Fernand Deligny. For the educator, who worked with autistics in the French countryside, the network is a way of being. Thinking about an Arachnean way of being, between the spider and the human, he reverses the modern scientific paradigm that imposes mastery and predictable control of the experience on the act of researching. He wonders whether the spider has the project to weave the web or the web has the project to be woven. One of the characteristics of this network-being, web-being, is being outward as a dimension of being necessary. The moment when space becomes a concentration field and the formation of a network creates a kind of outside that allows the being to live, circulate and inhabit as Arachnean (Deligny, 2015).

In this experience, attention is paid to the vague, to what provides vastness and diversity. Vague as *vague*, wave in French, as waves wander on the sea surface. To wander is to walk at random. Random as co-incidence: mutual incidence of forces that create a vertex=encounter.

To wander, as Deligny (2015) points out, is an infinitive that needs no complement. The paths traveled in network constitute the network, become the network, like the Arachnean who never knows whether he/she weaves or is woven by his/her web of senses and relations. Cartography as an intervention research method proposes an inversion in the traditional sense of research, emphasizing the process, the path that traces its own goals from its movement, the path used, the movement, beyond the prescriptions and objectives given *a priori* (Passos; Barros, 2010). In this perspective, the whole research is intervention, each body interferes in space, occupies a place in space, therefore, there is no neutrality in this way of being in research. To know is thus to do-create. To know reality is to follow its process of constitution, its making, which is done with.

Cartography has been used by many artist-researchers to help to compose new ways of researching closer to art and sensitive experience, dealing with silent intensities and invisibilities, traces and marks, with error, surprise and drift, rather than truths and procedures closed in themselves as absolute meanings.

Follow up and propose creative actions and processes that take place in the indiscernible zone that connects art and life, in the transit between the macro and micropolitics of the spaces lived inside and outside the walls of the University... Inhabit the spaces affectively with women's bodies, enabling new forms of presence to be created by the encounter... Affirm the wandering through space, the walking at random but with attention, and the mapping of impressions of space... Actions that performed a political body in the city. Performing, which is an act of resistance to the imperatives of the 'performance' of the efficient productive body in the world of capital. These are some threads that guided us through the streets, churchyards, squares, corners and alleys of Morro da Conceição, making a political gesture through dance research.

The experience of wandering creates new visibilities through the *photo-graphs* that we took while walking aimlessly, and new body cartographies are drawn in the city, cartographies that constitute themselves as the very movement of wandering. Wandering through the Morro also opens space to weave new narratives through the *text-graphs* that we carry out after our affective occupations of space.

This text is woven by the reverberations of a collective body that was mixed in the landscapes of the city and found in the work of some Brazilian artists, such as Hélio Oiticica and Paulo Nazareth, a landing to affirm the gestures of drift and affective occupation in-with space as *per-forma-ação* [performance in Portuguese = per-form-action] that links art, life and politics. For this reason, we also find here some of these secretions of the body in the sex with the city, in the transit in and out, between body and space. These secretions are the *photo-graphs* and the *text-graphs* that fill the body of this writing made of flesh and asphalt, wall and sky. Text that is the offspring of an encounter of women who roam the street-body of *Santa Conceição*.

### **Fissures of Conceição: women's bodies affectively occupying spaces in the city**

The going smells like welcome. Buying things to sweeten and feed the day. Sharing. I enter the subway. Sad and tired faces on a Monday morning. I breathe in relief, feeling myself navigate the counterflow of these tired faces, this sad vastness. I feel pity. I feel it and move away so I do not suffo-

cate. I leave the subway. My body joins the crowd and once again I move away to find my own rhythm. How contagious is the crowd! On my way, the flowers on the corner are intensely and brightly colored. A speaker nearby cries the voice of Elis Regina, which says that *despite all we've done, [...] we continue to live just like our parents*. After the Sunday, March 13, 2016, haunted by the sleeping and violent giant, I agree with the words of Elis. Tears and strength to re-exist. A few more steps and a good smell of ambient smoking herb (Afro-Brazilian tradition). I cross the street and the landscape of the *morro* pulls me, invites me. I arrive at Casa Porto and meet Francisco. The people are gathering, and we are only women, and the theme of being in the world having a woman's body screams in the relationship with the loves, with the partners, with the work, with the city, with life. This is the theme. It is the collective. Feminine+collective+city=dream. Lídia announces that I have an invitation today: to see the reflecting pool and touch the skin of water through an experimentation with a plate full of water. We walk on the *morro*. I feel like sniffing the space. Today I had a sensation of going through a thin and thick film when, while talking to Bruna, we crossed the school street, up the *morro*. Today, the boys were not at the corner. In the churchyard of the window women, the sun burns, and we realize that the sun did not reach there before due to the daylight-saving time, which ended last week. The space that the *morro* would offer us was not that today. It did not welcome us, it did not receive us to stay and pause like so many times. We walked up the *morro* and arrived at Pedra do Sal. There, the space called us. I started to place the plates on the stone floor and the others joined me in my gesture. One plate on each step. We filled them with water. The slope of the ground kept the dishes stable and the water running (Image 1).



Image 1 – Photo-graph March 13, 2016.  
Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

We spread in space, each one with an object, in her dive out of space. The plate reflected my shadow, the colors of the houses on the hill, the flight of the birds and the dance of the clouds in the sky (Image 2). The little bit of water in the plate became a lake, river, sea through which my body traveled. The water washed all my skin out of me, flooded me with softness.



Image 2 – Photo-graph March 13, 2016.  
Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

I look at Thaís, who is in a different tune, in another type of vigor. She shatters a piece of clay in the water plate and then scratches the stone with what is left of the clay. The scratch of the clay opened grooves on the stone floor, as if tearing-scratching the earth, the salt stone. My body follows her scratch on the stone and the trail of water that flows down the stone. We went down, flowing on the salt stone, together, sucked, crawling, mixing with the stone, water, salt, clay. The children (boys only) are influenced and begin to slide on the stone with an overflowing joy (Image 3). We also flow on the stone, like on a playground slide. Their mothers say they need to go and the boys ask to slide one last time. They give us space

to play and then gather in the space of the stone to slide all together one last time.

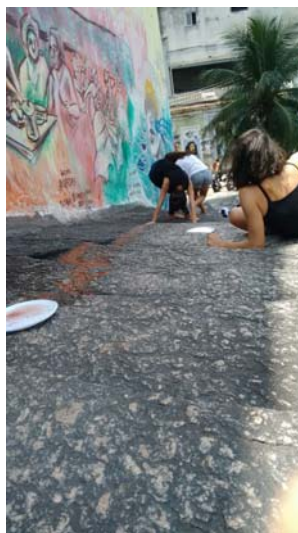


Image 3 – Photo-graph March 13, 2016.

Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

Today we slid, watery, over the space of Pedra do Sal. We left our trail-water on the stone, which repaid us with its body of presence full of memories. When I get home, I show my son the photos we took today, and Pedro says: “Pedra do Sal! It is called that because, in the past, the sea used to reach this stone and leave a mark of salt on it.” Today it has become a place to play, to pause, to slide and for some women bodies to pour out<sup>2</sup>.

Morro da Conceição is a landmark of the initial occupation of the city of Rio de Janeiro by the Portuguese. Its way of life and its architecture like the traditional Portuguese neighborhoods resisted the deep urban transformations that the city suffered over time. We find the origin of its name in the small chapel in honor of Our Lady of the Conception, which was built on the top of the hill. One of the researchers of the Center, Thaís Chillinque, lives next to the chapel, which continues to dominate the top of the Morro.

The choice for this region of the city was strongly influenced by the fact that one of the researchers lives in Morro da Conceição, which is located in the port area of the city, a space that has been undergoing major transformations over the last few years, as the city was elected host of major international events, such as the 2016 Olympic Games. The Center already had as its theme the affective occupation of the spaces and was researching the drift of the body to create new gestures, new dances and narratives

through the cartography of the body, in the relationship with other bodies and with the space in the UFRJ's Science and Culture Forum. From there came the desire to explore new paths of the city, tracking its genesis. And, since an encounter, as we said, is a co-incidence of forces, then desire and possibility met.

While inhabiting the Morro, we also find a different way of living in the city, with more air, more pause, more space to land and breathe. Our gaze would blur, and our foot would lose its balance when we found the winding geography composed of churchyards and squares and so many other corners for pause and landing. We know the residents, we listen to their stories, we eat the food they make and sell (snacks, sweets, freezies), we play with their children, know the places (Escola Sonja Kill, Observatório do Valongo, Biblioteca do Morro da Conceição, Casa Porto), move on the ground and on the wall of their habitat. We create a body on the floor of the Morro and we weave fissures and open cracks through its corners. We are women who dance when we walk through its streets, under the sky of the city and the incessant flight of the birds. Space is also time. To be in Morro da Conceição is to stick time, to be between-times, between the inaugural time and the current time of Rio. Rio that leads to the sea. The Pedra do Sal, a space that houses several cultural manifestations in the Morro, is called that because, in the past, the sea licked its body with salt. One morning in March of the year 2016, women's bodies licked the Pedra do Sal, like water from a waterfall, from a river running down stones.

In *Flesh and Stone*, Richard Sennett (2006) addresses the relationship between body and city exercised by the Greeks through the ritual of Thesmophoria. He tells us about the social differences that circumscribed specific practices to men and women, citizens and slaves in the *polis*, which were related to the temperature difference between bodies. The functioning of the body determined a functioning and value in the city. The amount of warmth in the bodies conveyed meaning and value: cool bodies were considered weak and passive, while warm bodies were strong and active. Cool bodies were the bodies of women and slaves, and the bodies of free men were warm. Richard Sennett points out how the cool bodies of Greek women created other meanings, beyond passivity and weakness, through a ritual called Thesmophoria.



The Thesmophoria, an agricultural ritual of pre-Homeric origin, was performed by the Greek women in the city when, for three days in the autumn, on the eve of planting the seeds, they gathered for the ritual. First, the women slaughtered and buried pigs – considered sacred by Greek mythology –, then removed the remains of the flesh and covered the carcasses with seeds. They returned everything to the pits, left the place, and together they stayed in shelters, where they smoked the air with willow leaves. On the third day of the ritual, they emerged, feeling with new radiance, warmth, and power.

We can say that the transformations in the body, in this ritual, had not only individual meaning, relative to self-knowledge or self-care, but also involved political gestures in the city. The experience of creating another body is also experience of building a space for this body in the city. The socially imposed physiological truth that had as its political effect the exclusion of women in the life of the city was subverted through ritualistic practice. We can say that the Greek woman, when occupying with her body of presence a space in the city, affirms a political gesture of transvaluation of the meanings socially imposed. According to Cristiane Knijnik (2009), the practice of Thesmophoria dislocated several meanings of the body in the city: occupation of the urban space by women, change of the cool passivity attributed to the female bodies into warm and active bodies, and affirmation of the multiplicity of forces that constitute the polis. Ritual that is also a performative act of the body in the city. We can thus say that the artistic, cultural, ritualistic and everyday gestures form the body of the city, have the power to transform its landscape.

Contemporary art, since the 1960s, with performance, body arts and the advancement of visual and technological media, has been questioning the premises of art and redefining its meanings. The gallery, the theater and the museum are questioned as commercial institutions. The art goes to the streets, squares, buildings and to the universities, inhabiting other spaces of the city. Art is becoming involved with political and social issues of its time and, as in the practice of Thesmophoria, creating political gestures in the city, intervening in the urban space.

In the 1960s, especially in the United States, many artists committed to experimentation began to question the museum and the institutionalization of art and began to occupy other spaces with their artistic experiments.

This occupation became the artistic movement *land art*, an art of the landscape. According to Kátia Canton (2009), from the *land art*, the dialogue of the artists with the public space gradually expanded and changed. In the dance scene, this experimentation off the stage began to happen also during this period.

One of the concerns that united us in the Center was the interest in a dance that could be danced anywhere, without the need, *a priori*, of costumes, scenery, lighting or soundtrack. We were interested in composing an ordinary dance that was not limited to choreographic composition, a dance that was not discerned from life, a step-walk that could not be distinguished from a step-choreography. In addition, as researchers in dance, we were excited to leave the classroom and jump the walls of the University, we wanted to be in the street, dance in the street and/or other public spaces. Our bodies wanted to dance to life, to dance in the street, to act with the body in the city. Gradually we understood that our small gesture of wandering aimlessly and with no destination in the streets with our dancing bodies of women was a political act. Being a woman who wanders, who dances in the street and who is adrift and becoming with the space of the city seemed to be a choreography that made sense to us.

### **Body-graphy: body, art and politics in the city**

Paola Berenstein (2002) states that the space in movement is at the same time the space of the *ginga* and *ginga* of the space, which is also the body *ginga*. She says that walking through the alleys of the *favelas* is an experience of singular perception that creates a unique rhythm of moving through space, the sensual *ginga* that the labyrinthine sinuosity of the *favela* presents us. We can say then that the *ginga* is, therefore, a political act of subversion to the straight and objective paths that diminish the space for chance, for the pause and for the encounter in the contemporary urban experience. Going through the *ginga* spaces – the sinuous and labyrinthine spaces – implies a new rhythm, a new occupation of space, a new presence that allows us to lose ourselves, to enter a wandering experience. This movement transforms the space of the body and the space of the city, intertwining body-city. The space in movement is sensory space that, before being space, is a way to be traveled. Thus, we connect with the space of the

Morro, its flesh marks our flesh, its labyrinthine sinuosity potentiates our body which drifts through its entrails.

In the Brazilian art scene, we have, in the figure of Hélio Oiticica, an important landing to think about the relation between art, body and politics in the city. Oiticica was a cartographer, a resident of the southern region of Rio de Janeiro, desirous of mixing with the people, an intellectual desirous of being *disintellectualized* through dance, not any dance, but the dance of the people, of the *morro*, samba, *ginga* dance, of improvisation, body surrender to the rhythm of the environment, a less individual body, a more collective body. Oiticica (2011) affirms his encounter with dance as a search for the direct expressive act, the imminence of that act, the immersion in rhythm, in which the intellect is obscured by a force that is both individual and collective, a force that is made with the encounter between bodies. In the *ginga*, in the expansion of the body in the body of the city, a collective body is created. The artist used to call his friend Lygia Pape to go out wandering around with her beetle around the city, creating a body-geography of the city. The encounter with Morro da Mangueira, with the sinuous, labyrinthine architecture of the *favela*, the encounter with the samba, with the heroes of marginalization, more and more, made the artist claim that “the museum is the world”.

For Oiticica, this experience makes art an environmental art. The dance and the relationship with samba and the Morro gave the artist “[...] the exact idea of what is the creation through the bodily act, the continuous transformability” (Oiticica, 2011, p. 78). Hence the need to create such environmental spaces, as in *Tropicália*, that stimulate this creative act in the participant (not a spectator anymore, but an agent participating in the work). With the creation of the *Parangolés*, especially with the performative act occurred in the gardens of the Museum of Modern Art (MAM), in 1965, during the exhibition *Opinião 65*, Oiticica affirms this relation of the body as presence, intervening in the space of the city. On that day, Oiticica invades, with his friends from Mangueira, the Gardens of the MAM, making everyone inside the museum join the performance. According to Wally Salomão (2003), it is an early attitude addressing a problematic that strongly instigates international discussions at the end of the twentieth century. For Oiticica (2011), the museum was not in crisis, the museum is a crisis. In 1966, he formulated in his *Programa Ambiental* that “the Museum is the

World”, it is the daily experience, the programs for “environmental appropriations”, the transformable places or works in the streets, linking art to life, body to city. For Oiticica this gesture was...

[...] the true definitive link between creative manifestation and collectivity – there is something like an exploration of something unknown: we find ‘things’ that we see every day but which we never thought to look for. It is the search for oneself in the thing – some kind of communion with the environment (Oiticica, 2011, p. 83, translated from Portuguese).

Oiticica, with his intuitive presence, inaugurated this poetic-political-bodygraphic experience of the city in Rio, London, New York, drawing his art on the body-world. The artist dared and used the body to mingle with the people, bringing the theme of the *morro*, the art of the periphery, the issue of elitisation and intellectualization of art, affirming the marginal experience as a re-existence to imposed social paradigms. The works of Oiticica question, from the incorporation to his art of sensory materials coming from the experience in the *morro*, preconceived ideas that link the poverty and the race to a naturalization of what is on the margin, which is different and does not fit in the social values, as dangerous and worthless. Here in Brazil, during the military dictatorship, this idea of the *internal enemy* of the process of nation development was intimately linked to all of those who went against the imposed standards. When Hélio Oiticica honors Cara de Cavalo with his Bólido Caixa 18 CARA DE CAVALO, he litters our coded view of the world, makes us see in the number 1 enemy of morality, order and decency, a hero, like a Robin Hood of the *favela* who imposes a new order, whose *ginga* and dribbles help to survive in the savage capitalism that swallows and accentuates the differences. The same applies when Clarice Lispector shows in living flesh what she feels with every shot in Mineirinho: “The thirteenth shot murders me - because I am the other. Because I want to be the other” (Lispector 1999, p. 124). The anthropophagic experience of Clarice, becoming-marginal of Hélio, to be on the edge between the being and the world. According to Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2008), we must become Robin Hood, loot to give away. For the anthropologist, this is also an anthropophagic act: take from the rich, pulling from Europe and the US and give to the global peripheries.

This *aesthetic* approach to art, in the words of Rancière (2005), is a sharing of the sensible that creates a recombination of the visible landscape,

the relation between doing, being, seeing and saying, art and politics. This sharing is a frame of time and space, of the visible and the invisible, of the word, and the noise that defines the place and what is at stake in politics, in the common life of cities. The work *Tropicália* by Oiticica is an icon of this valorization of our culture as anthropophagic experience, in which global and local, natural and artificial, body and space, rite and art, art and life, art and politics, singular and collective, everything is mixed and the border lines blur. Inspired by his wanderings in the alleys and *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro, in the *ginga* of the *morro*, Oiticica creates this “environment work” that inserts the spectator as participant of the work. Work that only takes place when the participant enters the environmental space of the work and mixes with this space, waking up in his/her body multi-sensorial experiences. The intuition of Oiticica brings several reflections about the “intellectualization” of life and the work of art, about life in the city, which anesthetizes the body, the relation of the work of art as a commodity and final good. In addition, it inserts the aesthetic experience in life and the spectator in the experimentation that only exists when he/she inhabits the space of the work, being agent and work-happening, being participant. When the art critic Sérgio Duarte wanted to know about Lygia Clark’s work phase (2014) called *Estruturação do Self*, after his long stay in France in the late 1970s, he had to go to his apartment in Copacabana, take off his clothes, and lie down on the “big mattress”. Art that is not to be shown, but lived.

In the current scenario, the work of the artist Paulo Nazareth (s. d.) and his experience of wandering through the cities of Brazil, America and the world also help us to think about the relationship between art and city, body and politics, through current issues that dialogue with the local and global, downtown and periphery, contemporary and regional. We can affirm the artist as a contemporary *flâneur* who creates a cartography of the present and a body receptacle of experiences, sensations, memories, posing questions that blur the specialties of art. The kind of art that addresses the issue of borders in a globalized world, the issue of the colonized peoples of Latin America, of the mestizo people of America, of the relationship with the inhabiting of the body in the city in the contemporary world, the force of savage capitalism in our country, etc. We can affirm his work as a cartography of wandering, which creates an affective map with the places where the artist’s body crosses and is crossed.

Paulo Nazareth (s. d.), wanderer, narrates his travels in papers that become art, such as cordel leaflets. The artist collects traces, finds people, establishes relationships, draws affective threads between geographical borders, allows the body to be marked by impressions, mixes with space and gains meaning in the drift and movement of being marked by the world. Nazareth's goal is a line, a path, a movement of going, of walking as a collector who collects stories, people, things, memories. He walks barefoot from the south to the north, from the colonized world to the colonizing world, reversing the world map, taking the dust of places with his feet, letting his flesh be imprinted over the world with his footsteps, leaving footprints and carrying dust from the places on the soles of his feet, taking all the dust from Latin America to be washed in some corner of the United States<sup>3</sup>. He walks to get rid of the idea of permanence. The experience of weaving networks on the map stratified by borders that are not merely geopolitical in the globalized world. Like an Arachnean, wandering, he weaves webs, relationship networks that abolish boundaries, connecting art and life.

We also write after wandering, we write while we wander. We walk, and our skin meets the texture of space, then we weave new layers of time, new body films. Our dance is made with the space: sometimes being just a walk, sometimes a stop, sometimes reading a text in the square or dancing for the women at the window, sometimes flowing down the salt stone. By wandering unintentionally and with attention to the present moment and the space between bodies, we widen the fabric of time, paint new colors and textures in space and create at every step a new body. We wander to affirm the body in motion as an ethical, aesthetic and political exercise. We create graphies of the body in the city by letting the space graph the body during the wandering, and the body graphing the space during the writing. The writing becomes a gesture of thought, unfolding from the body that has wandered through the cities of the world. Walking and wandering, we try to capture how each everyday situation can gain new rhythm. Wandering, every bit of time creates fissures and undoes the rigid durations and hard boundaries.

We see in the work of Paulo Nazareth and Hélio Oiticica, among other artists, an inspiration for our wandering. Inspiration that helps us think about the relationship between art and city, body and politics. As you wan-

der around the city, the body breaks out of an internalized self and then can accept in its skin the strangeness, the difference, the not-knowing. The wandering makes art a daily element, which weaves trust networks between bodies in the city. The artistic experimentation is taken as producing meaning as sensation, concept and direction and not just aesthetic creation. According to Canton (2009), the problems involving large cities cannot be *solved* by artistic creations, but affection can create a communication channel between persons who share the same urban space and the same political and social context. Art can intervene, create space-time fissures, create spaces of openness in the congestion of the senses, in the indifference and intolerances to alterities and inequalities. Art can open spaces to breathe and pause, it can make thinking dance and create a common body, a collective body for a sharing of sensitive experience in the cities of the world, affirming with Oiticica that the “Museum is the World”.

Our gestures of wandering around the *Morro*, with no prior intention or prediction and with much provision and profusion of matters, affirm themselves as a political gesture of opening cracks in the space-time of the city. The body pursued the desire to find the flashes of the fireflies, as in the words of Didi-Huberman (2011), creating small elevations in the city.

### **Occupying Spaces is a *per-forma-ação***

*About being-woman and walking on the streets of the pier*

The days weigh on the Wonder City that awaits the Olympic Games. A city that screams. If it could speak, it could tell us so many stories that the media speed would not be able to handle. Today the alley that takes to the first ascent to Conceição is damaged: it does not embrace the bodies of the homeless, nor does it reserve space for street vendors. Today, only one street vendor resists before the municipal guard, who, at least today, uses words, not force. I arrive at our port and wait for Laura and Thaís. Bruna is on her way. Lídia is sick. I talk to Francisco and, in a shared astonishment, we talk about the police action in the Occupation of the Department of Education of the State of Rio de Janeiro (SEDUC). Nothing had been disclosed on the news by that time, but we knew that the oppressive violence of the State is acting and trying to undermine the revolutionary force of our youth. The girls arrive, and we talk about this gray cloud above us. The

same cloud that weighs, brings the light of days. Thaís tells us that, yesterday, she took a walk through the streets of the pier. As a resident of the port region, she witnesses the paradoxes of the changes in the city. Now it is good to walk there, the sea breeze arrives, the birds can dance in the wind, but these streets do not shelter those people forsaken by the social order anymore. Thaís invites us to start our cartographic expedition through the pier. I think on the gesture of *grabreleasing*<sup>4</sup> that we propose to do once again. I think and Laura points to a white stick lost at Casa Porto, and our bodies become in tune with the shared gesture and we continue *grabreleased* in the streets of the pier. The movements need to be aware of the inside (interlaced space of the relationship) and of the outside (the movements taken from the drifts thorough the pier). The whole body itself also needs to *grabrelease*: the preconceived ideas, the determined directions; and it floats. The body captures the space and creates a space in relation, in composition. We stay side by side to weave a time-temple one-with-the-others. Everything that the eye sees, it sees-with, we form a body-with. Time is extended, and space is drifting. We are a web in motion. It feels like my body has multiplied its directions in space and sees-feels the flight of birds, the sea breeze, the walls of buildings, everything touching and transforming us, going through us in a multi-sensory *sex* in which, in fact, #tamojunto# (Image 4).



Image 4 – Photo-graph of June 6, 2016.  
Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

We are so close together that our bodies move the space. We are all women. We are three women with the strength of a crowd. We walk through the pier and the only other woman who shares that place with us is a woman who works in one of the buildings already opened. We are three grabbedreleased women and many men are astonished by our gesture: at



first, they look at the women, and when they see the object that entwines us, they look at us again in a long and strange gesture. We are only women in a paradoxical gesture that originally was for nothing, to wander, but that, after the gaze of the construction worker on the pier, takes on a displacement tone: no, it is not just women wandering alone by the pier, they carry an object for nothing, to wander, they are together, intertwined, and grabbedreleased (Image 5).



Image 5 – Photo-graph of June 6, 2016.

Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

We found a way to the *Morro* and we went there. It is beautiful to see, from the place where we are, Conceição presents itself beautiful with its houses. It calls us, and we follow. We go through a new path. We pass through the works of the Wonder city and once again we found the misplaced gaze of men who were always trying to see our asses, but now look at the stick we grabrelease. We find a building that is a children's elementary school, although it looks like a small dark prison. We look through the hole in the gate and a man came out. He looked like the inspector and also a madman in the asylum. This man could be a madman from an asylum, a convict, but, he was all this and a school inspector. Thaís asks him if the school is occupied by students on strike. The man did not understand at first and he said that for health, education and culture “there is no money when there is no profit”. I say that it seems to be an elementary school, it should not be a state school, thus it is not on strike. He looks at me in the midst of his disjointed screams and says, *Exactly. There is no such thing here. They are small children.* He seems, at the same time, to be outraged and to support the dominant speech. A mother and a child come out, the mother smiles and the image does not stick: her smile and the darkness of that place. We left with a strong feeling that a window opened for us in that

scene. A window that shows the contradictions of our present time. I now understand the drift path of Foucault's (2013) thought for so long devoted to disciplinary institutions to, at the end of his life, gift us with his text on "The Utopian Body, The Heterotopias". This text makes so much sense here-now. We need to ventilate the institution, occupy with affection to remove the disciplinary moths that annihilate life. We need to take care more than to break, to occupy with love to create new spaces within the space itself.

We continued to Conceição...

grabbedreleased with the strength it calls... (Image 6)



Image 6 – Photo-graph of June 6, 2016.

Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

There our body becomes lighter, the tension in the eyes of others is no longer present. Only Conceição with its memories of stone, floor, wall, squares, stairs, curves to come along with us. There, we can even venture to gather herbs for a tea (Image 7) and rest our skin and breathe smoothly and find a gap in space... Tear the film of space and ours too, to tear ourselves into an encounter.



Image 7 – Photo-graph of June 6, 2016.

Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

There, at Conceição, our *grabbedreleased* journey was seen by school girls. Two girls shout at others from afar: “They are walking holding a stick. Three women holding a stick. HaHaHa.”

Grabbedreleased women.

In the end, a break for a tea with an herb picked out of the walls of Conceição<sup>5</sup>.

In our research, we understand our doing as an action of affective occupation of the body in-with space. The drifts and wandering around the corners of the *Morro* triggered in us two cartographic gestures, namely: photo-graphs<sup>6</sup>, which are image records made during the experiment; and text-graphs, which are texts written after the occupation gesture. We understand that our gestures perform worlds, creating new visibilities through photographs and new narratives through text-graphs.

Our drift departed from Casa Porto, a space that is a partner of research, located at the base of the *Morro*, in Largo da Prainha. At Casa Porto, we read, receive partners, talk about drifting, draw on the map of the region our route in the previous meeting. We do not stretch, we exercise the contraction of the collective, paying attention to being together. Our muscles help us to create an opening body to see, hear and feel with all our skin the curves, reliefs, colors, sounds and textures of the *Morro*.

Our action is done in acts, presence, in a relationship of intensive influence with the space around. Our bodies do not draw narratives, or tell stories. Our route is neither planned nor prepared. Our drift follows the calls of *Conceição* curves. We can say that it is the movement of the drift that creates a body in a performance state and not the opposite. The drift separates us from the limits of the name and personal history at the same moment in which it calls the intensive presence of the body. In our research, narratives are creations *a posteriori* and always narrate a shared experience.

Here, we address performance as a field of the arts that is in line with our actions. We are not performers, but dance researchers-artists who understand dance beyond choreography, affirming new *core-grafias* (body and writing in Greek) as political gestures in the city. We are interested in the performance studies, however, for activating new intensities and states of

body and affirming the indiscernibility between art and life, body and politics.

Performing here is thus to inhabit a threshold space between subjectivity and the world. Performing is to inhabit a present moment, where, at the same time, we are creature and creator, offering our body to an influence dynamic in search for the creation of a common body, a public body, as in the *parangolés* of Oiticica or in works like *casa é o corpo* by Lygia Clark, in which merely watching is doing, the public is a participant. Performance sets the body as a space for experimentation, investigation and creation. For Renato Cohen (2013), the performance lies in a limit-space between visual and performing arts. Performance, as an art of rupture, is in line with the advent of modernity and the beginning of the twentieth century, when experimentation with the sensitive body strengthens. For Cohen, performance is an art of intervention that intends to cause a sensible transformation in the audience.

Diana Taylor (2013) explains performance as a political act, mapping several experiences in Latin America, in which performance was linked to issues related to differences, inequalities and social minorities, affirming a character of political resistance in the performance act. She wonders whether the performance disappears or persists, being transmitted through a non-archival system that she called repertoire, transmitting memories, making political claims and manifesting a sense of identity of a group. According to Taylor (2013), if performance did not convey knowledge, only the scholars and powerful could claim the memory of social facts. The author thus addresses relations between the incorporated performance, the production of knowledge and the social and political changes.

Performance is considered as an upheaval, as a way to intervene in political scenarios, as vital transference acts, conveying knowledge, memory and meanings. Taylor points out that performance emerges as a research theme in the 1970s related to the social and disciplinary upheavals that shook the academy in the late 1960s: the feminist movement, the Black Power movement, reaction to dictatorships in Latin America, and so on. According to the author, the performance studies emerge to attenuate the course divisions between anthropology and theater, “[...] facing the social dramas, liminality and staging as ways to escape from structuralist notions of normality” (Taylor, 2013, p. 32). We have here a larger view of perfor-

mance that inserts it into a necessarily political scenario. Through this view, the performance works as a mode of transmission of a traumatic memory, unfolding in file and repertoire of shared cultural images, at the same time that it transforms them. For the author, as well as trauma, the performative protest inscribes itself, in an unexpected and importunate way, in the social body, and its strength depends on its power to provoke recognition and reaction in the here and now, instead of retelling something that has passed. She insists on the presence and occupation of space: one can only participate by being there. And being there or here in presence then marks not only the space of the performance, but also the collective environment that addresses everyone and that affects us all and makes us (all) be here creating a body of collective presence, establishing small upheavals.

To affectionately occupy Morro da Conceição is to leave open this time wound that is there in a past that still resists in the current urban landscape, in a moment in which the real estate speculation and the expansion of large companies in the port zone modify, often violently, the lives of its residents. On the other hand, to be in this space of the city, affectively occupying its landscape with our bodies, is to be here and to affirm the memory of the place of trance, transit and exchange that was and still is that region of the city. The region that received the African slaves in the time of Colonial Brazil, that receives refugees from other countries and also from the city itself in search of cheaper housing and that receives us every Monday in the morning.

With our occupations while drifting through the *Morro*, we make a *per-forma-ação*: an action that performs worlds. To perform is to create out of a present body, lurking, waiting, like a feline before the jump. Performing is a feline behavior, like that of cats spreading across the *Morro*. For that, one must have a posture to listen with all his/her skin the movements of the world, a posture of a body that waits and is created in the interval between the body and the wall. To inhabit this way the present moment, the instant-now of the movement. To perform is to access the plane of movement: an absolute movement with neither subject nor form. The movement that creates the performance “[...] does not belong to the body, it goes through the body, it embodies, allows a new tone. The body appears as an effect of the movement that crosses it and co-composes it” (Torralba, 2015, p. 14). Thus, this is our body drifting dance. Here we cannot distinguish

the movement of the body from its dance, from its gesture of occupying space with affection.

From this perspective of performance, art and politics go through each other. The fight meets the rite and the party, and every street laughs and dreams a new world to come, producing small upheavals. It is about keeping an eye on the fireflies, as Didi-Huberman (2011) used to say, to the flashes, the upheavals. To look through the gaps of time, between past and future, and compose a body of presence like that of fireflies, forming a community enlightened with desire and dances in the dark of the night, producing flashes-drifts, describing drift lines in the dark, not being content with the light of the Society of the Spectacle, which obscures the fleeting and intermittent delicacy of the fireflies.

One has to go to the fireflies to see their flashing lights drawing dances in the night. For us, it was the courage to go and let our body adrift that allowed us to *dance* in the streets of the *morro* and affirm small upheavals every Monday in Morro da Conceição. Our per-forma-ção opened a crack in the space-time between our flesh and the stone of the city, creating new gestures, new narratives, bringing memories, creating dislocations in eyes accustomed to always look at a landscape the same way.

To wander the winding streets of the *Morro*, filling the space with the body of a woman; to propose a dance and a way of research in dance that can happen beyond the limits of the stage, the classroom and the walls of the University; to affirm the body-city relationship as political action through the affective occupation in-with the space; these were threads that we drew while drifting, creating a web of images, sensations and narratives.

We created a courage body to bring the dance that moves in our bodies to the street, opening many streams in Conceição. Our affective actions ripped the body of the city, created furrows and fissures in its asphalt body, just as the streets created marks on our bodies, they watered pieces of ground from the city of Oxum (Image 8).



Image 8 – Photo-graph of November 30, 2015.  
Source: photo by Ruth Torralba.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The term *wander lines* comes from the work of the French educator Fernand Deligny, who, in the 1960s and 1970s, coordinated a work with autistic children in southern France. The wander lines referred to the paths taken by the children who were treated freely instead of confined in specialized spaces, the widespread practice until then. Deligny and his team tracked these lines and recorded them through videos and mapping. In relation to the traveled and occupied space, the autistic created a way of being in the world, in which the lines constituted an affective map in his/her relationship with the world.
- <sup>2</sup> Cartography of Morro da Conceição written on March 14, 2016.
- <sup>3</sup> Performance carried out by the artist between March and November 2011, in which he walked barefoot from Brazil to the United States, passing through several countries in Latin America. At some moments, the artist had to use transportation, such as a boat, but most of the route was done on foot and barefoot, in order to get the dust from the southern ground to be washed somewhere in the USA.
- <sup>4</sup> This term was used to define a gesture in which we are in a certain way of contact with the object and with the bodies of contact in which we *grab* and *release* at the same time, affirming a noncontradictory way of being in the relation with the beings and things of the place.
- <sup>5</sup> Cartography held on June 6, 2016.
- <sup>6</sup> In addition to the photographs, some videos were made by research collaborators, but, in this text, we only stick to the photographic pictures.



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