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VOICE OVER

MAGAZINE FOR ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSE

8

PEDAGOGIES

MAY 2022

WITH
**CESARE
PIETROIUSTI**



VER CULTURE_VOICE OVER BAD AI_VOICE OVER MONUMENTS_VOICE OVER

MAY. 2022



ER INSTITUTION_VOICE OVER REALITY_VOICE OVER LANGUAGE_VOICE OVER





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“ When everyone in the classroom, teacher and students, recognizes that they are responsible for creating a learning community together, learning is at its most meaningful and useful.”

EDITORIALE

DONATA LAZZARINI

I recently told the students that Pierre Huyghe declared that “art is not just exposing something to someone, but exposing someone to something”, referring to how attention has spread in art practice to what can really change in the viewer, in those who participate, when the involvement of those who are no longer just observers, become the subject of the work (or of the operation) of art. It therefore becomes important for students to be stimulated to the theoretical-political reflections necessary to address the major issues of our time, which means expanding the concept of sculpture into real life by concretely addressing social and environmental issues such as the climate emergency, the Capitalocene, and gender studies.

Art encompasses all aspects of life, I would of course add the metaphysical ones, so the frequent question we ask is not just how art can be taught in life but rather how and what art can teach life.

The relationship between art and art pedagogies is in fact a central theme in the research of the School of Sculpture of the Brera School of Fine Arts, and we have been engaged for quite some time in conducting a reflection that has already begun in 2018 2019 with MI VIDA EXPERIMENT; with Real Presence we have proposed a conference on the project started in 2001 in Serbia by Biljana Tomic and Dobrila Denegri, followed by a day of studies on the relationship between the city and didactics, particularly on the social function of didactics as a means of possible insertion in the world of work and art, together with a heterogeneity of students who have experienced theory and practice, shared classrooms, active collaboration with the teachers, all of which have flowed not only into exhibitions, workshops, publications, but into a wonderful human experience.

We have also collaborated with *fuoriregistro*, a magazine on art and pedagogy that investigates the relationship between education and contemporary art, on which the

students worked, together with Maria Rosa Sossai, on the first issue (*Feminissmmmm-Vai pure* whose thematic core was the sentimental relationship seen from a gender perspective) and on the second issue on the Common Good as a systematic objective for creating empathy in the various areas of relationships. This year, together with Paola Gaggiotti of *fuoriregistro*, the project *Da casa a casa* was created with the students and guests of the Jannacci home, which will be exhibited at the Boschi di Stefano Museum in Milan.

In the wake of these experiences, last year we also began a fruitful collaboration with the *Museo delle Periferie* in Rome, participating in *Iperfestival*, investigating the relationship between the centre and the periphery from many points of view, which was followed by a special issue of *Voice Over*.

<https://iperfestival.it/?s=Brera>

<https://iperfestival.it/?s=voice+over>

Together with the students we want to develop a creative pedagogical thought that rejects all forms of discrimination because art can be a form that creates well-being for all.

This year we are taking part in the Biennale Sessions on 23 April at the *Sala d'Armi* in the Arsenale, reflecting on the theme “Art and Art Education” with Maria Rosa Sossai, researcher in the field of artistic practices and education policies, Camilla Seibezzi, coordinator of the Master in Art and Cultural Heritage Management and civil rights activist, Massimo Mazzone, Alberto Gianfreda, Roberto Galeotti, Cecilia Guida, artists and teachers involved in the teaching of cross-border art, and then the following day we will meet Gian Maria Tosatti, the artist representing Italy in this Venice Biennale.

Together with the students we want to develop a creative pedagogical thought that rejects all forms of discrimination because art can be a form that creates well-being for all.

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AIRIT OGRAPHY

RICARDO MARIN VIADEL INTERVIEW BY ROSANNA GUIDA

After attending your lecture at the Macro Asilo Museum in Rome, I would like to ask you a few questions for a more in-depth discussion: What does the term a/r/tography mean?

Dopo aver partecipato alla sua lectio magistralis al Museo Macro Asilo di Roma vorrei porle alcune domande per un approfondimento per esempio: Cosa significa il termine a/r/tography? **Del texto de tu lectio magistralis podría extraer las respuestas a algunas preguntas de la entrevista que me gustaría hacerte, por ejemplo: ¿Qué significa el término a/r/tography?**

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A/R/T/OGRAPHY

(EN) — The term A/R/Tography was devised by Professor Rita Irwin of the University of British Columbia, Canada, in 2003, to indicate the intersection of three fields of knowledge and professional activities that characterise teachers of art and art education: art, research, education. The first three letters of the term A/R/Tography, separated by a slash, correspond to the initials of the three English words [Artist] “artist”, [Research] “researcher”, [Teacher] “teacher”. In English, these three letters make up the word ART “art” (<https://artography.edcp.educ.ubc.ca>).

(IT) — Il termine A/R/Tografia è stato ideato dalla professoressa Rita Irwin della University of British Columbia, Canada, nel 2003, per indicare l’intersezione tra tre campi di conoscenza e attività professionali che caratterizzano gli insegnanti d’arte e di educazione artistica: arte, ricerca, educazione. Le prime tre lettere del termine A/R/Tography, separate da una barra, corrispondono alle iniziali delle tre parole inglesi [Artist] “artista”, [Research] “ricercatore”, [Teacher] “insegnante”. In inglese, queste tre lettere compongono la parola ART “arte” (<https://artography.edcp.educ.ubc.ca>).

(ES) — El término A/R/Tography fue ideado por la profesora Rita Irwin de la Universidad de British Columbia, Canadá, en 2003, para indicar la intersección entre tres campos de conocimiento y actividades profesionales que caracterizan a los profesores de arte y educación artística: arte, investigación, educación. Las tres primeras letras del término A/R/Tography, separadas por una barra, corresponden a las iniciales de las tres palabras inglesas [Artist] “artista”, [Research] “investigador”, [Teacher] “profesor”. En inglés estas tres letras componen la palabra ART “arte” (<https://artography.edcp.educ.ubc.ca>).

RG — What distinguishes an a/r/tographic work?

RG — Quali sono le caratteristiche che distinguono un’opera a/r/tografica?

RG — ¿Cuáles son las características que distinguen una obra a/r/tográfica?

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(EN) — An a/r/tographic project or action involves, in a balanced way, three components:

A. artistic creation in any speciality of the visual arts, music, literature, dance or theatre; **B.** scientific research, as currently practised in the human and social sciences; **C.** education or teaching in any context, whether scholastic or social.

Although each of these three actions has its distinct professional status (there are artists, researchers and teachers by profession) and the result of each produces different things (works of art, scientific theories and learning), which are socially classified in distinct institutions, it is also true that the boundaries between each of these professional actions, in many cases, can be quite permeable. a/r/tography was born to focus on the nexus between the person of the artist, the researcher and the teacher. What if instead of continuing to force the differences between creative artistic activities, scientific research activities and educational activities, we tried to unify them? What could the arts bring to social science and humanities research and, more specifically, to educational research? This question has challenged some of the most deeply rooted prejudices in academic culture, initiating many debates on the various epistemological assumptions underlying the social and institutional classification of knowledge: the sciences are objective and the arts subjective; the sciences produce testable theories and support effective technologies, while the arts provide aesthetic delights and produce refined emotions; the sciences seek truth and the arts beauty. As long as these assertions remain unquestioned, it is not possible to seek an encounter between scientific research and artistic creation. (Marìn Viadél and Roldano, 2017).

One of the remarkable consequences of Arts Based Research, and thus also of a/r/tographic approaches, is the academic recognition of a plurality of languages and ways of representing the data, processes and conclusions of educational research. The result of an a/r/tographic project is published both through written texts (including poetic texts and theatrical dialogues) and through visual materials: photographs, photo essays, performances and videos.

(IT) — Un progetto o un'azione a/r/tografica comporta, in modo equilibrato, tre componenti:

A. creazione artistica in qualsiasi specialità delle arti visive, musica, letteratura, danza o teatro; **B.** la ricerca scientifica, come si pratica attualmente nelle scienze umane e sociali; **C.** l'educazione o l'insegnamento in qualsiasi contesto, sia scolastico che sociale.

Anche se ognuna di queste tre azioni ha il suo distinto status professionale (ci sono artisti, ricercatori e insegnanti di professione) e il risultato di ognuna di esse produce cose diverse (opere d'arte, teorie scientifiche e apprendimento), che sono socialmente classificate in istituzioni distinte, è anche vero che i confini tra ciascuna di queste azioni professionali, in molti casi, possono essere abbastanza permeabili. a/r/tography è nato per mettere a fuoco il nesso tra la persona dell'artista, del ricercatore e dell'insegnante. E se invece di continuare a forzare le differenze tra attività creative artistiche, attività di ricerca scientifica e attività educative, cercassimo di unificarle? Cosa potrebbero portare le arti alla ricerca nel campo delle scienze sociali e umane e, più specificamente, alla ricerca educativa? Questa domanda ha sfidato alcuni dei pregiudizi più radicati nella cultura accademica, avviando molti dibattiti sui vari presupposti epistemologici che sono alla base della classificazione sociale e istituzionale della conoscenza: le scienze sono oggettive e le arti soggettive; le scienze producono teorie dimostrabili e supportano tecnologie efficaci, mentre le arti forniscono delizie estetiche e producono emozioni raffinate; le scienze cercano la verità e le arti la bellezza. Finché queste affermazioni rimangono indiscusse, non è possibile cercare l'incontro tra la ricerca scientifica e la creazione artistica. (Marìn Viadél e Roldano, 2017).

Una delle notevoli conseguenze dell'Arts Based Research, e quindi anche degli approcci a/r/tografici, è il riconoscimento accademico di una pluralità di linguaggi e modi di rappresentare i dati, i processi e le conclusioni della ricerca educativa. Il risultato di un progetto a/r/tografico viene pubblicato sia attraverso testi scritti (inclusi testi poetici e dialoghi teatrali) che attraverso materiali visivi: fotografie, saggi fotografici, performance e video.

(ES) — Un proyecto o acción a/r/tográfica implica, de manera equilibrada, tres componentes:

A. la creación artística en cualquier especialidad de las artes visuales,

música, literatura, danza o teatro; **B.** la investigación científica, tal como se practica actualmente en las ciencias humanas y sociales; **C.** la educación o la enseñanza en cualquier contexto, ya sea escolar o social.

Aunque cada una de estas tres acciones tiene su propio estatus profesional diferenciado (hay artistas, investigadores y profesores de profesión) y el resultado de cada una de ellas produce cosas diferentes (obras de arte, teorías científicas y aprendizaje), que se clasifican socialmente en instituciones diferenciadas, también es cierto que los límites entre cada una de estas acciones profesionales, en muchos casos, pueden ser bastante permeables. La a/r/tografía nace para enfocar el nexo de unión entre la persona del artista, del investigador y del profesor. ¿Qué ocurre si en lugar de seguir forzando las diferencias entre las actividades creativas artísticas, las actividades de investigación científica y las actividades educativas, intentamos unificarlas? ¿Qué podrían llevar las artes a la investigación en el campo de las ciencias sociales y humanas y, más concretamente, a la investigación educativa? Esta pregunta ha puesto en tela de juicio algunos de los prejuicios más arraigados en la cultura académica, iniciando muchos debates sobre los diversos supuestos epistemológicos que están en la base de la clasificación social e institucional del saber: las ciencias son objetivas y las artes subjetivas, las ciencias producen teorías demostrables y apoyan tecnologías eficaces, mientras que las artes proporcionan delicias estéticas y producen emociones refinadas; las ciencias buscan la verdad y las artes buscan la belleza. Mientras estas afirmaciones sigan siendo indiscutibles, no es posible buscar el encuentro entre la investigación científica y la creación artística. (Marin Viadél e Roldano, 2017).

Una de las consecuencias notables de la “Arts Based Research” [Investigación basada en las artes] y por lo tanto también de los enfoques a/r/tográficos, consiste en el reconocimiento académico de una pluralidad de lenguajes y modos de representación de los datos, de los procesos y conclusiones de una investigación educativa. El resultado de un proyecto a/r/tográfico se publica tanto a través de textos escritos (incluidos textos poéticos y diálogos teatrales), como a través de materiales visuales: fotografías, ensayos fotográficos, actuaciones y vídeos.

RG — Can you give some examples of a/r/tographic works?

RG — Può dare qualche esempio di opere a/r/tografiche?

RG — ¿Puedes poner algunos ejemplos de obras a/r/tográficas?

(EN) — W. Ewald is an American photographer and educator whose photographs are taken mainly by girls and boys, women and, in general, the people who make up the rural indigenous communities or migrant groups with whom he develops his projects. His photographs are an intimate, profound and prodigious portrait of a community, the people who make it up, their environment, their values, their dreams and desires.

His way of working is not the norm among professional photographers. Ewald questions the traditional concept of the artistic author. In his photo books, the creators of the photographs are the members of the community themselves. You integrate yourself into the community by organizing a photo workshop for school children. She teaches the complex technique of large format Chinese Mac photography, usually in black and white, over several months, but her focus is not on photographic technique but on the values of a community (wendyewald.com). In the town of Margate, on the east coast of the UK, Wendy Ewald worked with a group of twenty children and teenagers who had been housed in an immigrant hostel. She showed them photographs and filmed them with their few personal belongings. On the portraits and self-portraits they wrote a short sentence about their history, their fears and their hopes. The photographs were printed on huge vinyls hung on the facades of some of the city's most central buildings. The public visibility of 'disintegrated' people and social groups and their stories and aspirations is usually one of the usual goals of Action Research projects in socio-educational intervention, but rarely does this presence in the space of the social rag achieve such visual splendor and roundness. (Ewald, 1985, 2003-2006) Wendy Ewald's books are beautiful graphic books and, at the same time, educational projects about personal and community identity. Although she does not explicitly use the concept of a/r/tography, her projects are a model of a/r/tographic action.

Another example is the "clase-piedra", an a/r/tographic installation proposed in the ACOES schools of Tegucigalpa (Honduras). This collaborative installation took place in August 2019 in the primary and secondary school "Santa Teresa" of the organization "Asociación Colaboración y Esfuerzo" (ACOES), located in the neighborhood of Nueva Capital, a la pe referred to the city of Tegucigalpa (<https://aco.es.org>). The main objective of this organisation is education. Therefore, its main actions are schools for children and young people who are excluded from the public education system. La clase-piedra is an artistic, educational and research action that combines the artistic concepts of "Participatory Art" and Installation with the educational concepts of "Participatory Learning" and "Participatory Action Research", together with the research methodology "A/r/tography".

“La clase-piedra” is an installation because it is a construction, with different materials, of large dimensions, designed for a specific place and for a period of time. It is not a collection of separate pieces (as usually in a painting and sculpture exhibition), but a complete and unified experience to produce a great visual impact through an immersive environment (Kavokov, 2017). In the installation, literal references to ancient and contemporary works of art are used as decisive elements of the installation.

(IT) — W. Ewald è un fotografo ed educatore americano le cui fotografie sono scattate principalmente da ragazze e ragazzi, donne e, in generale, dalle persone che compongono le comunità rurali indigene o i gruppi di migranti con cui sviluppa i suoi progetti. Le sue fotografie sono un ritratto intimo, profondo e prodigioso di una comunità, delle persone che la compongono, del loro ambiente, dei loro valori, dei loro sogni e desideri. Il suo modo di lavorare non è la norma tra i fotografi professionisti. Ewald mette in discussione il concetto tradizionale di autore artistico. Nei suoi libri fotografici, i creatori delle fotografie sono gli stessi membri della comunità. Ti integri nella comunità organizzando un laboratorio fotografico per i bambini della scuola. Lei insegna la complessa tecnica della fotografia mac cinese di grande formato, di solito in bianco e nero, per diversi mesi, ma la sua attenzione non è sulla tecnica fotografica ma sui valori di una comunità (wendyewald.com). Nella città di Margate, sulla costa orientale del Regno Unito, Wendy Ewald ha lavorato con un gruppo di venti bambini e adolescenti che erano stati ospitati in un ostello per immigrati. Ha mostrato loro delle fotografie e li ha filmati con i loro pochi effetti personali. Sui ritratti e gli autoritratti hanno scritto una breve frase sulla loro storia, le loro paure e le loro speranze. Le fotografie sono state stampate su enormi vinili appesi alle facciate di alcuni degli edifici più centrali della città. La visibilità pubblica di persone e gruppi sociali “disintegrati” e delle loro storie e aspirazioni è di solito uno degli obiettivi abituali dei progetti di Ricerca-Azione nell’intervento socio-educativo, ma raramente questa presenza nello spazio dello straccio sociale raggiunge un tale splendore e rotondità visiva. (Ewald, 1985, 2003-2006) I libri di Wendy Ewald sono bei libri grafici e, allo stesso tempo, progetti educativi sull’identità personale e comunitaria. Anche se non usa esplicitamente il concetto di a/r/tografia, i suoi progetti sono un modello di azione a/r/tografica.

Un altro esempio è la “clase-piedra”, un’installazione a/r/tografica proposta nelle scuole ACOES di Tegucigalpa (Honduras). Questa installazione collaborativa ha avuto luogo nell’agosto 2019 nella scuola primaria e secondaria “Santa Teresa” dell’organizzazione “Asociación Colaboración y Esfuerzo” (ACOES), situata nel quartiere di Nueva Capital, a la pe riferito alla città di

Tegucigalpa (<https://aco.es.org>). L'obiettivo principale di questa organizzazione è l'educazione. Pertanto, le sue azioni principali sono le scuole per bambini e giovani che sono esclusi dal sistema educativo pubblico. La clase-piedra è un'azione artistica, educativa e di ricerca che combina i concetti artistici di "Participatory Art" e di Installazione con i concetti educativi di "Participatory Learning" e "Participatory Action Research", insieme alla metodologia di ricerca "A/r/tography". "La clase-piedra" è un'installazione perché è una costruzione, con diversi materiali, di grandi dimensioni, progettata per un luogo specifico e per un periodo di tempo.

Non è un insieme di pezzi separati (come di solito in una mostra di pittura e scultura), ma un'esperienza completa e unitaria per produrre un grande impatto visivo attraverso un ambiente immersivo (Kavokov, 2017). Nell'installazione, i riferimenti letterali alle opere d'arte antiche e contemporanee sono usati come elementi decisivi dell'installazione.

(ES) — W. Ewald es una fotógrafa y educadora americana cuyas fotografías han sido tomadas principalmente por chicas y chicos, mujeres y, en general, por las personas que componen las comunidades rurales indígenas o grupos de emigrantes con los que desarrolla sus proyectos. Sus fotografías son un retrato íntimo, profundo y prodigioso de una comunidad, de las personas que la componen, de su ambiente, de sus valores, de sus sueños y deseos. Su sistema de trabajo no es la norma entre los fotógrafos profesionales. Ewald cuestiona el concepto tradicional de autor artístico. En sus libros fotográficos, los creadores de las fotografías son los mismos miembros de la comunidad. Se integra usted en la comunidad organizando un laboratorio fotográfico para niños en edad escolar. Enseña la compleja técnica de las cámaras fotográficas de gran formato, generalmente en blanco y negro, durante varios meses, pero su objetivo no es la técnica fotográfica sino los valores de una comunidad (wendyewald.com). En la ciudad de Margate, en la costa oriental del Reino Unido, Wendy Ewald trabajó con un grupo de veinte niños y adolescentes que habían sido alojados en una residencia de inmigrantes. Les enseñaba la fotografía y las grababa con sus pocos efectos personales. En los retratos y autorretratos han escrito una breve frase sobre su historia, sus temores y sus esperanzas. Las fotografías han sido impresas sobre enormes vinilos colgados en las fachadas de algunos de los edificios más céntricos de la ciudad. La visibilidad pública de las personas y de los grupos sociales "desintegrados" y de sus historias y aspiraciones es generalmente uno de los objetivos habituales de los proyectos de "Action-Research" [Investigación-Acción] en la intervención socioeducativa, pero rara vez esta presencia en el espacio social llega a tal esplendor y redondez visual. (Ewald, 1985, 2003-2006) Los libros de Wendy Ewald son hermosos libros gráficos y, al mismo tiempo, proyectos educativos sobre la identidad personal y comunitaria. A pesar de que no utiliza explícitamente el concepto de a/r/tografía, sus proyectos son un modelo de acción a/r/tográfica.

Otro ejemplo es la "clase-piedra", una instalación a/r/tográfica propuesta en las escuelas ACOES de Tegucigalpa (Honduras). Esta instalación colaborativa tuvo lugar en agosto de 2019 en la escuela primaria y secundaria "Santa Teresa" de la organización "Asociación Colaboración y Esfuerzo" (ACOES), situada en el barrio de Nueva Capital, a la periferia de la ciudad de Tegucigalpa (<https://aco.es.org>). El objetivo principal de esta organización es la educación. Por lo tanto, sus acciones principales son las escuelas para niños y jóvenes excluidos del sistema educativo público. La clase-piedra es una acción artística, educativa y de investigación que

combina los conceptos artísticos de “Arte Participativo” e Instalación con los conceptos educativos de “Aprendizaje Participativo” y “Investigación-Acción participativa”, junto con la metodología de investigación de “A/r/tografía”.

“La clase-piedra” es una instalación porque es una construcción, con materiales diferentes, de grandes dimensiones, diseñada para un lugar específico y para un período de tiempo. No se trata de un conjunto de piezas separadas (como de costumbre en una exposición de pintura y escultura), sino de una experiencia completa y unitaria para producir un gran impacto visual a través de un entorno inmersivo (Kavokov, 2017). En la instalación, las referencias literales a las obras de arte antiguo y contemporáneo se utilizan como elementos decisivos de la instalación.

It is also true that the boundaries between each of these professional actions, in many cases, can be quite permeable. a/r/tography was born to focus on the nexus between the person of the artist, the researcher and the teacher.



CESARE PIETROIUSTI

TESTO RACCOLTO DA ROBERTO GALEOTTI

[First of all]

**SOME KEY WORDS
(CHARACTERISTICS OF
AN EFFECTIVE WORKSHOP):**

MAY. 2022



.Circularity of ideas and non-directionality of teaching

.Hospitality:

The teacher-function is identified with the ability (also in the literal sense of «capacity») to host, welcome the ideas of others (e.g. students) and return them to the working group with an elaboration that is also a model of how it is possible to intervene on the ideas of others.

.Elastic temporality:

Extending / suspending / wasting time

Breaking the taboo of time DEBT.

.Critical analysis and collective brainstorm of current project(s)

.Disciplinary liminality

.Going off topic (radical experimentation)

.Accepting not knowing where you are going

.Accepting non-economicity

.Changing the rules (play)

.Reflexivity:

on one's own situation

on the mechanisms at work in the working group

looking through the eyes of the other



NOTES ON RESEARCH AND ARTISTIC TRAINING*

When I was a beginner - in Rome, in the early 1980s - I often had the feeling that the prevailing opinion, within the artistic *milieu*, considered it somehow incompatible for an artist to be knowledgeable and inclined to theorize. Unlike writers, directors or even musicians, visual artists, «painters», it seemed that they had to be somewhat ignorant in order to be able to guarantee access to forms of inspiration, genius and non-conformism that would be tainted by rational or scientific approaches. A probable inheritance of idealism, this vision, which wanted artists to be more like the gentleman-hero than the scholar, was, with a few exceptions (including those of two people who taught me a great deal, Sergio Lombardo and Fabio Mauri), internalized by the artists themselves, to the point that many of them seemed to want to make people believe or even boast of being less cultured than they actually were, and cruelly ironise the creative sterility of those who claimed to be artists and intellectuals. For someone like me, with no inspiration, no technical skills and only a few books (especially on psychology) read, this state of affairs was paradoxical (how was it possible for someone to boast of being ignorant?) and frustrating (how could I enter into any kind of dialogue?).

At a distance of time, I must recognise not only that I myself have largely taken advantage of the stereotype that admits non-systematicity, drift and off-topicity for the artist, but above all that a certain theoretical anarchy guarantees, compared to a rigid coherence, spaces of freedom in which works of art are born and move better, and can communicate more.

Nonetheless, I am convinced that non-systematicity can and must be achieved without taking bald-faced shortcuts, and rather by deconstructing theories that have been carefully studied, and rational analyses that have been patiently deepened, sedimented, and discussed with others.

Things have changed somewhat since the 1980s. Italian artists (always, with some exceptions) no longer boast of their true or presumed ignorance, no longer pose as misguided *bohemians*, and even less as courageous and naive *parsifals* from the suburbs. The curricula of young artists often refer to studies in critical theory, aesthetics, complex research with a feminist approach (it goes without saying that the pre-

NOTES ON RESEARCH AND ARTISTIC TRAINING - CESARE PIETROIUSTI

vious model, that of the neo-expressionist hero, required that the artist be invariably male), ecologist, post-colonial. Things that were inconceivable thirty years ago.

Such a change is fundamentally positive; I think it is due, first and foremost, to the extension of knowledge that has been enabled by the web and search engines. In Italy, the way in which art professors at the Academy or professors of history of art at the University used to propose awareness of international research to their students was almost always imbued with sarcasm and minimisation. The horizon of contemporary art was therefore desertified and depressive. The Internet and Google have, if nothing else, revealed that, beyond the horizon offered by those teachers, there was a very rich world of thought, discourse and possibilities. The problem is that educational institutions have not changed much in the meantime, with the result that many young artists have gone to seek study and work opportunities outside Italy over the last twenty years.

The inadequacy of training schools is therefore at the heart of a vicious circle in which the depletion of creative energies and the dulling of critical attitudes contribute to the fragility of an entire system of galleries, museums, magazines and independent spaces, which is deprived of the power to disseminate to the broader public, precisely because of the lack of that fabric made up of students representing not only a «first-rate public» but also an irreplaceable mediating force.

It is a common opinion, repeated with more or less emphasis, that the emergence of the 'great artist' does not depend on the quality of the school. This trivial truth, however, cannot fail to take into account that the forms of knowledge and expression have changed in the direction of ever greater interdependence and networking between people and disciplinary knowledge. I am convinced that artistic training can represent the terrain on which, more than elsewhere, those forms of knowledge and expression to which one can have access in the present can be experimented - with a bit of Internet euphoria and above all with a great deal of critical patience and humanistic aptitude. In this regard, I will take the example I know best, that of the visual arts laboratories at the IUAV in Venice. This is a rather well-known case, which is due to the determination and farsightedness of Angela Vettese and Marco De Michelis, who, in the very early 2000s, conceived a genuine degree course for both artists and curators, based on an equal division between theoretical teaching - given by «internal» teachers - in the morning, and intensive workshops - given by «external» artists and curators, often non-Italian - in the afternoon. The workshops lasted twelve weeks and took the students from conception to realization and presentation of a new project. In my experience, these workshops were a model, sometimes a particularly successful one, of interaction between the theoretical aspects (art history, aesthetics, semiology, psychology, etc.) and the operational aspects of artistic work proper. Students, in other words, were led to interesting connections between theories under study and their own project (artistic or curatorial) as a case study.

I believe that these workshops are an example where artistic training has managed to be articulated on three different levels: in addition to theory, technique (video, photography, painting, etc.) and *pragmatics*.

I would like to focus in particular on this last aspect. The first thing that the workshop brings about is the creation of a «table» around which the participants

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sit to form a group. They learn to share their project, to overcome the embarrassment of talking about an idea that is still confused or a difficulty encountered along the way; above all, they learn to get used to a circularity of thought. This is a crucial situation in any training course and concerns both the figure of the «teacher» and that of the «learners». The circularity of thought is based on the mechanism of *hospitality*, in the sense that the ideas of one finds a place in the mind of the other. The resulting learning is that of observing things from the other's point of view, i.e., by extension, getting used to not considering oneself merely as a «self» but always as a «self-with» the other. If, for the students, this can lead to the establishment of affective bonds, which in turn reinforce the mechanism, or more simply the cooperative competition of forces and ideas, for the teacher, the circular course represents the challenge to demonstrate his or her ability to listen to and understand the discourses and projects proposed by the participants. The teacher's function thus shifts from that of *guide* to that of host: welcoming the ideas of others, incorporating and processing them in order to better dispose of them, connecting them to each other in order to better relaunch them in the group. In the best case scenario, this circular trend of thought can lead to a situation in which the emergence of a (beautiful) idea is felt by everyone as their own and shared without jealousy, and sometimes with enthusiasm: it is the creation of a *group mind*. It is true that it is always (and, I would say, fortunately) a matter of temporary situations that cannot be reproduced on command, but it is nonetheless the learning, often unforgettable, of a (beautiful) possibility.

Obviously, all the aspects linked to the creation of a network of collaborations between the students (for example, the exchange between electronic and carpentry skills; or between relational skills and the use of a camera) are part of the pragmatics of a workshop, as are the drafting of a presentation text, the management of communication, finding an exhibition space, setting up, etc.

Finally, we should not underestimate the importance of the diversity of approach that the teachers of the workshops can offer the students; a diversity that at times, at the IUAV, has created an initial disconcertment (imagine the state of mind of a student who starts a workshop with Vezzoli immediately after spending three months with Muntadas...), but which, in the long run, teaches us that artistic research is a field of multiple possibilities and modelling spaces, rather than predetermined behaviours and roles.

To conclude this text, I would like to briefly mention four points that seem important to me and that may represent possibilities for developing the very idea of «artistic training»; four points that, in different ways, revolve around the idea that *training* can, in fact, become a territory of experimentation and research, without taking the place of the work but instead increasing its potential and the area of users of the people involved.

1) **PERFORMATIVE EDUCATION**

I am thinking, for example, of Black Mountain College. In that school, the simultaneous presence of teacher-artists (often friends) whose research, albeit with different disciplinary presuppositions, was oriented towards *performance*, meant that a music course, a dance course, or even a painting course could intersect and contaminate each other, until they became shared artistic practice, group work.

I am also thinking of the extension of the now well-known and popular concept of the *performative lecture* (and of artists such as Dora Garcia, Matt Mullican, Andrea Fraser, Walid Raad, Rabih Mrouè and many others) in the direction of real courses in which a certain philosophical or psychoanalytical or linguistic theory or other is studied, deepened and elaborated through sessions of artistic experimentation. One could, for example, combine a study of phonetics with collective experiments in tactile perception or sound expression at an oral level; or study the laws of the market economy by trying to challenge the law of supply and demand through the production of thousands of drawings (yes, I am thinking of my own work...).

2) **LOCALISED PEDAGOGY**

The architectural, aesthetic, landscape and urban qualities of schools, universities and other places where educational activities are carried out are generally considered to be independent of the content of what is studied there and the way in which it is done. Localised pedagogy, on the other hand, proposes to enhance and give meaning to these qualities, so that the time (lesson hours, seminar days, weeks of residence) that students, teachers and participants in general spend in a certain place is in any case linked to forms of attention, exploration and care for the characteristics of the place itself. A reference could be the concept of a *site-specific* work as opposed to the display of an object in the neutral space of an art gallery or museum. Any transmission of knowledge or critical spirit could, according to this hypothesis, always be related to the place where it takes place; such an attempt to integrate the knowledge that is being acquired and the places that are being inhabited could become a powerful factor of memorisation and cognitive reinforcement.

3) **THE COMMUNITY SELF-EDUCATION**

It is not only the locations, but also the temporality of school or university teaching that are «separated», in a presumption of neutrality and in-contamination with respect to the times of eating, sleeping, playing, etc., which are the most important elements of the community. But for those who participate in a training group, the constitution of a community could be a fundamental element not only to activate the mechanisms of hospitality and circularity to which I referred earlier. The sharing of times, practices, desires and dreams around a training project, i.e. a sharing that is still linked to a subject of study and to the ways of transmitting knowledge, can lead the participants in the group to experiences in which a course of lessons becomes a true experience of a form of life, just as it was (or we want to believe it was) in the Epicurean garden, in the *Stoà*, in Aristotle's *Perìpatos*.

4) **THE EXHIBITION WORKSHOP**

What I am about to say is probably due to the fact that more and more artists are teaching and there is an increasing demand for artists to conduct workshops with various types of users, from art school students to executives of companies or public administrations. This kind of practice, which allows artists to make money without necessarily having to sell physically definable works of art, tends, in my opinion, to expand and is occupying, or rather creating, a space that is intermediate between proper academic teaching and exhibition activity. In other words, it seems to me that, even in major events such as the international Biennales, a strategy is emerging that aims to present the workshop activity to the public as it unfolds; an activity that, often starting from pre-established groups of participants/students, can attempt to involve the exhibition visitor in a collaborative activity or in moments of discussion and collective elaboration. It is obvious that the conditions of any biennial are not at all favourable to this, first of all because of the limitations of the exhibition hours. However, it is also true that the multiplication of exhibition spaces, which is increasingly evident in large events, allows the activation of places and people beyond the defined time of the vernissage, beyond the canonical opening and closing times, and sometimes even beyond the payment of the ticket. In Kassel, during dOCUMENTA 13, such cases were numerous, from the community gymnasium of AND AND AND (Anastas and Gabri) to the capsule/»participatory open space» of Critical Art Ensemble, to the «Hugonot House» occupied and restored by Theaster Gates and many of his friends.

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In all these cases, we are dealing with hypotheses of formative work that take a long time, longer than what we generally consider acceptable for visiting an exhibition or participating in a conference or a course of lectures. Perhaps this is the point. Artistic education requires, before anything else, a new idea and a new experience of time, which challenges the slavery dictated by time-wasting: a debt as pervasive and ferocious as the financial one.

For a real qualitative leap in education, we need a time of citizenship.

Workshops, communities, *scholè* (idleness) and performative didactics must not so much 'offer' this time but *train* all of us in a new conception of it.

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L'ERG,

DES BASES SINGULIÈRES

DE
FLORENT DELVAL

En conversation avec Laurence Rassel (Directrice de l'ERG)

Dès son origine, l'erg (Ecole de Recherche Graphique) de Bruxelles pose des bases singulières. Jean Guiraud et Thierry de Duve, auparavant collègues dans l'école catholique de Sint Lukas, l'ont pensée comme une école expérimentale qualifiée de "Bauhaus post-68 fortement réformé par les sciences sociales" (1). Thierry de Duve, un temps aspirant artiste, a été formé sur les ruines de Bauhaus, à Ulm au début des années 60. Il s'est formé au contact d'une approche pragmatique de l'art qui était en même temps en phase de déconstruction. Le parti pris de créer une école d'art une dizaine d'années plus tard était rétrospectivement étonnant. En effet, on le connaît comme le grand spécialiste de Marcel Duchamp et le théoricien de l'approche nominaliste de l'art. Si l'art est tout ce que l'on désigne comme tel, alors les disciplines, l'atelier ou encore la technique deviennent sinon obsolètes, du moins optionnels. En outre, il savait alors pertinemment que celui qui a redéfini le champ artistique dans son ensemble était

autodidacte et n'avait pas tenu un an à l'école d'art.

Certes, entre l'académie Juliard et les années 70 où l'erg est imaginée, le monde a changé; deux guerres mondiales et de nombreuses avant-gardes ont rebattu les cartes de la modernité. Ce que Thierry de Duve a gardé de Duchamp, c'est que l'école ne peut être un système de validation. Il peut cependant agir comme outil de transmission. Cependant ce concept quasi utopique implique une relation professeur-élève qui peut être problématique. Cela reste un mot clef dans le projet pédagogique de l'erg depuis le début. Comment se tenir à une ligne quand les paradigmes évoluent constamment? Quand l'erg est inaugurée, l'élève est le centre de l'attention car l'heure est à la créativité et à l'invention. L'imitation n'est plus de rigueur, il s'agit de révéler les potentiels individuels. C'est l'époque de Joseph Beuys. Tout le monde est potentiellement artiste et l'art est une force capable de transformer radicalement la société. Puis vinrent les années 80... et d'autres paradigmes s'enchaînerent.

«La conoscenza non circola necessariamente in linea retta. Come mantenere questa casualità all'interno della scuola?»

Sammy Del Gallo, qui s'occupe actuellement de la communication à l'erg, et qui fait partie de l'équipe pédagogique, reconnaît que l'école avait peu à peu perdu son cap au fil des mutations. Toutefois la nomination de Laurence Rassel en 2015 a créé une nouvelle impulsion. C'est tout d'abord l'introduction d'un positionnement féministe affirmé, et d'un héritage de la culture open source. Être féministe, dans son acception la plus large, c'est ne prendre pour acquis. "Ce qui est important pour moi quand je travaille dans une institution c'est Qui? Comment? Pourquoi? Et pour qui?" (intervention dans le séminaire Something You Should Know à l'Ehess en 2016). La position de ceux et celles qui détiennent la parole doit donc être située pour être valide comme le préconise Donna Haraway. Être situé.e c'est dire d'où l'on parle ce qui inclut celles et ceux qui nous précèdent. Par exemple, l'apport de la culture open source lui vient en réalité de Chris Marker qui imaginait que la technologie était là pour tous et toutes. Autrement dit, l'entrée en matière a été plutôt oblique. De manière aussi inattendue, elle rencontre le féminisme dans les années 90 par l'intermédiaire de Noël Burch et Geneviève Sellier, qui furent les premières personnes à introduire les gender studies en France via la sociologie du cinéma. Je tiens à préciser cela pour une raison assez évidente : le savoir ne circule pas forcément en ligne droite. Comment alors garder cet aléatoire à l'intérieur de l'école? Comment favoriser la rencontre inattendue dans un cadre académique? Laurence Rassel a toujours envisagé l'institution comme un milieu hostile, tout

en y participant. Ses outils théoriques sont un kit de survie : outre le féminisme et l'open source, on y trouve l'inspiration de la psychothérapie institutionnelle.

«La question des communs ne présuppose pas une horizontalité parfaite entre les rôles, mais un accès aux ressources égalitaires à l'intérieur d'un groupe donné. »

De cette discipline très française, à laquelle sont associés les noms de Jean Oury ou Félix Guattari, on pourrait dire qu'elle soigne aussi bien les patients que l'institution qui les accueille. Celle-ci n'est pas plus un simple contenant, mais doit être prise en compte en tant que système, y compris à un niveau symbolique.

Cette approche est rendue nécessaire car depuis l'époque de Thierry de Duve le contexte a un peu changé. Il ne s'agit plus de construire une école idéale, ce qui impliquait déjà un travail de déconstruction approfondi, mais de s'adapter à un cadre restreint par les accords de Bologne. L'erg actuelle vit dans l'ombre d'une école expérimentale passée. Elle n'en demeure pas moins ancrée dans des problématiques de son temps, notamment la question des communs qui a littéralement envahi tout

le champ artistique.

Dans un milieu officiel soumis à des règles européennes, la question se pose un peu différemment. La question des communs ne présuppose pas une horizontalité parfaite entre les rôles, mais un accès aux ressources égalitaires à l'intérieur d'un groupe donné. Comment travailler ensemble avec les différences de motivations, de statuts, financières etc...? Cette notion dépend essentiellement du contexte, et donc doit être constamment redéfinie en fonction de l'évolution de celui-ci.

«Among the tricks the ERG uses to circumvent official criteria is the use of subtitles in its titles. *Multidisciplinary Laboratories leads to Politics and Graphic Experimentation and then on to Artistic Practices and Scientific Complexity.*»

A l'erg, il n'y a pas de chef d'atelier. Un.e professeur.e travaille sur un pied d'égalité avec un.e assistant.e ou un.e conférencier.e. Mais les étudiant.e.s ont aussi leur mot à dire dans un contexte qui évoluent comme un software qu'on met à jour comme je vais le détailler ensuite. Le décret dit "paysage" qui entama la normalisation de l'enseignement supérieur francophone belge en 2015 serait-il alors le hardware? Parmi les ruses

auxquelles l'établissement a recours pour contourner les critères officiels, l'utilisation de sous-titres dans les intitulés. Au fil des ramifications de l'interface expérimentale du site, "Ateliers multidisciplinaires" amène à "Politiques et expérimentation graphique" puis à "Pratiques artistiques et complexité scientifique". D'autres manières de contrebande se pratiquent à l'erg : ainsi le séminaire "Histoire et actualité des arts" pour les B2 semble bien balisé, mais Isabel Burr Raty fait reposer son cours sur "des groupes minoritaires qui vivent dans un état de résistance, et qui sont exclus de la production artistique «officielle» comme: la communauté Rapa Nui à L'île de Pâques, le peuple Mapuche au Chili, la communauté Zapatiste au Mexique". Christoph Fink, Coraline Guilbeau, Oriol Vilanova quant à eux, responsables du master Installation/performance, ont initié un centre d'art fictif, une institution imaginaire qui utilise des salles de classe et nommée Kunsthalle Pompei : elle apparaît notamment sur Instagram sans aucune mention de l'école.

Le recours à de nouveaux récits est devenu littéralement un trope des formes critiques, c'est la manière la plus évidente de penser d'autres ontologies. Or l'erg propose depuis une dizaine d'années une formation "Narration spéculative", c'est-à-dire avant même l'arrivée de Laurence Rassel. C'est la proximité géographique et philosophique d'Isabelle Stengers et de Didier Debaise (tous.les deux alors à l'ULB), qui a sans doute facilité cette écriture "qu'il s'agit d'activer dans le présent, de rendre perceptible, en le chargeant des virtualités

de ce qui pourrait être. Ce qui implique, en retour, l'engagement spéculatif comme pensée des conséquences, et non utopie ou imaginaire projetés sur le présent" (« Gestes spéculatifs » - Texte de présentation du Colloque de Cerisy Juin/Juillet 2013, Isabelle Stengers, Didier Debaise.)

En français, "programme" s'utilise pour désigner le contenu d'un cursus mais est aussi l'équivalent de "software". Le programme s'écrit dans un environnement fermé, mais avec un souci d'élégance comme on parle de l'élégance d'une équation ou d'une démonstration. Quels sont les résultats à long terme, c'est-à-dire après la fin du cursus? Est-ce que les anciens élèves acquièrent une certaine facilité à s'émanciper? Car n'est-ce finalement pas la fonction de l'art, une fois dégagé de considérations académiques et imitatives, que de d'accroître les champs des libertés?

L'un des projets les plus marquants qui a émané de l'erg (en collaboration avec La Cambre), la collective Bye-Bye Binary, interroge justement le champ des possibles de la typographie dans une perspective non-binaire, ou en d'autres termes réfléchit à des solutions graphiques pour l'écriture inclusive dans la langue française. C'est une recherche en cours, c'est-à-dire sans solution toute faite. En effet, la réflexion sur le genre continue d'évoluer, et il faut réussir à l'intégrer sans toutefois léser les personnes dyslexiques ou autres. Bye-Bye Binary inclut donc les utilisateur.ice.s au cœur d'un dispositif de mise à jour constante. En outre, la collective

a protesté en 2020 lorsque la presse s'est emparée de la création de Tristan Bartolini, présenté comme l'inventeur de la première typo inclusive, ce qui était en contradiction flagrante avec le principe de dissémination de l'authorship sur lequel repose BBB. Sans doute serait-il abusif de n'attribuer qu'à l'erg cette approche "open source" de la création, mais il est tout de même notable qu'elle est compatible avec les principes prônés au sein de l'école.

En outre, c'est au sein des espaces transversaux qu'est apparu BBB. Ces ateliers, qui peuvent être virtuels ou réels, temporaires ou pérennes naissent d'un besoin des utilisateur.ice.s de l'erg, c'est-à-dire principalement des étudiant.e.s. L'erg se situe dans un quartier bourgeois et les restaurants y sont chers : l'EAT (Erg à table) est apparu en réponse à ce contexte ; c'est une cuisine collective, qui répond à des contraintes financières, qui privilégie des circuits courts et prête attention à la diversité des régimes alimentaires (véganisme etc...). C'est aussi un endroit pour penser les liens entre art et cuisine. Depuis sa création, l'EAT a évolué et est maintenant devenu un cours technique. Est-ce que le Cluster Club trouvera une telle pérennisation? Cet espace apparu pendant les confinements pourrait se résumer comme un cours sur l'histoire de la musique noire, de la musique caribéenne : selon différents points de vue, du graphisme à la sémiologie. Mais le Cluster Club a avant tout été pensé comme un espace de décompression et de socialisation durant une période qui a été une crise pour les

étudiant.e.s en général. Citons encore comme exemple d'espace transversa, outre la recyclothèque, Le rideau de perles, une bibliothèque autogérée pour des livres queer, rares, volés, scannés, transformés en pdf et pour des fanzines. Le rideau de perles a ensuite évolué en bibliothèque physique, puis s'apprête à devenir un lieu de rendez-vous mensuel. Ces endroits-interstices naissent donc d'un besoin, puis sont testés et éprouvés pendant un an ou deux ans, ce qui implique une évolution des usages au fil du temps. Parfois les initiateur.ice.s changent et la question de la transmission se pose... Les étudiants partent et alors, comment pérenniser... Certains espaces transversaux sont repris dans le programme d'études, d'autres deviennent indépendants, mais chaque cas est unique.

Rien n'est donc figé à l'erg et tout est en perpétuel réécriture. L'école compose donc entre ses inspirations (Black Mountain College, Corita Kent, Stephen Wright...) et la réalité politique et sociologique d'une école d'art européenne en 2022. L'un des principaux défis qui se présente à l'heure actuelle est la forte augmentation des inscriptions. Alors que jusqu'à présent un entretien visant à s'assurer de l'adéquation entre les projets étudiants et l'établissement était de rigueur, un processus de sélection plus drastique et donc inique est envisagé. Comment le projet de l'erg pourra s'adapter, voire se mettre à jour, face à cette nouvelle situation?

(1) Thierry De Duve, Faire école (ou la Refaire?) FeniXX réédition numérique (Presses du réel) Mamco 6 Avril 2020



WHAT RESPONSIBILITY COMES WITH HAVING EYES?

ANDREA SOTO CALDERON

Interview by David Liver

What is the performativity of images?

It is lightly asserted that our attention deficit results from saturation of visual stimuli.

But what if attention was overrated? The problem seems to be a different one.

Spanish philosopher, Andrea Soto Calderon, introduces a new status of the image, suggesting new ways of relating to it.

WHAT RESPONSIBILITY COMES WITH HAVING EYES? - ANDREA SOTO CALDERON

Before seeing how performativity applies to learning, we should define performativity itself, not an easy task. Many thinkers have taken on it.

When speaking about performativity it seems that we need to imply and coordinate obvious concepts such as purpose, action, effectiveness and change. And perhaps we need to address some sort of dramaturgy for all of these concepts to take stage: who performs? Who's affected? Who resists? What obstacles appear? What changes and how? It seems to me that confrontation (or conflict) is traditionally implicit to the idea of performativity. How do you define performativity?

ANDREA SOTO CALDERON - The notion of performativity has unavoidable associations with the theory of action and with its reference to performative utterances. However, my interest in the performative dimension is related to the formative processes, with the modes of operation, operability and ways of doing. Precisely, I would say that the notion of performativity in relation with images arises for me in an attempt to displace the question of what images are to what images do, how they work and what their mechanisms and modes of organization are. In this regard, if performing means *giving form*, then it is an operation in which the form is not prior to its becoming, the process is not configured before its realization. The prefix "per" suggests that this form finds its way of being in trajectory, so it is also a question of relation with the formless. Therefore, the specific operation of performativity is that of a passage of indeterminacy that is knotting forms.

For this reason, I have wanted to

differentiate my reflection from the performative uses of images. My analysis does not focus on what images make us do, but on the reality that they are capable of configuring. This has to do with my interest in the force of the imaginal, not as something that opposes the real, much less with the idea that the image has to make visible a pre-existing reality or be a reflection of the real. In fact I believe that if we want a critique that does not remain in denunciation and is capable of investing its energy in a new creative passion to organize the polemic encounter between the real and the possible, it is necessary to go against our intuition, because our intuition has been modeled by a determined experience of knowledge.

If we ask ourselves how to activate our imagination in these times that appear without a future, it seems to me that images have a place that is structuring. That is why it is so important to understand the performing energy, the operative value and the real efficacy of sym-

bolic gestures. The imagination articulates ways of tracing, desiring, affecting and inhabiting reality. It is an inventive doing. It creates, regulates and transforms society, raises figurations, interferences, residues that introduce thresholds of variation, not as an image of something existing, but rather instituting its *being-there*. In this sense, the images will not have to be subjected to what they represent, nor be accountable for what is real, but committed to the fabric of the real that they are capable of building. I think that if there is something that has clogged our imagination, it is the regime of beliefs according to which critical thinking builds its power of truth against images. It is urgent to question this political distribution according to which images are for the masses and words for intellectuals.

Performativity is a problematic word as it is commonly associated with an idea of outstanding achievement but -as you say- it definitely relates with fragility.

VOICE OVER

This implies that performativity is not understood from an organization of the strong sense of action as the intentionality of a subject that activates a movement oriented towards a specific goal from a logic of causes and effects. In opposite, it is about being 'listening' to situations in order to be able to welcome the processes of transformation in which we participate and exercise our gestures, to experiment with them in order to divert them from the ways in which they have been habituated, to exercise forms of indiscipline of the gaze by interrupting the dominant systems of adaptation - or innervation, to use W. Benjamin's words. In this, it seems to me primordial to create infrastructures that take care of the zones of conflict, as you say, because most of our tradition of thought and organization has not been characterized by taking care of the conflictual, on the contrary, what is conflictive is reduced in consensus or ignored or eliminated. It is precisely there where the multiple can grow, where we can answer with images the imaginaries imposed on us by the cultural industry, the hegemonic fictions and where a work of resistance can be articulated.

DAVID LUER - Defining a frame of investigation appears necessary when addressing performativity. Butler for instance defines it within

the gender frame as a stylized repetition of acts, an imitation of the dominant conventions of gender : "the act that one does, the act that one performs is, in a sense, an act that's been going on before one arrived on the scene". By saying so Butler seems to bring up a passive quality of performativity, showing another possible outcome of its applications. What do you think of it?

How does performativity apply to your field of investigation?

ANDREA SOTO CALDERON - Since John L. Austin's famous essay *How to Do Things with Words* was published, several fields and theories of thought have made their own declensions about how to understand the performative. Thinking about this notion in relation to images is not an exception, however, it requires contravening diversities of its structural elements. On the one hand, as Jean Wirth already pointed out in *Qu'est-ce qu'une image?*, it is not so obvious that it is possible to transpose the theories relating to acts of language to the analysis of the functions of the images, and even if this were possible, it would be necessary to see in what conditions it would occur; on the other hand, I believe that it would be necessary to rethink and question the category of action, which has been at the

centre of the reflections on the performative, insofar all doing has not ceased to be measured by virtue of its effects.

As we know, the performative term was coined in philosophical thought by Austin to give content to a concept that sought to account for the transforming force of language on reality: utterances that do not describe a reality but rather institute it. Most of the theoretical receptions of this notion come from cultural studies or gender and identity studies, as is indeed the case of Judith Butler, who takes up this concept to give it a bodily dimension, emphasizing the idea that body matter is not given naturally, but that in acts, it is constantly being produced. Hence Butler asserts that in a certain sense *one is not simply a body, but one makes one's own body*. The body is the configuration of a repetition of gestures and movements that are what constitute it.

This autopoietic position begins as a reflection on language, which does not mean that it should be reduced to language alone. What performativity referring to language affirms is an insubordination of language to the law of *adequatio*, «language was no longer thought of as the correspondence of a statement or a pre-existing object but as the

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autonomous or autonomizing act of a social or individual subject positing itself» (1). Its singularity is that it does not ascertain a prior referent, but establishes it in its own doing. A self-founding instance that establishes not only an epistemic dissidence, but also a position. In my case, it is not about affirming that performativity is a construction that depends on a strong will, but precisely because it does not depend on will that it is open.

For me, thinking about the performative status of images implies relocating the figurative dimension, dwelling on the fabric of images, on their practices, on their *poiesis*. The image as a fissure in the category of action, at least questioning what is meant by the affirmation that images have agency. It is a questioning of the categories from which we perceive the relationships between images, aesthetics and politics. All visual epistemology is also a political configuration, hence it is fundamental to change our grammars and discourses in relation to images. Moreover, this notion allows us to think about the complex tension between ways of being, ways of seeing and ways of doing by questioning the category of action and the expressive system. Finally, a methodical study of their strength and their excesses makes it possible to move the question

on from 'What are images?' to 'What do images do?', without continuing the line of inscription that places them on the side of the lack of being, nor the which refers to a demand for their purity. On the contrary, understanding images from their performativity is an approach to their dynamic forces and figures, as a complex of relations that operate procedures of composition and relations. This attends to its differential potential, capable of making and undoing senses of the common, attending to the capacity that images have to open other links. Not every image has the same performative potential, there are images that constrain their figures, but there are also images that take care of their emancipatory reserve, challenge the gaze, the body and the community in which they are inscribed and circulate.

DAVID LUER - How would you define the critical role of images?

ANDREA SOTO CALDERON - One of my concerns is how all credit has been taken away from the critical role that images can play. The images have been declared unsuitable for criticizing reality. Moreover, all criticism of visual culture has been made against images and not from them. We have distrusted our images so much that, perhaps,

we have forgotten to analyze their critical potential in the Deleuzian sense of the term, that is, creative. In this, without a doubt, the thought of Jacques Rancière has marked my perceptions, I share with him his distance from the idea according to which looking is the opposite of acting and looking is the opposite of knowing (2). But, more fundamentally, contrary to popular belief, we are not facing the images, we are among them. That is why it is so important to explore its orientation force in our community. On the other hand, I have another heritage, which is that of Latin American thought. In our culture, or at least in that of our ancestors, the formation of images implies the concept, but also the song, the dance and it needs other metaphors that are not only that of reading. Hence, I consider that in order to enrich the movements of the forms, the perspectives facilitated by the references to the signifier have long shown their limits. Indeed, I share the diagnosis that our critical categories and experience have been weakened. Our loss of participation in the production of cultural, intellectual or sensitive life symbols is evident, which produces a collapse that generates disorientation not only in collective but also individual terms. It is precisely for this reason that I consider it urgent to articulate other ways of reflection and other meanings for image

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practices, it is in this sense that I am interested in exploring the capacity of performativity as a critical category.

DAVID LIVER - You said: *"I would say that the notion of performativity in relation to images arises for me in an attempt to displace the question of what images are to what images do, (...) In this regard, if performing means giving form, then it is an operation in which the form is not prior to its becoming, the process is not configured before its realization (...) so it is also a question of relation with the formless. Therefore, the specific operation of performativity is that of a passage of indeterminacy that is knotting forms."* I might be mistaken here but would it be correct to say that the specific way you look at images, not as a reflection of the world but as the reality embedding its potentiality, is a suitable point of view on how to approach the performativity of learning? Does your research on images implicitly apply to a visual pedagogy?

ANDREA SOTO CALDERON - Yes, undoubtedly this reflection needs other ways of learning. I believe that most of the critical reflections that have been made regarding images and the uses and status

they occupy in contemporary society, insist upon the need for a kind of school of the gaze or upon the fact that we must learn to read or decode images. I consider that these referrals to the signifier are at least too narrow to exercise a critical gaze. In this sense, we instead need an indiscipline of the gaze, ways of counter-adaptation to the dominant forms, and also to seriously question the ways in which art academies teach and the ways in which needs are prefigured, where images are often understood as a place for the projection of meaning. Moreover, in terms of visual pedagogy, we are taught very little about sustaining situations of not-knowing, welcoming contingency and developing listening policies. Institutional inertia is favored and there are few tools to suspend the projective.

Within the various critical diagnoses of images, there are extensive analyses about the complicity of images in the attention crises of contemporary societies, whether in their forms of multitasking, channel hopping, intolerance to boredom or what has been called chronic distraction; and the responsibility that images have in this noticeable impoverishment is pointed out. In the face of different discourses

that insist on declaring images as unsuitable for criticizing reality, I have tried to propose a dissenting line about the numerous doubts that weigh against them. In this sense, my purpose has not been to establish a definition that says what is specific to images, but to emphasize the fact that images are primarily a work. Undoubtedly, images can inform, entertain and alienate; but they can also organize: they open up a field which allows us to dispute the terrain of the sensible, opening up other economies of desire.

The question is perhaps how to shape an attention in dispersion. Activating the critical capacity of images has nothing to do with building a school of the gaze that teaches us to look closely read, interpret or decode images; nor with determining parameters on how we should see images or what we should see in them; rather, it is a matter of questioning several of these imperatives.

Jonathan Crary, in *Suspensions of Perception. Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* (1999), argues that attention has a paradoxical nature, since, on the one hand, the various crises of attention in contemporary society affect creativity and experience but, on the other hand, our way of contemplating and listening is the result of a crucial change

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that occurred in the nature of perception in the second half of the nineteenth century. This transformation is intimately linked to the subjective formation necessary to be able to focus on the requirements and demands of new forms of production. Forming the ability to be able to develop snippets and unconnected states implies a profound and complex subjective rearticulation that becomes necessary in a historical moment in which perception must adapt to the fragmentation and partialization of experience.

It seems to me essential not to underestimate this profoundly ambivalent character of attention, this paradox pointed out by Crary between the imperative of maintaining a concentrated focus in *the disciplined* organization of work, education, mass consumption. Attention becomes a crucial problem at the very moment that a productive and controllable subjectivity emerges, in the demands of modern separation of social experiences and subjective autonomy, when strategies become necessary to isolate individuals as part of the processes of rationalization and modernization. That is why it is so important to pay attention to this genealogy traced by Crary in order to think about the limits and

failures of *the attentive individual*.

Perhaps it is not so much a matter of *directing* attention as of *digesting* attention, of feeling the viscera of the movement which disturbs us. Indeed, to be attentive to a situation, to be aware of what is being formed, to extend oneself towards something, requires not establishing known relationships with that which we come into contact with. To a large extent, cultivating a connection is an exercise in unlearning and a willingness to resonate with another, to experience their pulse.

Our eyes may well be crammed with logos and icons, but that is not the same as images. Rather than the *weariness of the gaze*, I would say that we are talking about a disconnection, although at the same time it is important to remember that every disconnection carries the potency of the connections to be built.

In a short story entitled *Love is Blind*, Boris Vian imagined the effects of fog on relationships. The inhabitants of a great city wake up one morning surrounded by a thick fog that gradually alters the way they behave. The needs that appearances impose become obsolete and the inhabitants

embark on a process of collective experimentation. Love becomes free, facilitated by the permanent nudity of all bodies. Orgies spread everywhere. Skin, hands and flesh all regain their prerogative, since "the domain of the possible is extended when one is no longer afraid that the light might be turned on". Unable to prolong a fog which they did not help to create, the inhabitants fall apart when "the radio says that experts have noted a gradual regression of the phenomenon". In light of this, everyone decides to gouge out their own eyes so that life can go on happily (3).

It is an intense commitment to seeing, with the experience facilitated by the fog, with feeding the night in which the gaze is refined but, above all else, with tightening the bonds, cultivating relationships, since they are what enable us to see.

What responsibility comes with *having eyes*? What responsibility with *seeing*? How does the eye bend? How does it fold to contain? The relationship with images is not so much about what the gaze gathers, or the way in which it isolates.

Even if the history of art has carried out systematic attempts to transform the gaze into a discipline, embracing images has little to do with being *before* something, with modulating the justness of that distance.

Looking does not fit into a gaze.

(!) Werner Hamacher, «Lingua Amissa: The Messianism of Commodity-Language and Derrida's Specters of Marx», in M. Sprinker (ed.), *Ghostly Demarcation: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx*. Verso, Nueva York, 1999, pp. 189, quoted by: Mauro Senatore (ed.), *Performatives after deconstruction*, Bloomsbury, Londres, 2013, p. 1

(2) Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, Verso, London, 2021.

(3) Tiqqun, *The Cybernetic Hypothesis*, semiotext(e), London, 2020. This paragraph replicates in a partially altered form Tiqqun's analysis, pp. 159-160.



By Florent Delval **HAMEDINE KANE**
A SCHOOL FOR THE FUTUR

In recent years, the decolonization of knowledge has become more and more visible, especially in West Africa. Hamedine Kane, a Mauritanian-Senegalese artist living in Brussels, gives us access to this intellectual and artistic effervescence, the extent of which is still poorly perceived from Europe.

The imposing shape of the building evokes a fantasy of science fiction from another time. They are the ruins of an African utopia. This inverted pyramid is the *Université du Futur Africain*, located near Dakar between Sebikotane, the former site of the colonial-inspired William Ponty School, and Diamniadio, site of the Smart City. Its announcement made a lot of noise in 2005 but only ghosts now walk these corridors. One of them is undoubtedly that of modernity, an idea already disembodied at the dawn of the 21st century.

However, if the African modernist project has fallen into disuse, it should not be forgotten that European modernity, synonymous with both the concentration of knowledge and disciplinary separations, has also reached a dead end.

The paradox is that Africa currently appears as a place of circulation of knowledge in full transformation. Decolonization has begun on the territories but it continues to padlock the future, a word that the West refuses to use in Africa. However, the Afro Futurist movement dates back to the 1960s and one can imagine that it inspired the University of the Mutants.

Léopold Senghor, president and poet, created this school with a unique project on the island of Gorée, where tens of thousands of enslaved Africans had lost their past. Senghor was then in search of endogenous knowledge and thirsty for universalism. But the adventure gradually faded away, probably also frozen in a certain idea of the future.

However, in recent years, names from the past have resurfaced. Universities of African Futures is the title of an exhibition at Le Lieu Unique in 2021. Curator Oulimata Gaye, a specialist in African Science Fiction asks this question, «What is left of the Non-Aligned Futures?»

Another name emerges from an alternative future: L'École des Mutants. This collaborative platform of Hamedine Kane and Stéphane Verlet-Bottéro explores educational policies in West Africa in an attempt to understand how they have been shaped by colonial models and addresses the question of utopia.

I meet Hamedine in a café in Brussels, where he greets familiar faces, friends and colleagues throughout the interview. The Belgian capital is for him a base that allows him, as a Mauritanian-Senegalese, to think about mental and political borders and to reflect on the circulation of knowledge. Today, he has an appointment with Marie-Yemta Moussanang, from the association Génération Afrotopia, inspired by Felwine Sarr's emblematic essay and creator of the podcast Afrotopiques.

Self-taught, it is through his encounters that he was formed. Without doubt, this might be the best position to have a critical look at the access to knowledge.

Arrived in Belgium as a documentalist, he rubs shoulders with the artistic milieu of Brussels. Few people around him think that Hamedine is a potential artist in the making. Of this ordinary racism, he doesn't seem to have any complaints. In this regard

he offers this scathing, but not bitter remark: «The first thing that struck me when I arrived here was the ignorance of Europeans about the rest of the world». It is clear that his vision of the knowledge economy is not articulated in terms of center/periphery. However, the symbolic model of a Western world as the sole master of education remains imprinted in people's minds. Together we see that many immigrant and racialized artists suffer from an imposter complex. Despite international recognition, he sometimes has difficulty defining himself as an artist. But Hamedine transforms adversity into strength: this feeling of always being illegitimate becomes an injunction to invest in projects that make sense. This strength of character pushed him, from a workshop led by Benoît Mariage, in the reception center where he found himself during his asylum application, to become an accomplished director.

Exile and immigration are at the heart of his personal work. The journeys are sometimes anonymous, the arrivals floating. When he films the inhabitants of the Petit Château, the arrival center for asylum seekers, from his studio, he captures their wanderings. When he doesn't know what to film, he starts by filming his feet, the ground he walks on as if the journey were the only point of reference. He is an artist without a studio, sensitive to the geography and movements of the streets. He feels like an ethnologist. It is thus quite naturally that he privileges an art of movement. He films as he would take notes during his travels, as a field filmmaker.

“What is left of the Non-Aligned Futures?”

An encounter and a personal journey brought him to film, without knowing the Senegalese cinematographic heritage. He only discovered Ousmane Sembène or Djibril Diop Mambety much later because these films no longer circulate in Senegal. This undoubtedly raises once again the question of the colonization of knowledge and art: the national cinema has difficulty in existing and even more so in being preserved. The film industry remains extremely concentrated geographically.

His youth was bathed in a completely different culture, that of the griots in the Peul language that he listened to on the radio; the tales and epics that his grandmother also passed on to him. Thus, Hamedine developed very early a certain artistic sensitivity in contact with artistic forms totally ignored in the West.

Through Schools of Mutants, he seeks to honor forms of education neglected by colonizing authorities. The popular assembly is the first form of counter-narrative. It is a form of community organization but it is a form of transmission. African societies are organized around the palaver tree or the market. It is a much more horizontal system. In any case, this is one of the tracks that School of Mutants explores in its protean work: installation or sculpture, confe-

rences, manifesto... The emblematic piece that undoubtedly made the duo School of Mutants known is a multi-channel video that is simply called «The School Of Mutants». Two characters obliquely confront two visions of the future, one disillusioned, the other optimistic. The basis of this discussion is partly derived from Felwine Sarr's ideas, notably when the female character says «Emergence is a death drive». It would probably not be a misunderstanding to link this formula to the condemnation of development, that colonial injunction.

“The first thing that struck me when I arrived here was the ignorance of Europeans about the rest of the world.”

Sarr furthermore calls for an exit from «re-production and mimetic teaching» by unraveling the complex links that tie Africa to the West (1). Moreover, knowledge about Africa is strongly marked by Western anthropological views. In this case, it is difficult to determine how much of it is myth. However, Hamedine Kane does not offer a simplistic vision that would postulate a purity of African culture. An admirer of Germaine Acogny, he is interested in the Mudra Afrique school that she directed for a time. This historical and influential pedagogical project was an offshoot of Maurice Bédart's Belgian school; the question of the colonization of pedagogies and aesthetics is still being asked. Yet Germaine Acogny is now the emblem of a unique style, awarded a Golden Lion in 2021. Reality is always complex, and this is how it resurfaces in her films. In his documentary *La Maison Bleue*, Hamedine Kane shows how the artist Alpha recreated a personal paradise in the hell of the «jungle» of Calais. Together, they evoke village life with nostalgia in the middle of this passage zone. The West has imposed dysfunctional myths over the centuries that have produced paradoxes. Thus Paris, the center of a colonial empire was also the capital of the non-aligned (2). «Trois Américains à Paris» is one of Hamedine Kane's latest projects, where we discover that a major page of Black American literature was written in the capital, through Richard Wright, Chester Himes and James Baldwin. Other stories inside the ruins. We are witnessing an exciting moment in which the crisis of Western modernity is liberating other imaginaries from the shackles of capitalist and other forms of oppression. The school of Mutants, like Felwine Sarr and his doctoral school *Ateliers de la pensée* or *Raw Académie* invited by the ICA in Philadelphia, give hope in other ontologies, other heritages, other aesthetics anchored in an innovative Africa.

(1) Afrotopia. p.100 et sq. (Philippe Rey 2016)

(2) Michael Goebel «Paris, capitale du tiers monde. Comment est née la révolution anticoloniale (1919-1939)» (La Découverte 2017)

"I don't want to be reconciled - I don't want to be reconciled - I don't want to be reconciled!"

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1ST ISSUE

CONFLICT



SEPT. 2020

WITH
**JIMMIE
DURHAM**



"I congratulated them on the fact that they made a robot parrot a dead poet!"

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2ND ISSUE

BAD AI



NOV. 2020

WITH
**KENNETH
GOLDSMITH**



"The Creole is still at the peripheries of French as the language of the non educated"

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N5

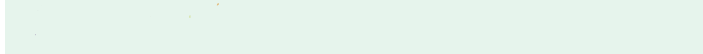
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MAY - 2021

WITH
**JEAN
D'AMERIQUE**

DANIELA ORTIZ
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MIJO MIQUEL
SALOME RODRIGUEZ



«Soy lugar común como el eco de las voces el rostro de la luna»

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with
**REGINA JOSÉ
GALINDO**

magazine for discourse



Are there any tell tale signs of strange swirls that can foretell unseen rocks?

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3RD ISSUE

BORDERS

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WITH
MARIA THEREZA ALVES



"...hence we are tired. And angry. And perhaps also not particularly eager to mobilize even more."

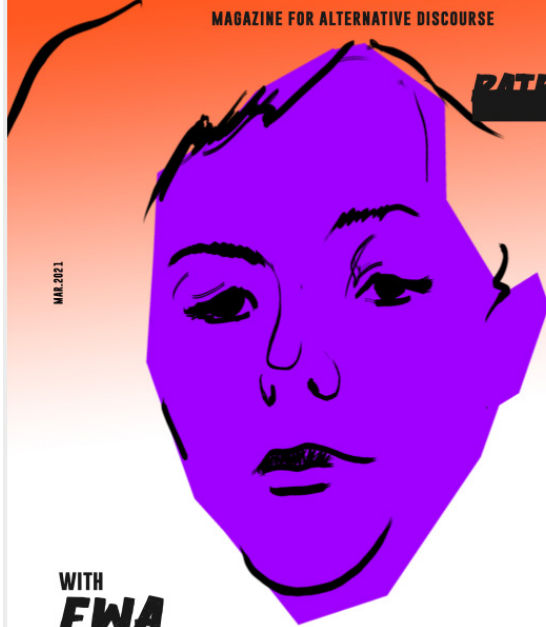
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N°4

PATRIARCHY

MAR. 2021



WITH
EWA MAJEWSKA

"Une fois qu'on a commencé à voir nos histoires, on peut commencer d'être libéré !"

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MONUMENTS

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For a real qualitative leap in education, we need a time of citizenship.

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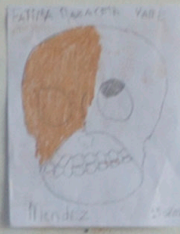
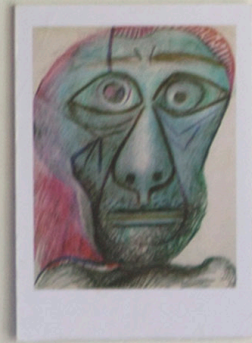
PEDAGOGIES

MAY 2022



WITH
CESARE PIETROUSTI





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PEDAGOGIES