



Misfitness: the hermeneutics of failure and the poetics of the clown – Heidegger and clowns

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ABSTRACT – Misfitness: the hermeneutics of failure and the poetics of the clown – Heidegger and clowns – The article presents some Heideggerian ideas applied to the art of clowning. Four principles of practice of the clown's art are analysed in the light of misfitness – a concept based on the clown's ability not to fit into theatrical, cinematic and social conventions, thus creating a language of his own. In an ontological approach, this article seeks to examine what it means to be a clown-in-the-world. Following a Heideggerian principle, the clown is analysed here taking into account his artistic praxis; a clown is what a clown does: this is the basic principle of clown poetics. The conclusion proposes a look at the clown's way of thinking – which is here called misfit logic – and shows the *hermeneutics of failure*, where the logic of success becomes questionable.

Keywords: **Heidegger. Clown. Phenomenology. Philosophy. Theatre.**

RÉSUMÉ – Misfitness (Inadaptation): l'herméneutique de l'échec et la poétique du clown – Heidegger et les clowns – L'article présente quelques idées heideggeriennes appliquées à l'art du clown. Quatre principes de pratique de l'art du clown sont analysés à la lumière de l'inadéquation – un concept basé sur la capacité du clown à ne pas s'inscrire dans les conventions théâtrales, cinématographiques et sociales, créant ainsi son propre langage. Dans une approche ontologique, cet article cherche à examiner ce que signifie être un clown dans le monde. Suivant un principe heideggerien, le clown est analysé ici en tenant compte de sa pratique artistique; le clown est ce que le clown fait: c'est le principe de base de la poétique du clown. La conclusion propose de jeter un regard sur la façon de penser du clown – appelée ici logique inadaptée – et montre *l'herméneutique de l'échec*, où la logique du succès devient discutable.

Mots-clés: **Heidegger. Clown. Phénoménologie. Philosophie. Théâtre.**

RESUMO – Desajustamento: a hermenêutica do fracasso e a poética do palhaço – Heidegger e os palhaços – O artigo apresenta algumas ideias heideggerianas aplicadas à arte da palhaçaria. Quatro princípios de prática da arte dos palhaços são analisados à luz do *desajustamento* – um conceito baseado na capacidade que o palhaço tem de não se enquadrar nas convenções teatrais, cinematográficas e sociais criando assim uma linguagem própria. Em uma abordagem ontológica, o artigo procura examinar o que significa ser um palhaço-no-mundo. Ao seguir um princípio Heideggeriano, o palhaço é analisado aqui levando em conta o seu fazer artístico; o palhaço é o que o palhaço faz: esse é o princípio básico da poética do palhaço. A conclusão propõe um olhar sobre a forma de pensar do palhaço – que aqui é chamada de lógica desajustada – e mostra a *hermenêutica do fracasso*, na qual a lógica do sucesso se torna questionável.

Palavras-chave: **Heidegger. Palhaço. Fenomenologia. Filosofia. Teatro.**

Clown Philosophy

Once, when I was a little boy, marching with my class in the Independence Day parade, my mother came to me afterwards and said: “Well done, Marcelo. You were the only one marching in the right way. The rest of the class got it all wrong!”. I start this article with this personal anecdote because it shows that I always had a tendency of not fitting in to communal practices, such as marching like soldiers during the military dictatorship in Brazil. From an early age, I felt like a misfit, always awkward in the world. Little did my mother imagine that her rose-tinted spectacles of maternal love encouraged me towards a lifelong practice of standing out through being different, or in the eyes of all the other mothers, simply getting it wrong. Inadvertently, following the Heideggerian principle of an object becoming noticeable through failure to perform as expected, when I marched differently to the rest of the parade and thereby failed to fit in, I gained some kind of *stage presence* through my unique failure. This might be the main philosophical approach in this article that is related to the field of Performance Philosophy. This tendency of mine of not fitting in found its professional outlet in 1982, when I met a group of clowns and we created the Circo Teatro Udigrudi¹, a clown company that is still in activity today. After almost forty years of performing as a clown and four years of research at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, I write this article about the philosophy of the clown based on my own experience as a misfit clown.

This article presents a short version of my doctoral thesis called the *Poetics of the Clown, Principles of Practice and Misfitness* (Beré, 2016)². Here, I will scrutinize four clown’s principle of practice and their relationship with the hermeneutics of failure. In other words, an attempt to show how a clown’s logic may work – a misfit logic embodied in the actions of the clown. I have taken some of Martin Heidegger’s ideas and attempted to relate them to the world of clowning. For instance, the very idea of misfitness – the thread that binds this article – comes from the development of a Heideggerian hypothesis that *we are never at home in the world*. Heidegger is given to generalizations³, such as his concept of *average intelligibility* – a fundamental premise for understanding misfitness.

Nevertheless, he also posited that to be human is to interpret the world and oneself in the world; and he claims that every encounter involves an interpretation influenced by an individual's personal experiences and background. This is one of the basic premises of Heidegger's fundamental ontology, which later he called hermeneutical phenomenology. An existential paradox between *das Man* and *Dasein*, or the collective and the individual.

However, this article is about the presence of the clown – principles of practice examined through the light of philosophy. I acknowledge that the spectrum of misfitness is very vast, but the main goal of this article is to present an ontological approach to clown's praxis through a Heideggerian lens.

The Misfit Clown

The clown is a misfit figure that insists on appearing in almost all cultures and traditions, from the first record of a clown performing in ancient Egypt to the Hotxuá, the sacred clown of the Brazilian Krahô Indian tribes, performing at the dawn of the twenty-first century; from clowns in Shakespeare to clowns appearing on today's television. Nevertheless, this universalism is ambiguous: clowns might have defining characteristics that make them clowns, for instance, making people laugh; and yet, at the same time, "[...] jokes and gags are context-sensitive [...] because they refer to the gestures, artefacts, norms, and values characteristic of their immediate material and social environment" (Bouissac, 2015, p. 1). Thus, we can only identify a clown in a specific given context: there are only specific clowns, not clowns *in general*. Nevertheless, I want to suggest that we might find characteristics that, when viewed ontologically, indeed belong to the clown *in general*. In this article, I will focus on the ontology of the clown, that is, what it means to be a clown in the world. For this, I will scrutinise common principles of practice that compose the poetics of the clown.

Humour and comedy are characteristics of the clown and typically found in clown-like⁴ acts which provoke in the audience a sense of complicity with the clown. But what I would like to propose here is that the empathy that the audience feels with the clown in his or her performance is

better understood as a form of identification grounded in the phenomenon of *misfitness*. The clown figure represents the misfit in society and in the world on stage or on film. The image often associated to the clown – of the hopeless dupe or naïve idiot – is really an invitation to the audience to see the world with other eyes; the perspective of reality from a clown's point of view. In disclosing aspects of what the German philosopher Martin Heidegger called the referential context of the world – the world of average and habitual practices in which we live our lives – clowns, I will argue, become *disclosing agents* through the embodiment of misfitness; and what they disclose is precisely these contingent but tacit laws that govern our daily lives but which, once disclosed by the clown, are likely to be also challenged by them.

Now, the clown reveals *misfitness* by playing precisely with the idea of fitting in. Clowns can either fail to fit in, or when trying to fit in, fail. In failing they reveal to the audience something about the referential context that we all inhabit – the world we share in common. What is provocative in clown performance is precisely that the clown breaks with our expectations about fitting in – either deliberately or not. The clown provokes the audience with his ridiculous attitudes and ludicrous posturing by creating an *in-between situation and a temporary zone of turbulence*⁵. Surprising the audience with unexpected actions, the provocation induces a reaction. This reaction, for the majority of clown theorists and practitioners, is ideally laughter. Thus, a clown performance develops through a process of chain reaction between the performer and the audience, leading to an uncomfortable but necessary realisation: for whatever the transgression may be that elicits that reaction, it only makes sense against the backdrop of a shared world of practices. Whether in the case of the live performance of clown or the clown on film, it is the world shared with the audience that provides the context for the clown to lay bare our *misfitness* grasped as an ontological condition for what Heidegger calls being-in-the-world.

Misfitness and Failure: to be a clown-in-the-world

Of course, clowns comprehend the world in different, sometimes in opposite, ways to that which the members of the audience are used to. This problem of how clowns comprehend the shared world leads to a basic

premise of what I shall here call the clown's hermeneutics of failure. Taking hermeneutics in the Heideggerian sense to mean a practice of disclosure, the clown can be thought of as an agent of disclosure: he or she discloses the *world* through failing to fit into this same world. In this approach, the term *world* does not signify the planetary sphere, the Earth, or habitats or environments. Here, the world is understood as the referential totality of human practices and embodied meanings that constitutes an *average reality* for someone in a given society. I argue that the interpretation of this act of disclosing via techniques of practised failure is what differentiates a clown from a non-clown performer. I am suggesting, in short, an approach to clowning that sees the clown as an agent of disclosure because of the way he or she discloses the world through the hermeneutics of failure. It is not just the fact that clowns fail to fit in this world of practices; it is also – as we shall see – the way clowns interpret and understand failure.

Heidegger posits that to be a human being – or what he terms *Dasein*, meaning literally *being there* – is to be in the world and to dwell on the earth; and yet he also believed that *we are never at home in the world*. My reading of this Heideggerian paradox is that we are – as human beings – misfits. To the extent that we are never fully at home in the world we are always trying to *fit into* this same world. How we fit in is through everyday practiced ways of coping, but insofar as our coping skills are imperfect, we also fail to fit in. One of the core suggestions of this article is that being a misfit is one of the defining features of being human.

Misfitness⁶ is not a word you can find in the dictionary, but the concept is relatively easy to grasp. What inspired me to use this neologism is the fact that we, human beings, are born without the chance of choosing our place of birth, our time, or our family. As Heidegger says, it is like we are *thrown* into the world. If we take Heidegger's expression *thrownness* (*Geworfenheit*) as a starting point to understand the concept of *misfitness*, we can say that every single human being is thrown into existence and each is thrown into a particular existential situation. This statement implies that we did not have the option to choose our condition as existential beings. We simply came (or were thrown) into this world, into a family and into a specific society; in other words, into a time and place. Or more specifically, we were thrown into the world at a certain point in historical time and in a

geographical place on this planet, with no choice or control over this matter. Moreover, to be *thrown*, in the Heideggerian sense, means that I understand the possibilities of my existence from the contingent world in which I find myself. At the same time, because I do not have the option of choosing which *world* this world is, the world is also *necessary* for me: the world itself could have been different, but it is this way for me. The way we adapt to the world defines who we are. And we need to fit into the world because we, each one of us in our own way, were born as misfits. The misfit condition of the human being is not only an anthropological and sociological one, it is a primordial ontological condition for being human – as Alva Nöe (2012, p. 13) puts it:

Modern political [and philosophical] thought begins with the recognition that we don't choose to be born, and we don't choose the conditions of our birth. You don't choose to be born a human being. You don't choose to be born here rather than there, now rather than then, male rather than female, loved rather than unloved, sick rather than healthy, wealthy rather than poor. One day you are here. You are like Gregor Samsa in Kafka's story. You wake up and find that you are present.

But once we are in the here and now, we soon learn the necessity of fitting in. To fit in to the family, we did not choose; to fit in to the school we attend and the society of which we are a part; to fit into the world. The risk of not fitting in is the risk of being considered an outsider, alien, alienated or mad. However, I am not implying that *thrownness* is a sufficient condition of misfitness. Another Heideggerian concept is *das Man*, variously translated into English as the They, the One, or the others. *Das Man* stands for the average one, or the average intelligibility to which we all tend to conform. In order to understand the concept of misfitness, we have to try to draw an understanding of what fitting-in means. Once we are *thrown* in the world, we face a contingent condition of adaptation to norms. Fitting in could be seen as an invisible phenomenon. According to this line of thought, we all tend to conform to norms, even if we do not notice or realize it. Once the norm is there, contingent and imperceptible, it becomes so familiar that we tend to fit in with it without even noticing that we are doing so.

Misfitness implies something else: my existence is always dynamic, and I am constantly adapting my way of being to a given context; I try to do

things, with *more or less* success; I try to fit in with others (*das Man*), with *more or less* success; I understand who I am by means of conventions that I do not question, with *more or less* success – it is in the difference between *more or less*, in my trying to fit in that I can also fail, and that is where and when I am constituted as a kind of misfit. The point I want to make here is that misfitness is both a universal condition and a singular one: universal in the sense that we all can be seen as misfits; but singular insofar as each one of us fails to fit in in our own particular way.

What I therefore claim is that the clown represents the one who accepts his condition as misfit and makes the most of it. Clowns are misfits because they fail to conform (even when they try) to habitual and practiced ways of doing things. We do the things we do in the way we do because we just take this way of doing for granted. The performer that performs the clown uses techniques that highlight the misfit qualities of the clown that the clown does not fit into an everyday context, the *world* or even into some theatrical conventions and expectations – for instance, frequently disregarding the fourth wall that protects the audience from his or her antics⁷. The clown performer proposes and creates clown conventions in relation to the given practical context of our average being-in-the-world – this is what I call the *poetics of the clown*, which derives from the clown's practising of the *hermeneutics of failure* in this article⁸. It will be suggested that behind the *appearance* of the clown-misfit there is a set of techniques and skills – what I am calling principles of practice – that produces the sense of failure that I relate to the concept of misfitness. The clown performer uses his body in-the-moment to reveal both the singularity of their own unique misfitness, and the general context of being-in-the-world in which misfitness is disclosed as our general *ontological* condition⁹.

Four Clown Principles under the Umbrella of Failure

Clowns and their way of processing failure bring the attention of the audience to a different way of coping with and grasping the world: here failure can be either a bodily failure or the failure of dealing with an object, the failure of fitting into a social or cultural context or even a failure in the interpretation of a situation. Rather than learning through failure to perfect their actions, clowns make use of failure to bring to light hidden aspects of

theatricality and worldly behaviour. In daily life, it is advisable to perform one's task trying to fit into the frame of conformism and to take care to avoid failure. Nevertheless, clowns tend to work in the opposite direction; they work with failure. To develop the skills of the clown's body is to understand how failure works in terms of helping the comic body to be revealed and to work on the things that failure brings to light. For example, the failure of a piece of equipment or misuse of an everyday object, or even inappropriate dysfunctions of the body, discloses the referential context within which we operate; and it is precisely in playing with this kind of pragmatic breakdown of everyday things, objects and bodies that clowns become agents of world disclosure. Shaun May (2015) summarizes the existential dimension of this social experience of failure as follows: "[T]he objects failure discloses the context structuring our activity and the body failure can disclose our finitude" (May, 2015, p. 10). My understanding of clowns is that they have the capacity, through their practice and the way they process failure, to "[...] induce an anxiety which reveals the groundlessness of the world and throws us ineluctably back to that world" (May, 2015, p. 231). I would add that the clown in action makes visible what was once invisible or imperceptible. Failure is part of life, while fitting in can be seen as an invisible phenomenon. If everything is working according to our expectations, we tend not to notice the structures and norms governing our activities and relations with other people. The *conventional* situation is a transparent relationship, in the sense that it is generally unnoticed by us, unless something out of the ordinary occurs. Here the idea of failing to fit into conventional patterned behaviours indicates that a clown's principles of practice induces some sort of rupture, provocation, or revelation, inviting the audience to see the world from a different perspective. And it is this idea – that failure is a factor in the disclosing of the world – that leads to the idea of the clown as an agent of disclosure. On the other hand, for Heidegger, every *Dasein* discloses a world. As Dreyfus and Spinoza also explain: "[...] our nature is to be world disclosers. That is, by means of our equipment and coordinated practices we human beings open coherent, distinct contexts or worlds in which we perceive, feel, act, and think" (Dreyfus; Spinoza apud Kompridis 2006, p.

265). In which case, the clown here must be seen as a special agent of disclosure: the clown is the one who discloses the world by failing to fit in.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable scenes in Chaplin's movies that illustrates my point can be seen in *City Lights* (1931) in the opening scene. In the foreground of this scene we can encounter a crowd of people gathering for a public event. In the background, we see what looks like a statue covered with a white cloth. The scene cuts to the mayor, who – officiating over the event – is giving a speech, introducing a lady who will be responsible for the unveiling of the statue. After their ceremonial speeches by both representatives of high society, the lady pulls the rope that will reveal to the assembled crowd the public monument for *peace and prosperity*. What is revealed when the cloth is swept from it is a monument composed of three statues of classical design, one standing up, one on her knees holding a sword and one sitting down. In the lap of the sitting figure we find Chaplin's tramp, sleeping like a baby. The following sequence shows the crowd becoming wary and the authorities shouting at the tramp. When he tries to get down, his pants get caught on the statue's sword. While the tramp is trying to get out of his uncomfortable position, the band strikes-up the national anthem. The authorities and the crowd stop to show their respect, assuming a solemn attitude, while the tramp also tries to respect the *right posture*, which is impossible to achieve because he is hanging by his trousers from the statue's sword. The next couple of minutes of this scene show the tramp *interacting* with the statues in a non-conventional way (sitting on their faces, saluting them, and so on) until he finally makes his escape by jumping over the back fence. In this case, the crowd represents the conformism of *das Man* and the clown, by not fitting in, discloses the bare reality of the time, exposing both its norms and its contradictions – peace and prosperity if you are wealthy but not, it seems, if you are poor.

The Everyday Object and the Misfit Object

Grock, the great Swiss clown, tells us in his autobiography: “Ever since I can remember all kinds of inanimate objects have had a way of looking at me reproachfully and whispering to me in unguarded moments: ‘We have been waiting for you ... at last you’ve come ... take us now, and turn us into

something different” (Grock, 1931, p. 29). Clowns have a very particular and peculiar way of dealing with objects. While in our daily life we interact with objects in a meaningful way, denoting that we have a functional interaction with objects – for example, we use a hammer to hammer a nail –, clowns deal with objects in a way that challenges their everyday utilitarian function – a clown can use the hammer to fix a clock as Chaplin does in the film *The Pawnshop* (1916), or a shoe can become food as happens in *The Gold Rush* (1925). Through their way of interacting with objects, clowns reveal something about the objects that the audience would otherwise not notice or perceive in everyday engagement with them. This relationship with objects can also disclose something about the referential context that was concealed by the average way of using equipment.

Heidegger posits that an object makes sense according to its function in a given context, that is, an item of equipment has a primary function: every piece of equipment or object has a specific *what-for* – the hammer is for hammering; the shoe is for wearing. However, this *functionability* only makes sense if we consider the context, that is, other equipment and other *what-fors*¹⁰. The example Heidegger uses to clarify the meaning of referential totality is the workshop where the carpenter works: the hammer, the nails, the table, and the planks of wood – all these objects refer to one another, according to the practices of the craftsman. The relationship established between each one of these elements and the way one copes and gets involved with them, in terms of practice, defines the referential totality of the carpenter’s world. The malfunctioning object is only highlighted because it contrasts with all the functioning ones – it stands out from them in an obtrusive way. In a kitchen or workshop where everything works according to its function, except for one object, that object will gain a quality of *stage presence* through its unique failure.

The relationship with objects is based on our experience and knowledge of such referential contexts, which is embodied and translated into our worldly actions or the way we interact with our surroundings. When Heidegger elaborates on the idea of human being as *Dasein*, he already suggests some sort of mundane and practical contextualization of our existence, since to be a human being implies *being there* in the world. There is an indication that being-there means being-somewhere-with-

someone-and-something. There is also an indication that being-in-the-world presupposes a fundamental structure or a referential totality that underpins our daily life and its practices. The Heideggerian concept of referential totality is crucial for the understanding of my approach to misfitness, and as a consequence crucial in clarifying the phenomenological meaning of the misfit object. To be a human being in the world means to relate to other human beings, animals, and equipment in specific and concrete contexts of use. It is not just a matter of spatiality (the world is not an abstraction for Heidegger) but a matter of pragmatic relationships – how one relates to and dwells within this referential totality by means of one’s involvements occurring within it. Fundamentally, then, objects are defined by their practical meaning or use. In order to hammer the nail, I need a hammer. The hammer and nail are internally related by the task at hand – say, to put up a shelf: this is what they are used for (a specific *what-for*). For clowns, however, it is not the proper use of the object that is signified, but their misuse – what I call the *what-else-for* of the object. Take the example of an umbrella: in terms of its normal function, one uses an umbrella to protect oneself from the rain or the sun. If we use it on a rainy day to prevent ourselves from getting wet, then it is fulfilling its assigned function. If a clown uses it as a parachute, like the legendary Russian clown Oleg Popov used to do in his act, to jump from a chair into a glass of water, it suggests a different way of using the object – not the *what-for* of the object but its *what-else-for*.

Charlie Chaplin provides an iconic example of how clowns (mis)use objects and make them part of the action. Chaplin (1964, p. 281) says in his autobiography: “In a state of quiet desperation, I wandered through the property room in the hope of finding an old prop that might give me an idea: remains of old sets, a jail door, a piano or a mangle”. He was looking for an object that could inspire him, or objects that could be used in a way that would transgress their normative usage – and this is strictly related to the idea of the *what-else-for* of the object. May (2015) suggests the expression *Chaplinesque transgressions* to summarize the way the Little Tramp relates to objects by redirecting their purpose to unconventional uses, and he posits: “[...] in object failure or Chaplinesque transgression [...] the fundamental structure that underpins our everyday understanding

of our world becomes salient” (May, 2015, p. 64); while Carroll (1998, p. 57) indicates the what-else-for of Chaplin’s approach to objects, when he writes: “Chaplin’s gags have a great deal to do with objects [...] He transforms them into other things ... He treats objects metaphorically”. Chaplin’s Thanksgiving supper scene in *The Gold Rush* (1925) shows us that Chaplin might treat one boot as food, but the other one stays on his foot (the equipment functioning as it should). Moreover, the pot he cooks it in, the plate he serves it on, and the cutlery he cuts it with are all used in the *average way*, fulfilling their specific *what-for*. It was suggested that these other objects doing what they ought to do and being used how they ought to be used form the background (the Heideggerian idea of *referential totality* considered above) through which we understand the exceptional object use. The objects being used in the *ordinary way* define a referential context that helps highlight the incongruity of the *what-else-for* of the misfit object. Just as the clown does not only work with the what-for of the object, but also with the *what-else-for* so he could be seen to work not with the how-to, but with the how-else-to perform an action. In Heideggerian terms, rather than remaining within the standard patterns of behaviour or usage of equipment, misfitness is manifested in the way the clown copes, gets involved, resolves or complicates the interaction with a specific object in a given situation.

My claim is that objects can be used by clowns in a transgressive way – a practical usage that paradoxically challenges the established pragmatic way of using things; using everyday equipment¹¹ in an extra-daily way. The relationship that clowns establish with an object is what alters the perception of the object – for the audience – from an ordinary into an extraordinary thing. The *disfunctionability* of an object can bring to light the whole referential context where the object is typically found. I would add that one of the radical possibilities of this principle of practice for clowns is the capacity to challenge the referential totality of the social world, and sometimes a whole context of human activity, through the way clowns deal with objects.

Ordinary and Extraordinary Misfit Relationships

It will be suggested below that human relationships have social patterns, tacit laws and behavioural compartments that *function* adequately

for the expectations of a given culture or society, but that clown relationships tend to disclose an intrinsic *dysfunction-ability* in their use of the social norms that regulate our daily behaviours. The misfit relationship is related to the way clowns fail to fit in with a given cultural and social context. Of course, there is a vast spectrum of *dysfunctionability* and other examples of misfit relationships could be analysed through a similar approach – however, the focus here is related to clowns while performers.

In order to grasp, however, what a misfit relationship is, we first need to clarify what a relationship of *fitting-in* is. It is important to understand here a key term that Heidegger uses to characterise the phenomenon of *being-with* others. Heidegger's conception of a human being, or *Dasein*, is that we are relational beings. In our everyday life, our ordinary way of being is being-with one another. To be-in-the world implies a relationship with *others* or what he calls *Mitsein*. Our engagement with equipment, situations, and world always already presupposes a social relation – each refers to our *being with* one another.

By 'others' we do not mean everyone else but me – those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom [...] one does not distinguish oneself – those among whom one is too [...] the world is always the one I share with others (Heidegger; Macquarie; Robinson, 2012, p. 154-155).

Heidegger's claim is that the notion of an *individual person*, vis-à-vis the *separable human being*, is misleading. He suggests that *being-with* is part of our ontological constitution in a far more primordial way than our being an *individual* human being. We are first *with others* before we are *by ourselves*. To be in the world is always already being-with and for the sake of others. We not only depend on common social practices; they are incorporated in our daily lives and embodied by each of us in the form of a self-interpretation that is performed in relation to the social and historical circumstances *one* finds oneself in alongside others.

Although Heidegger does not discuss this point specifically, I would suggest that *being-with* others is also a question of social *positionality* – that is, the relative positions of status, authority and power that those relations imply and in which each of us is *always already* caught up. Whilst it may be that clowns are not necessarily concerned with discourses of power, their relationship to the world nonetheless does deal with such issues of status

and therefore one can always find political connotations in clownery. This is most traditionally portrayed in clown performances and analysed in clown literature through the figures of the Whiteface Clown and the Auguste. One historical reference of this kind of clown duo was Footit and Chocolat at the turn of the nineteenth century. “Their performances revealed, as none had before, the character contrasts and comedic potential inherent in the combination of the [authoritarian] whiteface clown and the silly [and oppressed] Auguste”, writes Towsen (1976, p. 218). If we consider the classical model of the clown duo (the Whiteface and the Auguste), the Whiteface is the one who stands for the norms of his given society (the straight man, the one who is always trying to show that he is part of the culture and, moreover, that he could even be the ideal representative of this culture). Put otherwise, the Whiteface can be seen as the embodiment of the axiomatic figure of the *conformist misfit*, as I shall call him. The Auguste, on the other hand, is the one that does not fit in. He dresses and behaves in a very peculiar way. His clothes, gestures and attitudes are eccentric. When a clown *entrée* required a third character, the role was played by the ringmaster, sometimes called Monsieur Loyal, after a nineteenth-century ringmaster. This third element usually embodied the role of the whiteface clown as a representative of the norms and society. Another reference in clown history is the trio of the Fratellini brothers. In an almost hierarchical manner, François played the witty straight man (or whiteface); Paul played the first Auguste and Albert the second Auguste. The latter is closer to what one understands today as a *classical Auguste* or the archetypal image of the red nose clown. The hierarchical status between the clowns was clear – from the costumes they wore to the roles they played: François, elegant, clever and intellectual; Albert, grotesque, clumsy and fussy; and Paul halfway between them, sometimes taking the side of conformism, sometimes taking the side of the rebel. These *status games* were essential for the clown plot to work. Despite being at the bottom of the social hierarchy, if we take into consideration social norms, Albert always found his way out of a problematic situation using his clown logic (simple solutions for complicated problems, complicated solutions for simple problems) and was responsible for the punch line, or sometimes *punch action*. Albert’s most shocking appearance – “which he himself described as

being that of a hairy monkey” (Towsen, 1976, p. 237), influenced not just generations of clowns (including Charles Rivel in Spain, Piolin and Arrelia in Brazil and Ronald McDonald globally) but also painters, artists and the mass media; not to mention that the red nose – *the smallest mask in the world* – originated in the traditional Auguste’s make-up.

Many Augustes in traditional circus and silent movies adopted the figure of a tramp or vagabond, an exemplary social outsider or... misfit. Most analyses of the clown, however, do not go beyond this sort of generic associating of the clown as an archetypal social misfit – they do not detail in any concrete way the contextual specificity of that relationship. The tramp figure is at once harmless and threatening. He represents the human being that *failed* to accomplish or master some or most of the social norms that dominate society. A vagabond is unemployed and miserable. He is a threat to those who follow the norms – if you do not follow the norms you will become a tramp. The tramp is often seen as an inoffensive, pathetic and sometimes annoying figure because he is an *outsider* to the productive society, although he is also a victim of it. The tramp-clown is a representative of the human being that has failed to *fit in* in a given society or culture¹². It is for this reason that the misfit relationship must be seen as a fundamental principle of clown practice: because it stands as the very basis of both the conception and construction of a clown scene.

First, we have to acknowledge that there is a conventional way of doing something – let’s say going to a restaurant. When we go dining with our friends we expect to be served by a waiter and have our meal without major disturbances. However, if your waiter is a clown, you can expect a disruption of the norms. For instance, a clown waiter might spill your soup into your lap, or instead of carving the roast chicken, he can make it lay an egg on the customer’s forehead like Chaplin does in the film *The Ring* (1916). The profession of the waiter and waitress is dominated by well-established social rules of decorum and comportment. The main goal of this profession is to serve the client’s needs in as unobtrusive and invisible a way as possible. The fact that the waiter is in a close relationship with the various people he attends to has inspired clowns and comedians throughout time. A classic example of this kind of misfit relationship occurring in dinning places can be found in the silent film *The Cook* (1918). In this film,

Fatty Arbuckle and Buster Keaton break all the conventions that govern what we understand to be normal service in a restaurant. Arbuckle, the cook, juggles with food and kitchen tools while Keaton plays the clumsy waiter, flirting with clients and dancing like an Egyptian. Their behaviour challenges the expectations we have about a regular dining place, not to mention the health and safety standards of the kitchen. When Keaton attends a table, he gets so close to the female client's face that one has the impression that he is going to kiss her. The action is shown in a close up, indicating a level of intimacy that we do not normally see in a waiter/customer relationship. The way he serves the other tables, using acrobatic movements and juggling plates, is not how a regular waiter serves. The interaction with social norms is challenged and subverted here; as is the performance of appropriate forms of conduct associated with those norms and levels of expectation. The rules that regulate the waiter's comportment are broken. The misfit relationship can be witnessed not only in the waiter's behavioural discrepancy towards customers but also in the clown partnership between Buster and Fatty. The relationship they have with each other in this film is far from a relationship of *fitting in* with the norm – to the point that Fatty almost chops Keaton's head off. When Keaton comes into the kitchen after his duo with a belly dancer (something a regular waiter should not do), his actions *contaminate* the cook and Fatty follows his partner's logic and dances a remarkable choreography of Salome, using kitchen utensils as costumes, a cabbage as the head of John the Baptist, while a sausage becomes the snake that performs the fatal bite. This combination of principles (object, body and logic) culminates in a classical misfit relationship.

From the very beginning of the era of silent movies, the relationship with authority was explored, mocked and subverted. Mack Sennett's *The Bangville Police* (1913), often credited as the first outing for the Keystone Cops, provides one of the earliest examples of how clowns interact not just with social norms, disrupting them and exposing them to failure, but also in doing so, how they undermine and ridicule the agents who are meant to uphold those norms – the police. Sennett had in the cast some of the most iconic comedians of the time (including Fatty Arbuckle and Chaplin), and is known to have influenced a whole generation of filmmakers, including

Buster Keaton and Chaplin¹³. The Keystone Cops' acrobatic physicality, clown stunts and pratfalls are still a main point of reference today for the training of the comic body¹⁴. Extraordinary gags using trains, cars and trams gave these films a way of describing the modern world – a period of rapid social transformation, which would irrevocably transform social relations. Seen more broadly, the impression the Keystone Cops left the audience with was one of an emergent and chaotic way of living, characteristic of the fast pace of progress of the growing cities. Located within the centre of this turbulent new world, the clown became both the representation of the *one* of modernity, and a means of exposing it to ridicule: what lies at the very heart of every Keystone Cops plot is an anarchic critique of the authority of the police and its role in society. They became representatives of law and order by breaking the law and provoking disorder. The inversion, rupture or subversion of the very norms and forms of conduct that the police are meant to control and regulate – of policing the normal way fulfilling one's role in society – is a fundamental characteristic of the misfit relationship.

The Misfit Comic Body

The misfit body is the human body encountered as a body that fails – and specifically, it is a body that fails to fit into the *normative* idea of the body¹⁵. It is important to establish that the misfit body is not exclusive to clowns. Bodies fail and the idea of a normative body is easily contested. The *revelation* – meaning bringing to light – of misfitness happens when the body fails to meet conventional expectations, in a way that can happen to anyone. However, it will be suggested here that the physicality developed by the performer that plays the clown *reveals* aspects of failure that helps the audience to acknowledge the comic body in action.

A visually misfit body has been a source of comedy since the days of Roman theatre, with its extended phalluses, to the grotesque presence of the Buffoon, and even the big feet and red nose of the traditional clown. However, conceiving the misfit body as a principle of clown practice is not what the body looks like so much as what it does, that makes it a misfit comic body. I would suggest that the body of the clown is a body trained to fail, or in other words, a body in action that reveals aspects of human

physicality that fails to fit into the conventional conception of a *normative* body. Every average body has the potential to be a misfit body – meaning that in everyday life, the body works – but never quite *optimally*; and that sometimes it falls far short of the norms of optimal performance. Failing to meet those norms reveals precisely the misfitness of the body in relation to the practices it is expected to effortlessly pursue. Still, the normative body is – for the most part – unnoticed (not because it is perfect, but because by and large it *fits in*). If it is normative for a body to be – to some degree – *misfit*, then the misfit body of the clown discloses aspects of the physicality of the average body that are – for the most part in everyday life – either hidden or unnoticed in its transparency. It might sound paradoxical to say that the body can be hidden in being transparent, but this simply means that in our everyday activities, the functionality of the body is not *at issue* for us; it is there, but we do not witness it¹⁶.

What the clown's bodily actions disclose, then, is precisely what was supposed to be hidden or overlooked in our everyday comportment – aspects of our bodily imperfections, body *defects*, our inability to perform an action, or even our inevitable finitude, which resides in the body through, for instance, its aging processes – aspects that are generally hidden in the transparency of our everyday way of coping with our lives. The body is transparent, also, in the sense that most of our daily actions are done without the necessity of thought – not only do we not notice our bodies, we seldom think of them as a complex and functioning apparatus. It is only when the body fails to accomplish an everyday task in the proper way (with the emphasis on the *when*), that the dimension of bodily misfitness comes to light. This kind of misfit body is, in other words, the performed body of the clown in action: the body of the performer who is responsible for embodying the misfit logic of the clown. It will be suggested that the misfit body is disclosed when the body fails to meet with conventional expectations and that the physicality that clowns present – or the embodiment of ridiculousness – brings to our awareness the bodily nature of such failures.

We all develop bodily habits, by coping with everyday contingencies, in order to fit into a given social or cultural context. Our body *learns* how to perform tasks and the way we do it makes us *more or less* embedded in

the world we live in. This *more or less* is very important for clown performance. If the *normative body* is an ideal that we pursue but never reach, there is a constant attempt to try to fit in to a certain pattern determined by the norms of practiced coping. If our bodily coping fits in *more* with the patterns of *das Man*, it means that we are closer to embodying the average *norm* on the *normality spectrum*. The *less* we fit in with those patterns, the more the phenomenon of misfitness is experienced. When we cannot stand up because we have a numb leg, or when we stumble over our own feet, or when we get entangled in a yoga position, we experience some kind of bodily phenomenon that alerts us of our body as malfunctioning. In each case, misfitness is revealed when there is a failure in the approach to this *normalising* pattern of physically comporting oneself to the tasks set by our projects in being in the world. In other words, rather than only performing actions to fit in, our body is also capable (if not inevitably so) of performing actions that fall far short of the ideals of performance established by expectations of the *normative body*. It is precisely this failure of embodiment that clowns exploit in failing to fit into conventional stereotypical bodily behaviours, bringing to light the imperfections and incongruities that are hidden in the way the so-called *normative body* accomplishes its tasks. To work the misfit body is to work with a body that fails, has learnt to fail and accepts its failures in order to fail better¹⁷. Chaplin's roller skating skills, for example, shown in *Modern Times* (1936), where he is constantly on the verge of falling over, reveals the virtuosity involved in clown bodily *failure*, whereby the performer needs to be a highly skilled skater in order to fail at skating so dramatically.

Working on the bodily failures (or the possibility that the body can fail to accomplish a task properly) becomes a way of highlighting the comic aspects of the performer's body; thus, the highlighting and conscious manipulation of natural *imperfections* turn the clown's body into a source of comic actions. George Carl¹⁸ is an example of clown that attained a level of expertise in terms of skilful coping and the mastering the *maximum grip*¹⁹ of the comic body. This maximum grip is reached when the clown performer is able to improvise and transcend technique by developing a clown *way of seeing and reacting* to the situation, in other words, to embody the hermeneutics of failure. At this stage of expertise, the performer is capable

to combine rules and maxims without having to think about them; constructed actions become *instinctive* reactions. Carl, the clown, comes on stage to play a harmonica – but soon finds himself prevented from doing so by his own inability to control his own body. What follows is an act comprised of a series of physical gags²⁰ – a whole sequence of actions that induce the audience to think that parts of his body are not his own, or that he does not have control over them. First, the fingers of both hands get inextricably tangled; then the right thumb gets stuck in his eye, while the left thumb gets caught inside his hat; then, finally, the little finger gets stuck inside his left nostril. Using the sleeves of his jacket, Carl performs one of the most imitated sequences in clowns' repertoire. Both arms are alongside the body, but the left hand is missing. He checks the length by stretching both arms in a horizontal position. It looks like one arm is longer than the other. Back to the vertical position, he shakes his left arm harder. The left hand comes out of the sleeve but at the same time the right hand disappears inside the other sleeve. Then both hands disappear. He jumps up and down and both hands come out of their sleeves. There is an *unnatural* elasticity in the body of the clown – with arms lengthening and shortening like a cartoon character. Carl's body is a body trained to fail. A body that fails to fit into the patterns that govern the idea of the existence of a normative body, but which also represents what I call the extra-daily-virtuosic body of the clown performer²¹. He uses his embodied knowledge in order to build up each of his gags.

To be a clown, then, is to develop the skills of the misfit body; to understand how failure works in terms of helping the comic body reveal the limits of the human body. It is to work on the things that failure brings to light – for example, the fallacy that there is a model of a body that is perfectly adapted to a specific culture/society; that there is an ideal bodily form of behaving. Through manipulating failure at the level of embodiment, the clown's hermeneutics of failure reveals the body that fails and in doing so brings attention to itself as limited and finite being-in-the-world: it discloses the imperfections that we all carry around with us in our everyday lives, and it points to the ever-present possibility of the malfunctioning of the body in a specific pragmatic context.

Misfit logic: the logic of the contrariwise

The final principle of clown poetics is that of the clown's misfit logic. Misfit logic as a principle of practice for clowning might seem contradictory: how can we relate logic to clownish practices? But, in fact, it is precisely misfit logic that grounds clown practices. This principle is perhaps the most important for a clown's practice precisely because misfit logic is not necessarily related to rational ways of *thinking*, but is revealed in the way clowns *behave* while performing. Another way of putting this is to say that misfit logic is *situational* and embedded in the world of human practices; when we think about how a clown *thinks in action*, we come to the root of the clown's logic – in other words, the logic of the clown has to do with the embodied know-how that the performer must have. This embodied know-how is built upon the performer's practice and experience. Misfit logic is not, however, just another principle of practice within a complex of other principles; it underpins the entire *poetics of the clown*.

Avner Eisenberg, a contemporary American clown, writes that “[...] a clown is someone who finds complicated solutions for simple problems, and very simple solutions to complicated problems” (Eisenberg, 2005, n. p.). Each individual clown deploys a certain way of revealing their misfit logic through his or her actions. Despite being articulated in distinctly different ways by different clowns, there is, nevertheless, an identifiable common pattern that can be examined in terms of the clown's logic. Like Tweedledum and Tweedledee²², the clown is a kind of logician, but not in the standard sense, i.e., of someone concerned with determining whether or not what is said or done is fallacious or true or whatever – rather, the clown is a discloser of the logic of incongruity: they reveal the failures of language, of the body, and of the environment that nonetheless make sense through the uses of misfit logic.

The clown develops a way of acting and reacting to the world that reveals a special kind of know-how, where, as Shaun May (2015) puts it, “[...] know-how needs to be understood as having ontological primacy over know-that [and know-what]. In Heideggerian terms, knowledge-that is derivative upon a more fundamental understanding, know-how” (May 2015, p. 34). Ryle uses the example of a clown to clarify what he calls categorical philosophical mistakes²³.

Tripping on purpose is both a bodily and a mental process, but it is not two processes, such as one process of purposing to trip and, as an effect, another process of tripping [...] If [the clown] is thinking what he is doing, there must be occurring behind his painted face [in the clown's head] a cogitative shadow-operation which we do not witness, tallying with, and controlling, the bodily contortions which we do witness (Ryle, 2009, p. 34).

One of the mistakes categorized by Ryle is the Cartesian *ghost in the machine*; the belief that in order to act, we must first have a conscious intention to act – first we think, then we act: “The combination of the two assumptions that theorising is the primary activity of minds and that theorising is intrinsically private, silent or internal operation remains one of the main supports of the dogma of the ghost in the machine” (Ryle, 2009, p. 16). Ryle emphatically rejects the suggestions that what makes the unconcealed act a manifestation of intelligence is some kind of inner process or some activity happening in one's *hidden stream of consciousness*. For Ryle, “efficient practice precedes the theory of it” (Ryle, 2009, p. 31), which means that in order to perform a task intelligently one has to have *know-how* prior to knowing-that or knowing-what. The know-how is the embodied knowledge that one develops by being-in-the-world. The clown trips and tumbles but does not get hurt because he or she has developed a kind of know-how – through lived experience and hard training – that allows him or her to perform the action without the need of thinking. Efficient practice depends on how one gets involved, understands and interprets the world and the given situation, using lived experiences in order to properly re-act. Know-how is not just a matter of being able to reason practically – it is a matter of putting this acquired reasoning (or embodied knowledge) into practice. Following this line of thinking, know-how has to do with intelligibility – how one understands the world – how one gets involved and copes with the fact that we are all trying to fit in the world.

At this point it is important to flag up that misfit logic does not necessarily refer us to a set of rational inferences, but rather to a development of bodily skills and to the idea that the clown's logic is strictly related to the body of the clown, or better, the clown's body-in-action. Clown logic is embodied, or as Luis Otávio Burnier (2001, p. 217) accurately puts it:

The clown is a being whose affective and emotional reactions are all embodied in precise parts of his body, that is, his activity spills out of his body, his reactions are all physical and localized [...]. The clown, [...], does not have a logical, structured and pre-established psychology. He is not a character, he simply *is*. The logic of the clown is physical-corporeal: he thinks with his body.

Thus, the embodiment of misfitness can be seen as a mode of perfecting an *imperfect behavioural skill*. A bodily intelligence that fails to fit in with common patterns of bodily comportment, but which is shown through the performer's expertise – or embodied knowledge. The paradox of misfit logic is present in the body of the performer; it is a specific kind of clown know-how that demands technical knowledge from the performers in order to perform actions that reveals the failure of conventional logic.

Hermeneutics of Failure and Clown's Practice

For Heidegger, hermeneutics is not just a matter of interpretation; it is related to *understanding* – how one grasps and copes with contingent and tacit rules that regulate cultural and social systems. Through the hermeneutics of failure, clowns understand and interpret failure in a contrariwise way: their misfit logic is revealed in the way they embody the hermeneutics of failure. In a sense, misfit logic, manifested in the clown's body-in-action, leads to the performance not of failure per se, but to a practice of operating against the normative ways of succeeding: that is, in focusing on the clown's paradoxical way of achieving success – *through showing failure and incongruity embedded in our worldly actions*. Nonetheless, the misfit logic does consider the normative logic – insofar as it exposes its own difference to the prevailing norm. Another way of putting this is to say that the clown's way of coping with failure has to do with his or her misfit logic, and that despite the audience recognizing the failure of the action, clowns generally do not themselves recognize failure as failure. Or if they do, they push the action further up to the point where they find a clown solution for the given problem. In a sense, success for the clown is the non-clown's notion of failure. That is why clowns are comic rather than tragic characters. They are seldom defeated by the problematic situation in which they find themselves but present a solution to a given problem – even if this solution does not fit with what was expected by the audience. For this reason,

whatever the clown does while performing, the goal of the action, and how he or she goes about doing it is ordered by the underlying logic of misfitness – a logic that aims to disclose the world of everyday norms by revealing its incongruities. “The job of the clown on stage is to solve a problem”, said Avner in a personal interview and in his Clown Manifesto (Avner, 2005, n. p.), and I would add: using the misfit logic and understanding failure as a motivation, the job of the clown on stage or on film is to disclose and create new possibilities for understanding and solving our everyday problems.

Notes

- ¹ For more information about Udigrudi: <<https://www.circoudigrudi.com.br>>.
- ² Some of the ideas presented in this article were first published by the Comedy Studies Journal (2013) in an article *Clown: A misfit by profession – Misfitness and clown’s principles of practice*. (Beré, 2013). Although the themes might be recurrent (misfitness, principles of practice), here is an opportunity to scrutinize the subject in a deeper way and summarise my doctoral dissertation.
- ³ The idea that Heideggerian concepts are generalizations is controversial and largely contested by some of his scholars. Heidegger characterizes generalizations as a way of ordering and encompassing: “Generalization is thus ordering; it is determination from another, such that his order belongs, as *encompassing*, to the same material region [Sachregion] as that to be determined” (Heidegger apud Greaves, 2010). Heidegger claims that phenomenological characterizations are not generalizations but *formalizations*.
- ⁴ Clown-like acts refer to performances which do not necessarily identify the performer as a clown. The Danish comedian, conductor and pianist Victor Borge (1909-2000) is an example of this kind of performance.
- ⁵ Terms used by Renato Ferracini (2013). These *in-between situations* are related to how clowns break theatrical conventions or propose new conventions, redrawing the relationship with objects, audiences and stage partners.
- ⁶ Misfitness is a neologism and it will be used recurrently throughout this article as a fundamental concept. It is derived from the adjective misfit. Adding the suffix ‘ness’ literally means the state of the original adjective, i.e., the state of being misfit. The word does not *fit* in the English dictionary yet though.

- ⁷ Nevertheless, one could say that the clown is part of the *theatre convention* once I am analysing a *performative figure*. However, my claim is precisely that the clown creates a different theatre convention through the use of the misfit principles of practice.
- ⁸ Perhaps clowning is one of the most rigid and conventional forms of performing arts, full of hidden rules and established patterns, but this is a subject for another article.
- ⁹ It is important to disambiguate the term clown, which I intend to do throughout the article: 1. The clown is understood as the performer of clown; and 2. The clown as performed.
- ¹⁰ For Heidegger “[...] equipment – in accordance with its equipmentality – always is in terms of its belonging to other equipment ... before an ‘individual item of equipment shows itself ... a totality of equipment has been discovered’ (Heidegger; Macquarie; Robinson, 2012, p. 97-98).
- ¹¹ Heidegger posits that an object makes sense according to its function in a given context. In other words, what an object is depends on how one uses it in the context of the everyday world of human practices in which it is located. The relationship with objects should be based on our experience and knowledge, which is embodied and translated in our worldly actions. Therefore, the word equipment here has a connection with the daily usage of an object.
- ¹² There is also a positive take on the tramp – they represent the possibility of an existence outside the norms. They represent a form of freedom from convention. This is a form of mythologised freedom that can be picked up in American popular culture for instance. The hobo is for some a semi-heroic figure (Woody Guthrie, for example).
- ¹³ *Keystone Cops Discovery!* is a short YouTube film <<https://youtu.be/JVNSQ72wvlc>> about Robert Cox and the Keystone Cops.
- ¹⁴ Airtó Bassauri (@aitorbasba), a member of the clown company Spymonkey, holds regular workshops in London, having the Keystone Cops as the basic source for training the comic physicality of the clown.
- ¹⁵ “Phenomenologically speaking, one can consider the experiencing body as normative insofar as it generates norms through repeated actions and interactions, crystallizing into habits. On the other hand, according to Foucauldian approaches, the subjective body does not generate norms but is

itself produced by norms: Dominant social norms are incorporated via repeated practices of discipline” (Wehrle, 2017).

- ¹⁶ This in no way means that the aesthetics of the body are not, and the clown can also exploit this, with a red nose, silly hair or big feet for example. I acknowledge that we are living in a culture that is obsessed by looking at bodies and trying to make them fit in some kind of pattern. My analysis is focused on the way the body functions, not the way they look.
- ¹⁷ I am intentionally paraphrasing Samuel Beckett: “Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better!” (Beckett, 1983, p. 7).
- ¹⁸ This comment is based on a routine performed by the clown George Carl recorded for the German television programme *Am laufenden Band*, in 1974 Available on YouTube: <<https://youtu.be/ZVLejQnFdGY>>. Accessed on: 11 Jan. 2018.
- ¹⁹ This is a reference to Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology through the reading of Dreyfus (2004): *A Phenomenology of Skill Acquisition as the basis for a Merleau-Ponty Non-representationalist Cognitive Science*.
- ²⁰ Gags must be understood here as micro-narratives composing a bigger structure – the clown score.
- ²¹ This expression is a mixture of two concepts stated by Eugenio Barba in *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* and it will be developed in another essay: “The observation of a particular quality of scenic presence has led us to differentiate between daily techniques, virtuosic techniques and extra-daily techniques. It is these latter which concerns the performer. They are characteristic of the performer’s life even before anything is represented or expressed” (Barba; Savarese; Fowler, 2005, p. 8).
- ²² Tweedledum and Tweedledee – the clown-like characters found in Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871 [2012]), playfully highlight the absurdity of *logic* and language: ‘I know what you’re thinking about,’ said Tweedledum: ‘but it isn’t so, nohow’. ‘Contrariwise’, continued Tweedledee, ‘if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it wouldn’t be; but as it isn’t, it ain’t. *That’s logic!*’ (Carroll, 2012, p. 225, my emphasis).
- ²³ “In *The Concept of Mind*, Ryle (2009) focuses on a particular mistake which is typically made by philosophers of mind or epistemologists wishing to distinguish certain moves or performances that deserve credit (i.e., achievements) from others that are perceptually similar (in one sense of ‘perceptual’) that do not. The mistake involves appending on to the

achievement or credit-deserving performance some extra, non-perceptual feature” (Tanney apud Ryle, 2009, Introduction p. xxxvii).

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This original text, proofread by Ananyr Porto Fajardo, is also published in Portuguese in this issue of the journal.

Received on April 05, 2019
Accepted on October 29, 2019



Editor-in-charge: Ana Paula Hofling
Editor-in-charge: Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca
Editor-in-charge: Luciana da Costa Dias

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