

INTRODUCTION
HISTORIES, ROLES, AND DYNAMICS IN ARTISTIC
COLLABORATIONS: FOREGROUNDING COMMUNITY,
EXCHANGE, AND ARTISTIC EXPOSURE

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This thematic issue is dedicated to interrogating the histories, roles, and dynamics informing the practice of artistic collaborations in cultural and social spheres among artists in English-speaking countries or within transnational contexts. The act of collaboration often foregrounds a creative space that speaks to values of community, exchange, and artistic exposure. At the same time, artistic collaborations become enmeshed by intensities of process, personal/public politics, and both the tacit and explicit complexities surrounding paradigms of authorship and autonomy. Key to the theorisation of artistic collaborations is the growing scepticism around the figure of the ‘Author’, singular, with capital ‘A’. In 1991, Jack Stillinger in his seminal work *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* began to question the pervading prevalence of this figure despite ample evidence of the involvement of other minds in certain creative processes. Others have since employed case-studies with pairs/partners (often couples) and groups of artists across the arts, philosophy, and sciences to explore the dynamics that emerge from the joint work.

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The processual aspect of artistic collaborations can be made visible to scholars by different means: letter exchanges between the involved parties and/or their friends, notes taken in personal, artistic, and research diaries, photographs, and making-of videos, among others. The need for dialogue, so that one can be understood by the other, provides one of the constitutive bases of the working relationships within collaborations. Not surprisingly, documentary sources, such as witnesses to the creative processes, involved in collaborations are often more abundant than those extant from creative processes by isolated individuals. Communication amongst collaborators strengthens circles of friendship, as well as competition, organised as they are in sociability networks.

This trans- and multidisciplinary issue of *Ilha do Desterro* invited articles dealing with literary, interart, and intermodal collaborations, involving artists and practitioners in Anglophone contexts or from comparative approaches. The response was considerable and included a wide range of research areas and methodologies, with figures such as Samuel Beckett, Neil Gaiman, and W. B. Yeats appearing in two pieces each. Due to the fact that all three guest-editors work in Irish Studies, the appearance of Yeats, Beckett and also Dermot Healy could be expected given how we circulated the CFP amongst our research clusters, but we were pleasantly surprised by the interest in comics and other forms of popular culture and literature internationally. This emphasis is particularly welcome given *Ilha do Desterro's* long-standing commitment to Cultural Studies in Brazil. Moreover, as a special feature in this thematic volume, all three book reviews included analyse recently published volumes also addressing aspects of artistic collaborations.

The volume kicks off with Claudia Parra and Peter Harris's article, titled "Tom Phillips's illustrations for the Folio edition of *Waiting for Godot*", which beautifully discusses how visual artist Tom Phillips "expands the visual interpretative frame" of Samuel Beckett's much-performed play *Waiting for Godot* in his illustrations of the play for the Folio Society edition (2000). Parra and Harris analyse four illustrations of Phillips's as well as the book's frontispiece, which consists of the illustrator's portrait of Beckett, as well Phillips's minimalist and highly symbolic binding design. In their analysis, the authors comment on how Phillips's choice of recurrent images, such as bowler hats and leaves, go beyond their "allusion to the characters", in the case of the hats, becoming thus leitmotifs that add to the symbolic power of those elements in the play itself.

Marta Passos Pinheiro and Sabrina Ramos Gomes, in "Os 'novos' contos de fadas: Tradição e Inovação em *A Bela e a Adormecida*, de Gaiman e Riddell", also discuss how illustrations amplify the possible meanings and interpretations of a text. Similarly to Parra and Harris, Pinheiro and Gomes analyse the final effect of the collaboration between writer and illustrator. Here Pinheiro and Gomes argue that the story of the children's book *The Sleeper and the Spindle* (2013) is not only told by means of the text, written by Neil Gaiman, but also by the illustrations and graphic design, created by Chris Riddell. *The Sleeper and the Spindle* fuses elements of the fairytales *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*, which,

according to the authors, provides the story with an interplay of tradition and innovation. It is important to note that even though the analysis is based on the Brazilian Portuguese edition of the book, translated by Renata Pettengil (2015), the translation itself is not taken into account in the analysis, as the focus of the article lies in the relationship between illustrations and text.

Delving into a similar discussion of the same writer is Renata Dalmaso and Thayse Madella's "The Many Graveyard Books: Artistic Collaborations and Possible Multiple Readings in Illustrated Works". Their central argument is that illustrations and written text "can construct meanings in different (and sometimes conflicting) ways." Dalmaso and Madella's corpus is Neil Gaiman's children's novel *The Graveyard Book* illustrated by Dave McKean, published in 2008, and by Chris Riddell, published in 2009, as well as the adaptation of the novel into the graphic novel by P. Craig Russell and published in 2014. The authors analyse the opening illustration of chapter one "How Nobody Came to the Graveyard" as well as the chapter "The Witch's Headstone" to discuss the possible interpretations derived from the relationship between text and illustration. Dalmaso and Madella intriguingly demonstrate how the creative collaborations at work in the 2014 graphic novel have foregrounded layers of meaning that may easily go unnoticed in the 2008 and 2009 illustrations of the novel.

When it comes to authorship in comics, what sort of information is presented on the title page? Bearing in mind that comics are often produced by a large group of artists, ranging from writer to penciller, inker, colourist, letterer, and editor, how is the paradigm of authorship dealt with in the production and marketing of comics? In "Comutação autoral e a problemática da unidade 'autor-obra' nos quadrinhos", Lucas Piter Alves-Costa reflects on the paradigms of authorship in the production of comics as well as in the marketing behind the sales of comics. Based on the notion of "comutabilidade autoral" ("authorly commutability"), Alves-Costa reveals how very often a group of artists can be gathered under an umbrella pseudonym that stands for the entire group, in which artists can often switch roles in the creative process, or whose participation can be omitted.

"Traduções colaborativas: o caso das *fanfictions*", written by Fabíola Reis, Izabela Leal, and Christiane Stallaert, deals with issues of rewriting in the voluntary and collaborative translations into Brazilian Portuguese of *Words with Strangers* and *Words with Friends*, originally written by fanfiction writer Nolebucgrl. In their analysis, they examine the dynamic workflow of the team of non-professional translators, translators' notes, as well as the interaction between translators and readers based on their publications and posts available on the website fanfiction.net.

Vinicius Carvalho and Ivoneide Soares dos Santos's article, titled "Jane Austen e o fenômeno da autoria-zumbi em *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*", discusses the issue of "zombie-authorship" in Seth Grahame-Smith's rewriting of Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* as *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009). The authors use the zombie as a metaphor to describe the very process of rewriting the eighteenth-century canonical novel and shifting its canonical status

to that of pop-horror literature. They argue that *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* represents the result of (zombie) collaborative work in which the authors in question have never met—and only Grahame-Smith and his editors have benefited from the result of this “collaborative” enterprise. The article examines some of the paratexts of both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, such as title pages and back covers, in order to discuss the issue of authorial presence and absence in the two novels as well as in the translation of the Austen/Grahame-Smith novel into Brazilian Portuguese.

In their immersing article, Grace Egan and Colin Johnston approach the issue of collaboration at that which is, in many cases, the last possible intervention in the production of printed texts: the proofing stage. With the exception of *errata* and the like, often unbound additions to the main volume, proofing was (and still is, even when it’s done in the analogous form of checking an electronically sent PDF file) a crucial moment in the process of fixing the text for publication, both in terms of adjusting it and of reaching its stable form. In their study of illegally-printed religious texts in the Reformation period, the authors consider, on the one hand, the need for and the evidence of careful proofing, despite the grave dangers involved, and, on the other, the authority of those involved in the process. They uncover evidence of collaboration between authors, printers and their assistants in producing the “ideal” copy of the treaties. Their involvement in the proceedings is considered integral enough to their creation as to warrant persecution along with the authors in case their illegal activities were discovered and tried in court. In the specific case of William Tyndale’s *New Testament* (whose first full edition was printed in 1526) many detractors focused on the accuracy of the text, as particular care at the proofing stage was required to minimise mistakes in the printed text, which would be read as corruptions of the word of God. Interestingly, although the authors do not focus on this matter, it would be theologically sound to consider God the ultimate author with whom any translator of the Bible must collaborate in order to produce the text in written form.

An earlier stage of collaboration, but also including more than one agent, is the focus of Esa Hartmann’s piece. In her article, Hartmann takes a genetic approach to the translation process that led to the publication of *Seamarks*, a translation into English of Saint-John Perse’s 1957 book-length poem *Amers*. Published just a few months after the Gallimard edition came out, the bilingual volume put forth by Pantheon only credits Wallace Fowlie, the renowned literary scholar, as the translator. The evidence found in the archive of the Saint-John Perse Foundation suggests a different story, here unraveled by Hartmann. In this work of the developing field of genetic translation studies, the manuscripts are carefully studied to reveal the genesis of the collaborative process that led to the translated product, the published poem. The various stages, as well as their chronology, are revealed (two different typescripts, interlinear transcriptions, variants on the left margins) and so are agents unaccounted for. This includes John Marshall, responsible for an independent typescript that is made to run parallel to Fowlie’s

as interlinear additions to the latter's typescript in a transcription provided by Mina Curtiss, a friend of the poet's, who also provides variants to a number of words whose polysemy he highlights in the left margins. Curtiss, however, is not mere amanuensis, and not only marks her preferences but also makes suggestions. The published text, Hartmann proves, is the product of a collaboration of these four translators, and *Seamarks* stems from a collective work. In addition to the collaborative aspect, the article also highlights how the study of the pre-textual possibilities makes visible aspects of the metaphors that may otherwise have been obscure or that become fixed in both French and English.

It is worth noting that Saint-John Perse was an exile in Washington when the *Amers/Seamarks* collaboration took place. Expatriation is also a point of departure for Myriam Ávila's survey of the connections Brazilian writers established with their counterparts both abroad and back home. In her survey of the literary life of Brazilian writers in the 1940s and 1950s, Ávila considers how sociability networks were created and how some of these Brazilian key figures turned away from the influence and possible collaborations with foreign artists such as Marinetti, Le Corbusier, Blaise Cendrars and Pirandello. Contrasting the triad of Mário de Andrade, Manuel Bandeira, and Carlos Drummond de Andrade with Henry James, Ezra Pound, and T.S. Eliot, Ávila ratifies the two major trends Silviano Santiago identifies in the Brazilian movements of the twentieth century: a universalist or Oswaldian trend and an independent or Andradian approach, which is more self-oriented. Writers that took this approach sought their peers among fellow Brazilians, home or abroad.

The idea of a national project also informs Ondrej Pilný's considerations on the work of Dermot Healy across multiple collaborations in his essay, 'Dermot Healy and Memory'. Pilný argues that both Healy's collaborative projects, a film based on the documentary novel, *I Could Read the Sky*, by Timothy O'Grady and Steve Pyke (1977), and a documentary drama with clients from a day care centre in County Monaghan, *Men to the Right, Women to the Left*, contribute to the growing body of work on Ireland's cultural memory. Though questions and concerns regarding the Irish border and nationalism have by no means lessened in recent years, particularly as the island of Ireland prepares for the ensuing difficulties associated with Brexit, a public space has emerged that is more receptive to and conscious of personal histories, marginalised narratives, and stories that consider everyday traditions, values and occurrences. In terms of form, this shift in narrative focus often utilises documentary and verbatim theatre practices, as Pilný notes. Memory narratives and documentary or verbatim theatre tend to draw in some way from personal testimony, and as such, there is a more immediate expectation regarding truthfulness, and a sense of authenticity. Pilný provides useful theoretical concepts for navigating the role of artistic works and cultural memory, and situates the contribution of Healy's artistic collaborative projects accordingly. His essay particularly illuminates the contribution that artworks depicting non-violent narratives located in Ulster offer to the ever-shifting trajectory of Irish cultural memory.

Who constitutes a consumer, user, spectator or participant across the creative arts today, and indeed, what are the distinctions among them? How does one interpret authorship in the current moment, when an artistic venture may traverse a process that includes writing, performance, sound, digital construction, and result in multiple final products of different mediums (book, poem, film, song) derived from the same narrative root? These are the complex and engaging questions at the heart of Camila Figueiredo's convincing essay "Transmedial collaborative productions in *Secret Path* and *Airplane Mode*". The essay unpacks the lineage and development of the term "transmedial", contextualising how transmedial productions renegotiate traditional methods and hierarchies of collaborative creative production and consumption. In summary, "transmedia is based on a triad: media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence." Drawing from two case studies, the Canadian production of *Secret Path* (2016) and the Brazilian *Airplane Mode* (2017), Figueiredo illuminates the heightened collaborative relationships involved in the creative process, resulting in different products. The complexities resulting from this process for both author/producers and users/consumers are examined throughout the essay. Figueiredo notes that "Considering the role of the Author-God as Barthes conceived it, it is perhaps the case that the Author is not dead, but that there are many Authors or several deities." This, she asserts, requires new insights and approaches from scholarship to investigate adequately the construction, meaning, and impact of transmedial collaborative projects. She concludes her essay with the stark warning: "whether in the form of transmedial franchises, multimedia texts or else, collaborative productions will remain an overlooked phenomenon, for as long as academic disciplines persist with the more conservative notions of authorship, consumption and media boundaries."

The consumption end of the literary relationship is one of the concerns of the article Renata Junqueira, Jeff Stevenson, and Flávia Ramos discuss regarding the collaborative "wordless" book *Bocejo* (2012) by Ilan Brenman and Renato Moriconi. The authors address the work as one of the materials selected in 2014 by the *Programa Nacional da Biblioteca da Escola - PNBE* (National Program for School Libraries) for use in Brazilian day care centres (for 0-3 year-olds). More than the creation of the book (narrative and illustration), the authors are concerned with the meaning-making processes involved in reading. They conclude that "temporal blanks between the images displayed on the odd pages and the lack of words seem to require an even larger intervention from the reader", highlighting the role of the mediator who reads the book with the children in a collaborative process.

The last two essays in this edition include examinations of the life and work of Irish Nobel Prize winner, W.B. Yeats. Meg Harper is the author of one of the most important books on the collaboration between Yeats and his wife, entitled *The Wisdom of Two: The Spiritual and Literary Collaboration of George and W.B. Yeats*, published by Oxford in 2006. Departing from her definitive consideration of the dynamics of that collaboration, Harper, in the essay included here, chooses

to focus not on the genesis but on the symbols used to make sense of their joint work. While most marriages can indeed be seen as collaborations, the Yeatses took that idea many steps further, not only conceiving of their union as a *hieros gamos*, an alchemical sacred marriage, but dedicating “hours each day, week after month after year” to “explor[ing] philosophy and consciousness together.” In terms of products, it is not merely the two versions of *A Vision* that this artistic collaboration produced, but also dialogues, expository prose, as well as plays and poetry that explore the ideas that emerged from the experience of studying together. And yet talking about the work as they did, as a couple in the main, fails to comprehend that which is probably one of the most complicated and frankly outlandish cases of joint work, involving a wide range of agents, not all of them human. As Harper summarises, “George Yeats was not a typical co-author, if there is such a thing: she ‘received’ the information mediumistically, in an intense experiment with psychomantic writing and other forms of spiritualistic communication that continued over a number of years.” Moreover, the system they developed “arrived collaboratively between not only the two living human beings but also by a variety of communicators: controls, guides, ‘frustrators’ (tricksters or malevolent beings trying to damage the work), personages from other lifetimes, and daimons.”

One of the symbols used to represent the alchemical marriage is the *ouroboros*, whose circular unity transcends the division of gender or even the archetype of the hermaphrodite. The idea of unity or of joining two complementary halves, as well as its attending queerness, is at the centre of Alexandra Poulain’s brilliant analysis of Yeats’s *The Cat and the Moon* and Samuel Beckett’s *Rough for Theatre I*. The collaboration here is neither at the genesis nor at the reception, but rather at the representational level, in that both plays dramatise more or less successful outcomes for the collaboration between the two main *dramatis personae*: the Blind Beggar and the Lame Beggar. In this closing article, Poulain disregards Yeats’s drive towards unity and reads both pieces in terms of the uncomfortable *jouissance* the disabled characters experience. For the author, this “failed” collaboration, in the sense that it does not lead to a marketable product, focuses on the process of “shared creation and immediate enjoyment of stories.” It is fitting that we end this issue on Artistic Collaborations with an exploration of the fragmentary, “the unfinished, yet delectable.”

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