



What I Mean Before This: artistic action with theater audiences

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ABSTRACT – What I Mean Before This: artistic action with theater audiences – The article deals with artistic creation processes carried out with the audience through theatrical performances, aiming to highlight elements that constitute an audience poetics. The audience is invited to lean over the scene they are watching taking into consideration the impact caused by the work of art. What is sought, from the artistic creation proposed to the audience, is the possibility of language invention, of elaboration of statements that escape the repetitive role models.

Keywords: **Theater. Audience. Spectators. Artistic Action. Aesthetic Effect.**

RÉSUMÉ – Ce que Signifie-Moi In Front of the Cell: action artistique avec des spectateurs théâtraux – L'article traite des processus de création artistique réalisés avec le public après les représentations théâtrales, dans le de mettre en évidence des éléments qui constituent une poétique du spectateur. The public is inviting to fill in the assistance, due to the impact caused by the artist. Ce qui est recherché, based on the creation artist proposée aux spectateurs, is the possibility of invention of language, elaboration of phenomena with modèles répétitifs.

Mots-clés: **Théâtre. Public. Spectateur. Action Artistique. Effet Esthétique.**

RESUMO – O que eu Significo Diante Disso: ação artística com espectadores teatrais – O artigo trata de processos de criação artística realizados com o público a partir de espetáculos teatrais, com o objetivo de evidenciar elementos que constituem uma poética do espectador. O público é convidado a se debruçar sobre a cena assistida tendo em vista o impacto ocasionado pela obra. O que se busca, a partir da criação artística proposta aos espectadores, é a possibilidade de invenção de linguagem, de elaboração de enunciados que escapem dos modelos repetitivos.

Palavras-chave: **Teatro. Público. Espectadores. Ação Artística. Efeito Estético.**

The splendor of the morning
Cannot be open with a knife.
What does it mean?
It doesn't mean anything.
It doesn't mean anything at all.
Poetry lives on nothing.
(Manoel de Barros, 2019)¹.

Manoel de Barros' considerations about the intricacies of poetry, mentioned above, allow us to unfold analytical threads about the position of the reader – or the spectator – in his/her dialogue with the artistic proposition. The reading of a scene – or a poem – does not take place as something established in advance, previously defined by the artist and which needs to be unveiled by the audience. Assigning meanings indicates elaborating them in relation to ourselves, the way we make ourselves available for the encounter with the work, for what happens to us from there on. It is less about finding out what a scene means and more about wondering what happens to us, how the proposal impacts us. A scene does not mean anything that summarizes to a previously designated meaning, one which would or should be reached. It is precisely in this indeterminacy, as an event provided with purpose, but without an end previously established, that the artistic event takes place.

The text (the same thing happens with the singing voice) can only pull this judgment out of me, in no way adjective: that's it! And even more: this is it for me! This 'for me' is neither subjective nor existential, but Nietzschean ('in the end, it is always the same question: What is it for me? ...') (Barthes, 1987, p. 20).

The axial question about the spectator's act – and we say act, since reading calls for invention, production – needs to be modified, as it no longer aims only at meaning, but mainly at the potential effects of the artistic proposition. What demands availability to participate in a game that appears inadvertently and without pre-established developments, because it is organized as an experience, and, as such, is only fully effective if the participant him/herself is willing to constitute it while playing.

If, on the one hand, the artistic proposition pleases, fulfills, creates euphory, on the other hand, it proposes a state of loss, discomfort, or even tedium and boredom, making “[...] the historical, cultural, psychological bases waver, from the reader, the consistency of his tastes, his values and his

memories, makes his relationship with language go into crisis” (Barthes, 1987, p. 21). Frustration becomes, as well, a mark of the reading movement and participates in the proposed aesthetic effect. Which can lead us to the notion, as indicated by Deleuze (2006, p. 32), that “disappointment is a central moment of search or learning”. The audience is invited to design their own paths in their relationship with the writing or the scenic proposal and in its relationship with social life. Thrown into the stream of aesthetic experience, the spectator’s pleasure can take the form of a drift.

The drift comes every time that I do not respect the whole and that, by virtue of seeming dragged here and there by the illusions, seductions and intimidations of language, like a cork over the waves, I remain immobile, revolving around the intractable enjoyment that connects me to the text (to the world). There is drift whenever I lack in the social language, the sociolect (as they say: I lack the courage) (Barthes, 1987, p. 27).

In 2004, we created the *Instável Núcleo de Estudos de Recepção Teatral* – (iNerTE) [Unstable Center for Studies on Theater Reception]² based on the interest of its participants in investigating the aesthetic effect, focusing more specifically on the theater audience’s creative process, seeking to enunciate, based on the study of reception theoreticians and artistic procedures proposed in collective events, aspects of this mode of production. The scene that the nucleus proposes to unveil and analyze is the one that emerges from the encounter between spectator and artistic proposition, which can be evidenced by the following question: how to make the instances of poetic construction proper to the act of reading recognizable, highlighting the elements that support the notion of a spectator’s art?³



Figure 1 – Performative debates held at Teatro do SESC Prainha, in Florianópolis, within the scope of the project *Por uma Arte do Espectador* [For a spectator’s art]. Source: Author files.

The reception studies proposed by iNerTE seek to relate the theoretical investigations carried out with the practical experiments proposed by the nucleus. The main goal of these studies can be defined as the attempt to place the participant, spectator of the event, in conditions to perceive him/herself, keeping him/herself attentive to his/her own receptive processes, which he/she engenders while watching the scenes and acting on the artistic propositions. To carry out these meetings with the spectators, the nucleus has organized two lines of action. The first consists of a theater play, created by the group, which presents the trajectory of a spectator who is faced with a scene about to begin. Entitled *Effect*, the play addresses different aspects of the aesthetic experience. The scenes try to bring to light the experience of a spectator who, before the unveiling of a theatrical event, is faced with the anguish raised by the unknown, by what is about to be revealed.

The group's second line of action – which we will focus on in this text – are the collective artistic acts carried out together with spectators, proposed after performances of other theater groups. We call these meetings, held with theater groups from various regions of the country, and with groups from other countries, *performative debates* (Figure 1). These debates started on June 2013 with the play *Folias Galileu*⁴, at Galpão do Folias, in the city of São Paulo⁵.

Since February 2018, iNerTE, expanding its actions, has also been carrying out the project *Por Uma Arte do Espectador*, sponsored by SESC-SC, in which plays are presented at Teatro do SESC Prainha, for students of Youth and Adults Education (EJA), groups of students formed by workers who study at night, and who, in general, had never had the opportunity to go to the theater before. Following each performance, debates are proposed to the spectators, invited to elaborate poetic readings of the play at stake. The shows and debates take place once a month and, in addition to being offered to school students, they are open to the general public.

The *performative debates* can be understood as poetic developments of the public from a theater play. The main idea is to highlight a reception poetics, creating conditions for the spectator's artistic act to be carried out collectively. The audience who has attended a particular performance is invited to participate in a debate in which aspects of the theatrical event will

be resumed, encouraging participants to undertake scenic readings about the artistic event at stake.

The main purpose of these meetings is to unleash on the spectator the unfolding and recognition of the poetry that he, as (co) author of the work, is urged to create while relating to the show. Poetry that arises from the signifiers offered by the play and from the sensations and affections aroused from the invented images, the revisited memories, and from the potential future arising from the aesthetic and historical glimpses of each spectator-participant.

We seek, through the debates, to emerge and decipher disturbing aspects of the receiving and producing experience that arise from the relationship between spectator and artistic proposition. The spectators' scenic productions carry with them a whole lifestyle, a whole conception of social relations, a personal and collective ethic, which is revealed and exposed there. In other words, not only is the play being discussed, but also the positioning of each spectator before the urgent issues raised from the artists' proposition. And what emerges from that can confront us with the heterogeneity of the elements that participate in the production of subjectivities.

As we find there: 1. significant semiological components that are expressed through family, education, environment, religion, art, sport; 2. elements manufactured by the media, film industry, etc. 3. a-significant semiological dimensions, putting at stake sign informational machines, working in parallel or independently, due to the fact of producing and conveying meanings and denotations that escape from the linguistic axiomatics themselves (Guattari, 2006, p. 14).

With the *performative debates* we try to unveil some of these reading elements, or keys of thought that operate in the relationship that we have with the artistic proposition, in order to discover the mosaic of impressions that the collective of spectators enunciates by reverberating jointly the impacts caused by the scene. To this end, we seek to make it clear, from the beginning, that we are not looking for a traditional debate that intends to contemplate or unravel what the play meant to say. We do not want to, nor do we feel authorized to establish reading vectors or even explain to the audience what they should understand. As members of the nucleus, we are, on the other hand, placed in the position of another spectator of the

collective, seeking to capture glimpses of how the play reached, crossed each one of us. In other words, it matters less answering the question *what does that mean?* and more the attempt to face the question *what happened to me?*, or *what can come out of it?*.

Our attempt is to analyze how the one who dialogues with a performance, in addition to placing him/herself as a translator of the work, from experiences as personal as legitimate, can also place him/herself as a conscious spectator of his/her own creative act. A spectator urged to be attentive to the fact that the work relies on his/her act of reading to become effective as such. In search of capturing the spectator in mid-flight, in the midst of the creative process, with the *performative debates*, we start from the perspective of placing the spectator in the researcher's position, who lets the investigative process go through him, and starts to observe him/herself while watching the play. This subverts the established limits of the subject-object binomial.

Based on the investigation of oneself, in search of a singular relationship with the artistic proposition, perhaps we can evidence shots or flashes of a poetic-existential catalysis characteristic of art making.

This poetic-existential catalysis, which we will find in operation within scriptural, vocal, musical or plastic discursivities, engages almost synchronously the creator, the interpreter, the appreciator of the work of art enunciative recrystallization. Its effectiveness lies essentially in its capacity to promote active, procedural ruptures within meaningful and denotative semiotically structured fabrics (Guattari, 2006, p. 33).

In this way, the spectators circles try to foster counterbids – understanding the artists' proposals as bids, the spectators are invited to make counterbids– that break the structures of the *already classified*, and put themselves in tension with current symbolic assumptions, that define readings determined and crystallized from the aesthetic and social context. In order to mess up the subjectivation devices, taking them out of seriality so that “[...] they enter into subjectivation processes, which restore to existence what could be called their self-essentialization” (Guattari, 2006, p. 32).

The very relationship with theater art emerges, being questioned, enunciated directly or indirectly in the game, evidencing the key question that actually supports the proposition of these meetings with spectators:

Why theater today? A question that, in the case of the debates, seeks resonances and possible answers based on the potential for aesthetic effect proposed to the participating spectators. Far from seeking a previously defined end for art or for a performance, what is wanted is to hustle the artistic event, bringing up significant counterbids, which scratch and circumvent the impossible to be said. Without losing sight that “[...] the only acceptable purpose of human activities is the production of a subjectivity that continuously enriches his relationship with the world” (Guattari, 2006, p. 33).

Breaks of meaning, which can promote the reorganization of signification nets and fabrics, can happen on broad, collective levels, or on an individual, molecular scale: “[...] in a political activity, in an analytical cure, in the installation of a device to change the life of the neighborhood, to change the way a school or a psychiatric institution works” (Guattari, 2006, p. 34). Language structures are therefore constituted as aesthetic orders, which carry with them ideological patterns, which sustain ways of seeing, feeling, thinking and acting in the world.

In order to create conditions in which the meaning of a word (of a signifier) opens up to other possibilities of writing and reading, it is necessary to revoke, even if only temporarily, the propagated regimes, which determine the meaning. The establishment of another way of operating language calls for the recognition and confrontation of the social conditions that establish such regimes of meaning. As stated by Deleuze and Guattari (1995, p. 97), “language is a case of politics before being a case of linguistics”. For “[...] there is no significance independent of the dominant meanings or subjectivity independent of an established order of subjection. Both depend on the nature and transmission of slogans in a given social field” (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995, p. 17). Therefore, there is no way to consider writing and artistic reading as something outside the political field, as an utterance is materialized in the very tension it establishes with the aesthetic regimes in vogue.

In the *performative debates*, the ordering of language becomes evident at all times, the clash between the maintenance of *already classified* readings and the invention of potential meanings cause tension and move the circle of spectators. Sometimes, poetic elaborations that point to wide-scale approaches, in a social dimension, or to an individual, molecular look,

appear in a way that is both disruptive and pleasurable, filling the participants with courage, as they carry with them an unprecedented contentment, which only the poetic experience can provide. At other times, however, even if motivated by a play endowed with an intense provocative content, the collective of spectators manages to prevent the discomfort, precisely what could give something to think about, avoiding turning the thought not only about the play itself or the place of the theater, but about ourselves, from which various possibilities of reading could be opened. Even if the play manages to capture our thoughts and affect us powerfully, the debate shows, on certain occasions, the blind and fierce struggle to conform the poetry proposed on the scene with our usual way of thinking, unveiling, as Kafka said, “the frozen sea that we carry within us” (Kafka apud Larrosa, 2011, p. 2877).

To understand the action way proposed in the *performative debates* as *an artistic action* – as indicated in the title of this article – we can resort to the conceptual definition proposed by Maria Lúcia Pupo (2012, p. 48):

In the midst of artistic actions, what stands out is the uniqueness of the aesthetic perception present in the sensitive experience, as well as in the risks that it necessarily involves. By making art, subjectivity is built, while symbolically reconstructing common territory.

From this point of view, it would be advisable to distinguish, as Teixeira Coelho does in *A cultura e seu contrário* (São Paulo, Iluminuras, 2008), the specificity of an artistic action in relation to the action most widely considered to be cultural, based on the principle that art, at large, is the negation of culture. Its divergent character makes it an exception in relation to the manifestations of culture, which refer to the rule. In opposition to the sphere of need, the dimension of desire, intrinsic to the artistic activity, is emphatically emphasized by the author as its indispensable vector.

The artistic actions are triggered without the necessary prediction of what will happen next, encouraging the participants to assume the management of the process, engaging themselves as proponents, and also taking responsibility for the decisions that are made in the investigative path. In order to, perhaps, articulate “[...] the type of thought that alters states, transforms the state in process, questions what exists and sets it in motion towards the unknown” (Coelho, 1989, p. 33).

The Plots of an Inside Out Debate

[...] but he wants to know everything differently: he wants to know not the case itself, but the over-thing, the other-thing (Guimarães Rosa, 2019, p. 2669).

The performative debates are also called inside out debates – or understood as the backside of a debate – because, instead of starting from the question what does this play mean?, we start from the question what happened to me in relation to the play?. We investigate the scene from the impact on the spectators, from the concerns and glimpses provoked by the aesthetic effect. Based on the poem offered by the theater artists, spectators are invited to conceive another poem, which will clearly and purposefully emerge from the scenic writing first presented, but which will also have visible marks of the artistic creation of the spectators themselves.

The response to a scene does not need to be limited to analytical reasoning about it, or better, it is up to the proposer to create conditions for this analysis to be effective as creative production.

[The answer to a text] Must be another text. So, when a teacher reads a poem to his/her students, he/she must provoke them: ‘What does that poem suggest to you? What do you see? Which images? Which associations?’. This way the student, instead of giving him/herself in to the dubious task of discovering what the author wanted to say, gives him/herself in to the creative task of producing his/her own literary text (Alves, 2004, p. 06).

What is at stake, in this case, is not only what the scene means, but what each participant will critically and creatively elaborate from what the scene states. In order to invite each participant to manifest him/herself artistically about the scene, making his/her (co)authorship effective, delivering blows that are being conceived beyond the mere cold and rational analysis of what he/she saw.

The performative bids that emerge in these debates come into effect as creations engendered in the receptive processes, a kind of speech by the spectator, an inventive speech, exposed in the form of another scene, and that, at the same time that can open a variety of meanings about the play in question, which encourages the spectator to think about him/herself and to position him/herself before the artistic event, opening possible biases of analysis about his/her relationship with social life.

[Performativity] results from a new arrangement of data, which properly constitute a 'bid'. This new arrangement is obtained, most of the times, by connecting series of data previously considered independently. This ability to articulate together what was not together before can be called imagination (Lyotard, 1989, p. 106).

The debates are thought, therefore, as spaces of enjoyment and pleasure, of encounter and play among the participants, because, as Roland Barthes (1987, p. 7) states, "[...] it is not only the 'person' of the other that is necessary for me, it is the space: the possibility of a dialectic of desire, of an unpredictability of enjoyment: that the dice are not thrown, but that there is a game".

To address some of the procedures adopted by iNerTE in these debates, given the impossibility of exhausting them within the scope of this article, we would like to highlight two striking aspects, which have been recurrent in the meetings proposed by the nucleus, considering that the procedures adopted in these events are created according to the unique context of each encounter, and in dialogue with the aesthetic instances specific to each play that will be put at stake: a) the *thinghood of the elements*, and b) the *presentification of memory*.

One of the proposals made to the spectators at the beginning of the encounter is to enunciate the *thinghood of the elements* present in the play: visual, sound, tactile, olfactory elements, which, for obvious reasons, or for unfathomable reasons, have only been noticed, or even taken as impactful for each of the people present. The proposal, as stated above, starts from the notion of an *inside out debate*, in which we will approach the performance not from the scene, with questions about the interpretation of the signs proposed by the artists, but we will start the conversation from the audience, of how each one perceived him/herself in relationship to the artistic proposition, how he/she felt touched, affected by words, gestures, actions, sounds expressed in the event. The conversation does not follow from the scene to the audience, but, in an inverted way, occurs from the audience to the scene, evidencing the idea that the driving question is no longer *what does this play want to say?*, and becomes *what happened with me in relation to the event?*.

The invitation for each person to enunciate the thinghood of what he/she saw, felt, perceived during the event, extends beyond the scene,

covering, for example: the gestures and reactions of other spectators during the performance or even before (in the theater lobby, or on the street before the scene actually began) or after the artistic proposal is finished (and, it is worth mentioning, during the debates, the artists are also invited to participate in this moment, from their position and their perception of the event); images and sounds perceived in the course of the event, in addition to those limited to scenic writing; situations prior to the show, seen that day, perhaps on the way to the theatrical encounter, or even earlier, at home – when getting ready for the event – or at work, or at school; situations observed during the ongoing debate; among others.

This proposal wants to point the performative way in which the spectators can make themselves available for the reverberations and interferences of the things around them during the receptive-investigative process. This notion of performance as an opening for the elements of the scene and those of the surroundings to become active in the process of artistic reading can be understood based on the propositions of the theorist Paul Zumthor (2014). The author, to explain his idea of performance, uses a scene from his childhood, referring to the pleasure he felt, in Paris in the 1930s, after school, on the way home, in stopping to watch the performance of many existing street singers in the period. The small audience that stopped to watch the event, always formed by 15 or 20 people, was invited to sing in chorus with the artist. “There was a text, in general a very easy one, that you could buy for a few bucks, printed roughly on flying sheets” (Zumthor, 2014, p. 32). However, what caught the attention of passers-by was everything that involved the show: the man teased, sold the songs, proclaimed, passed the hat. All the elements that made up the event were an integral and inseparable part of the song:

There was the group, the girls’ laughter, especially in the late afternoon, when the saleswomen left their stores, the street around them, the noises of the world and, high above, Paris sky that, in the beginning of winter, under the snow clouds, turned violet. More or less all of that was part of the song. *It was* the song (Zumthor, 2014, p. 32).

The performative character of the song was composed by all the elements that made up the event. Analyzing the songwriter’s song only by its verses, or its melody, or by the interpreter’s gestures can be as valid as a reducer to think about the aesthetic power of the artistic event. As much as

the analysis of each element separately may improve the knowledge about the fact, it is only in its performative character, which integrates all the substance present in the present, including the noises and gestures of the world, that the song can become effective as a “luminous encounter” (Zumthor, 2014, p. 33).

To enunciate the things simply perceived or taken as impactful by each spectator in the theatrical event – the notion of event here, we reiterate, includes what also happens beyond the scene, and which, in some way, is related to what happens with each spectator – aims to evoke the *effect of presence* of these things on the spectator. In other words, all the elements present at the event, in a broad spectrum of approach, that affect the spectators, and participate directly or indirectly in the receptive act, are summoned for the *performative debate*. What “[...] points to all types of events and processes in which the impact of ‘present’ objects on human bodies begins or is intensified” (Gumbrecht, 2010, p. 13).

Evoking the elements’ *thinghood* is intended to manifest what meaning cannot convey, to resonate, in the space of the encounter, the presence, the materiality of each object enunciated by each spectator. And each thing evoked not necessarily having to make sense with the play at stake, or with the sequence of bids made by the collective of spectators in the course of the reading process. For, “[...] if we give meaning to something present, that is, if we form an idea of what that thing can be in relationship to ourselves, it seems that we inevitably mitigate the impact of that thing on our body and the our senses” (Gumbrecht, 2010, p. 14).

So that the spectators, in the course of the aesthetic experience that takes place, and that is evident there, in the space of exchanges established between people, place themselves available to make the “things of the performance”, in tension with the “things of the world”, that are present during the collective artistic act, able to “oscillate between effects of presence and effects of meaning” (Gumbrecht, 2010, p. 15).

Another striking and recurring aspect in the *performative debates* proposed by iNerTE is the invitation to *presentification of memory*, which arises in tension with the bids proposed by the artists, and in the spark of the unprecedented counterbids made by the spectators in the act in process.

Like Proust before the *madeleine* experience, when he finds himself strangely impacted by tasting the traditional muffin accompanied by a cup of tea, and finds himself thrown into a fruitful moment, which makes the subjectivity field vibrate, which triggers a drift *in search of lost time*, in search of what has been lost in time, of the essentials that are forgotten and can move the before, the now and the after, and which pressure the search for another way of understanding the very notion of time. A time that, in these singular moments, no longer allows itself to be cut into past, present and future, according to spatial schemes, but which proposes the non-discursive experience of duration, as mobilizing as it is difficult to enunciate:

And then, mechanically, overwhelmed by the sad day and the prospect of another equally bleak day, I brought a spoonful of tea to my mouth where I had allowed a piece of *madeleine* to soften. [...] A delicious pleasure had invaded me, isolated without the notion of its cause. [...] I no longer felt mediocre, contingent, mortal. Where could this powerful joy have come from? I felt it was linked to the taste of tea and biscuits, but it went beyond it infinitely, it shouldn't be the same kind. Where did it come from? What would that mean? [...] I lay down the cup and turn to my spirit. It is up to it to find the truth. But how? Serious uncertainty, whenever the spirit feels overtaken by itself; when he, the researcher, is at the same time the obscure region that he must research and where all his background will be of no use to him [...] (Proust, 2003, p. 48-51).

Proust realizes that there is the need of a cut, an interruption, a change of temporal references so that he can capture himself in mid-flight, capture what happens in that privileged moment. But he also knows that, in this fruitful moment, his cultural capital will be of little use, *his background will be of no use to him*, because “it is not a cognitive event but a phenomenon of existential intensity” (Guattari, 2006, p 81), which evokes significant strokes of memory, which arose involuntarily:

And suddenly the memory came to me. That taste was that of the little piece of *madeleine* that my aunt Léonie used to give me on Sunday mornings in Combray (because that day I didn't leave before Mass time), when I went to go greet her good morning in her room, after dipping it in her infusion of tea or linden. [...]

And soon I recognized the taste of the piece of *madeleine* dipped in tea that my aunt gave me (although I still did not know and should leave the discovery of why that memory made me happy for much later), then the old

gray house that faced the street, where her room was, came as a theater setting to stick to the small pavilion, which overlooked the garden, [...] the square where they sent me before lunch, the streets where I went running, the paths where I wandered it was good weather. [...] and all of Combray and its surroundings, all that takes shape and solidity, came out, city and gardens, from my cup of tea (Proust, 2003, p. 48-51).

It would be ineffective, according to Proust, wanting to bring up these things of the past through memory, because what is cataloged and made available by voluntary memory, the memory of intelligence, does not retain any significant of the experienced facts. “It is a lost job to try to evoke it; all efforts of intelligence are useless. It is hidden outside its domain and its reach” (Proust apud Benjamin, 2006, p. 447).

However, in the field of artistic signs, of what can be evoked by involuntary memory through the power of artistic propositions, making unconscious aesthetic formations vibrate, as we can understand in dialogue with Proust, is not a Freudian perspective, of bringing up an expected relationship, previously established but hitherto hidden in the depths of the psyche. It is much more about the invention of senses, of unprecedented compositions and elaborations, which do not set out in search of a pre-existing truth, which needs to be unveiled. It is not a question, therefore, of recovering a given traumatic moment from the past that can clarify and resolve the symptoms of present, or of “start looking for interpretative keys between manifest content and latent content” (Guattari, 2006, p. 81).

That is, if, in the performative debates proposed by iNerTE, we make use of devices that invite spectators to relate and to elaborate substances from involuntary memory, these proposals are not primarily focused on the disclosure of scenes from the past, in a nostalgic perspective, or the release and elaboration of repressed content. And, in fact, this is not what happens, as it is no longer about the scenes from the past. The *sensorial, imagery and narrative* actions enunciated by the spectators *present* another scene, a scene that takes place there, established in that fruitful *instant*, and that is made as an artistic act, marked by *aesthetic* tensions – in friction with the artistic provocations of the play at stake, with the devices proposed in the debate and with the other bids made by other participants in the encounter – and marked by *social* tensions – in dialogue with the glimpses of the historical present, arising from the profusion of *nows*, loaded with frustrations,

anguish, desires, dreams, needs, which arise from the interruption of the time *continuum* (Benjamin, 1993).

In other words, the performative bids made by the spectators, motivated by the debate, present another scene, based on the anguish of the present. It is no longer the scene from the past, but a narrative that is carried out as a performative gesture, as an artistic act, which takes place in dialogue with the aesthetic context, established by the play and the scenic devices proposed in the debates, and with the historical context, in tension with the uncertainties of time itself.

The process of collective artistic reading consists of the search for showing enunciative coordinates and not providing explanatory keys. What is sought is the possibility of language invention, of elaborating statements that escape the repetitive models, which foster the critical review of the adopted models. It is an attempt – always elusive, unstable, uncertain, and sometimes frustrated – “[...] not only to elucidate, to discern existing components, but also to produce components that are not yet present” (Guattari, 2006, p. 82), and which will always be present from the moment they are created.

Notes

- ¹ Interview with the poet presented on video at *Ocupação Manoel de Barros*, at Itaú Cultural – São Paulo, Feb.-Apr. 2019. Available at: <<https://www.itaucultural.org.br/ocupacao/manoel-de-barros/>>. Accessed on: 1 July 2019.
- ² INerTE was created in 2004, in São Paulo, at the Postgraduate Program in Performing Arts at Universidade de São Paulo (USP). In 2015, the group moved to Florianópolis, starting to work with the Postgraduate Program in Theater at Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina (UDESC). Available at: <<https://youtu.be/R5ivJxQI2Ro>>. Accessed on: 1 July 2019.
- ³ More details about the group can be found in Desgranges and Simões (2017).
- ⁴ An article about this performative debate is published in Simões e Desgranges (2017)
- ⁵ Performative Debate *Folias Galileu* (video): <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCGEycR3tGU>>. Accessed on: 1 July 2019.

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