Artistic Strategies in the Screendance *Fôlego*: slavery and necropolitics in Campinas (SP-Brazil)

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ABSTRACT – Artistic Strategies in the Screendance *Fôlego*: slavery and necropolitics in Campinas (SP-Brazil) – This article explores the screendance Fôlego (2018), whose theme addresses the violence practiced against black bodies in contemporary times. To that end, this work presents a brief overview about the historicity of slavery in Brazil, in particular, about the city of Campinas (SP), place of creation of the work, based on the concept of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2016). Therefore, the article discusses the virtual process of creation in screendance (Angeli, 2020), contributing to the debate about the different territorialities of the performance and the political and social provocations in dance.
Keywords: **Dance. Necropolitics. Screendance. Slavery. Campinas.**

RÉSUMÉ – Stratégies Artistiques en Vidéodança *Fôlego*: esclavage et nécropolitique à Campinas (SP-Brésil) – Cet article étudie le vidéodanse Fôlego (2018), dont le thème aborde la violence exercée contre les corps noirs à l'époque contemporaine. Pour une telle appréciation, ce travail a fait un bref aperçu de l'historicité de l'esclavage au Brésil, en particulier de la ville de Campinas (SP), lieu de création de l'œuvre, ayant comme axe directeur le concept de nécropolitique (Mbembe, 2016). Par conséquent, l'article traite du processus virtuel de création de vidéodanse (Angeli, 2020), contribuant au débat sur les différentes territorialités de la scène et les provocations politiques et sociales en danse.
Mots-clés: **Danse. Nécropolitique. Vidéodanse. Esclavage. Campinas.**

RESUMO – Estratégias Artísticas na Videodança *Fôlego*: escravidão e necropolítica em Campinas (SP-Brasil) – Este artigo investiga a videodança *Fôlego* (2018), cuja temática aborda a violência praticada contra os corpos negros na contemporaneidade. Para tal apreciação, este trabalho fez um breve panorama acerca da historicidade da escravidão no Brasil, em especial sobre a cidade de Campinas (SP), local de criação da obra, tendo como eixo norteador o conceito de necropolítica (Mbembe, 2016). Logo, o artigo discute o processo virtual de criação em videodança (Angeli, 2020), contribuindo para o debate acerca de diferentes territorialidades da cena e para as provocações político-sociais na dança.
Palavras-chave: **Dança. Necropolítica. Videodança. Escravidão. Campinas.**

Introduction

This text analyzes the screendance *Fôlego* in order1 to reflect on part of the poetics of screendance, its specificities and potentialities in relation to the artistic productions of dance in contemporary times. Accordingly, it can be said that screendance is a hybrid language, belonging to the areas of dance, cinema and other audiovisual fields. Such language uses the relation between dance and technology in order to build its expressiveness.

Since the body movement is situated in virtuality, screendance proves a force for the approach to different poetic discourses, equally linked to body and movement, establishing different relations, readings and meanings through its imagery condition and the organization of its virtualized aesthetic elements (body, space, movement, narrative, image, etc.). Thus, its virtual condition makes it possible to highlight historical, social and political aspects relevant to the existence of subjects in contemporary society, adopting different perspectives in relation to the dance performed in a strictly in-person manner.

In this spectrum, the screendance *Fôlego* (2018) presents as theme the violence practiced against black bodies in contemporary times. Therefore, the analysis of the work is based on the references about necropolitics present in the studies of Achille Mbembe (2016) to justify a historical journey that begins in the Brazilian colonial period, having the city of Campinas (SP) as a geographic focus.

This focus seeks to associate slavery and the rise of coffee and sugar-cane crops in the rural areas of São Paulo, showing part of its developments today. The work uses images as *aesthetic-narrative* elements, aiming to establish connections between history – in which slavery and racism were strongly present – and current times, denouncing the different developments that slavery, exploitation and violence infiltrate in the daily lives of black bodies, especially in the city of Campinas, leading to different forms of racism.

Brazil, with its intense contradictions, has labor laws, achieved with many clashes and struggles, and is deeply pervaded with work analogous to slavery, subverting the tacit understanding of the constitution and its democratic aspects. Slavery, seen as something dated and almost mythic by the

population, began to be debated and researched throughout the 20th and 21st centuries in the search for its origins and probable consequences.

This theme was explored by the work *Fôlego* (2018) using the language of screendance, which, in general, has bodies, spaces and other elements as narrative axes, built from virtuality. Thus, screndance expands the expressive limits of dance by conquering new territories, contaminated by technology and communication networks.

Through the brief scope presented, the reflections in this text seek to analyze the categories of power that unfolded in time, culminating in different dimensions of structural racism today:

> Slavery, colonization and *apartheid* are considered not only to have imprisoned the African subject in humiliation, deprivation of roots, and unspeakable suffering, but also in a zone of non-being and social death characterized by denial of dignity, deep psychic damage, and torments of exile. In all three cases, it is assumed that the fundamental elements of slavery, colonization and apartheid are factors that serve to unify the African desire to know itself, to regain its destiny (sovereignty) and to belong to itself in the world (Mbembe, 2001, p. 174).

By establishing associations between the necropolitics presented above and in Brazil, in addition to their associations with the political context of the daily life of Campinas, the aim is to justify the relation between the making of the screendance *Fôlego*, object of study of this text, and the aesthetic choice of the work in relation to the circumstance given by the paatern of exclusion of black and poor bodies in the organization of the city. That is, methodologically, the article made a brief bibliographical review about the notions of screendance, seeking to contextualize the work under analysis. In the thematic field, this text appropriated the concept of necropolitics (Mbembe, 2016), seeking to build the scope on which the artistic work is based.

In this logic, the screendance *Fôlego*2 was produced in 2018 by Cia. Eclipse Cultura e Arte3, directed by Diogo Angeli and performed by dancers Wagner Silva and Hiago Ramos, and was part of the *Côncavo e Convexo* project, carried out by the company in 2018 and supported by the ProacSP cultural incentive law. The project honors the life and work of conductor Carlos Gomes, reflecting on the issues of the black body and the classic-

popular paradox. Consequently, the authors of this text participated in the creative scope of the work and, as researchers, analyzed such practice as a methodological path for the construction of this article.

Slavery in Campinas: a brief overview of the mark of shame

On May 13, 1988, with the decree of the Golden Law the end of slavery was made oficcial in Brazil. Evidently, we can see the above statement as a fallacy, whose official records claim to have eliminate such a "labor regime," based on the involuntary servitude of black people. However, there are several records that culminate in different forms of human slavery to the present day, showing a parallel Brazil that still allows a human being to be objectified, enslaved and transformed into mere property of others – an idea of abject beings without humanity.

In this spectrum, we present the geographical focus that gave rise to the *screendance Fôlego* (2018): the city of Campinas (SP). Considered one of the last cities to decree the end of slavery in Brazil, Campinas was part of the object of research for the production of the artistic work, whose colonial symbolism became a platform for aesthetic research, thus leading to the screendance in question. Such work is based on the traces of slavery present in different spaces of the city, whose scale as colonial hub presents, in its origin, the significant centrality of a kind of metropolis, formed by and committed to slavery:

> The propitious climate favored the success of sugarcane agricultural production in this region, along with the red earth soil, which provided the entire structure for the cultivation of sugarcane. These factors, together with the slave labor that formed the large sugar farms of this region, in addition to the masters' experience in managing these farms, were the basis for the well-known West of São Paulo to become one of the most favorable places for the cultivation and development of coffee. As in other cities in the region, coffee was extremely important for the growth of Campinas (Castro; Papali, 2018, p. 2).

Starting an overview, we present the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), whose census shows that, in 1874, "[…] the population of Campinas was 31,397 inhabitants, 43.6% of whom were captives; in the 1886 Census, although the end of slavery would soon

be decreed, 24.2% of the population of 41,253 inhabitants still lived under the slave labor regime" (Abrahão, 2017, n.p., our translation).

These statistic numbers shows the resistance of a colonial elite to modify the slaveholding structure in the political and social relations, a central part of its economy. This fact demonstrates a falsified abolition, whose changes were too slow, gradual and without any punishment to slaveholders:

> In the West, the reality is that of a group composed *of slaves and free men of color* [sic] who live, in most cases, in the grey areas of a nominal citizenship, in the middle of a state that, despite celebrating freedom and democracy, is fundamentally a slave state. Throughout this period, the writing of history has a performative dimension. The structure of such a performance is of a theological order. The objective is, in fact, to write a history that reopens for the descendants of slaves the possibility of becoming agents of their own history. In the extension of the Emancipation and Reconstruction, the rewriting of history is, more than ever, considered an act of moral imagination (Mbembe, 2014, p. 60, our translation).

The slave labor force remained common until the mass immigration of European labor arrived in São Paulo in the late 19th century. Consequently, Campinas received, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a large contingent of enslaved black people, transforming itself into a São Paulo economic center of slave labor in its rural territories, focused on agriculture in general. Its wealth is built from the right to property of enslaved people, raising the city to high standards of economic growth, based on torture and denial of the other as a human being, in this case, black people.

Considering the discussion on slaveholding, Campinas had a predominance in the passage from the sugar economy to the coffee economy, resulting in large contingents of people enslaved in the condition of labor predominant in both agricultural formats previously explained. The city was nicknamed "Princess of the West" as an integral part of the Imperial State and, later, of the Republican State (Cunha; Ribeiro, 2018).

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that, in Brazil, there is not necessarily a direct relation between the notion of being a republican and, necessarily, non-slaveholder. Thus, part of slavery in Campinas was not persistently fought by the pro-republic agrarian elites, in an idea of equivalence

between abolitionism and the ideological references of equality and anti-colonial freedom.

Contrary to that, the replacement of enslaved labor gradually leads to a new idea of a city, based on the labor of European immigrants, thereby creating contradictions between a city that wanted to be seen as a kind of modern metropolis, based on the industrial revolution, but that featured the peculiarities of the colonial system. Such resistance can be perceived, among other aspects, by the profitability of the trade of captives, of enslaved people, with major impact on the local economy:

> Most of the purchased captives (34%) were aged between 16 and 20 years. Moreover, it is noted that the second largest age group comprised those aged between 11 and 15 years, representing 24% of the southern slaves sold in that city locate in the state of São Paulo. Finally, other groups with significant representation were those aged between 21 and 25 years, totalling 21% of the captives, and those aged between 26 and 30 years, with 9%. Thus, we have a situation of transfer of young slaves, born in the southern provinces and separated from their families through these sales. This preference for young workers is also part of what traditionally historiography points to as the main concentration of the slave market (Scheffer, 2009, p. 4).

The scarcity of skilled labor, the need to expand agricultural frontiers and the advent of the Industrial Revolution – albeit late – did not immediately lead to a change in the slaveholding mindset of rural landowners, problematizing the possible ruptures with the colonial system, remaining as the *agricultural capital of the province*:

> The modernization process Campinas underwent from the nineteenth century onwards coexisted with a basic contradiction: the existence of slavery. The coffee aristocracy, which held the means of production as well as political and economic power, was the layer that initially benefited directly from this modernization process, as it imported progress by means of European models while supporting such progress with coffee exports. Although Campinas saw rapid economic progress, the city still preserved characteristics of that small colonial village. The city lived the contradiction between the modern and the archaic. Society mirrored European standards of behavior, life and production: however, the presence of slavery perpetuated practices that were a factor of destabilization and contradictions (Zero, 2009, p. 2).

In this context, Campinas legitimized in its daily life the consensual aspects of an elite that relied on the logic between masters and enslaved

people, creating tensions inherent to social injustices, thus embracing a colonial thought that spanned the twentieth century and giving rise to statements of power and of exclusion of a significant portion of Campinas' current population: black people.

Necropolitics today and its subjectivation in everyday life

To consider the necropolitics of Achille Mbembe (2016) as a mere amplitude, branching and updating of Foucault's thought about biopower is to give a certain reductionist character to the death policy that serves as a State strategy in Latin America. Therefore, the action of authorities in power in the suburbs – the result of a genocidal and lasting colonization – highlights the war machines that the sovereign power still has, preconceiving that peripheral citizens are internal enemies and must be constantly fought.

In this regard, Mbembe (2016) claims that the State of exception does not introduce a policy focused on a certain space and on a brief period of time, but is normalized until it is trivialized into a kind of *unending war*. However, the enemy is no longer external or distant; it is the vulnerable subject that the state should have the constitutional commitment to defend.

From this perspective, the body to be constantly attacked – to the point of being seen as abject – is the body that has always been exposed, tortured, rifled and enslaved during the colonial period: the black body. Therefore, the mechanisms of control of coloniality operate on several fronts: political, economic, religious, cultural, etc., creating cyclical forms of extermination:

> This power over the life of others takes the form of commerce: one's humanity is dissolved to the point where it becomes possible to say that the slave's life is the property of their master. Given that the slave's life is like a 'thing' owned by another person, their existence is the perfect figure of a personified shadow (Mbembe, 2016, p. 132, our translation).

Nowadays, the field of subjugation of human bodies and lives is inconsistent with the very constitution. However, there is a complex rhetorical exercise in terms of institutional policy, which justifies racism as a device of many police operations in the suburbs and the condition of mass murder as a State policy.

Mbembe (2016) exposes the State's operational way of creating justifications that normalize barbarism since colonization: through a notion of objectification of human beings that instrumentalizes black bodies as mere disposable goods, guaranteeing immediate profit. Thus, *racializing (pre)concepts* sought to remove any layer of subjectivity from subjects since slavery, thus surpassing the colonial barriers between *bodies that matter and bodies that do not matter in contemporary times*:

> The wars of the era of globalization, therefore, aim to force the enemy into submission, regardless of immediate consequences, secondary effects and 'collateral damage' of military actions. Hence, contemporary wars are more reminiscent of the war strategies of nomads than of the territorial wars of 'conquest-annexation' of sedentary nations of modernity (Mbembe, 2016, p. 139, our translation).

As in the rest of Brazil, Campinas underwent processes of incorporation and subjectivation of necropolitics through its economic policy, whose origins were briefly presented in the previous item. This expanded the neoliberal devices of dismissal of labor rights, of precarious labor practices, of provision of the worst housing and living conditions for the black and poor population in general:

> In Brazil, public security management remains under the command of violent and racist hands and, as a consequence, we have total disregard for black lives in the suburbs. And, as if that were not enough, we have a racist orientation of the institutions so as to effectively manage the life and death of these populations. This administration of public security that manages the lives of these populations and defines – based on racist ideals – who in this population should die and how is the Brazilian necropolitical reality. Under the guise of a war against drugs in suburban communities, Brazilian states promote shameless genocide of populations and, even if allegedly they do not direct their policies in this manner, statistics show us the opposite on a daily basis. In 2019, for example, approximately 5,800 people were killed by the police in the country. Between 2017 and 2018, more than 75% of those killed by the police were black people (Ferreira, 2020, n. p.).

Considering such implications, it is necessary to ponder on artistic and pedagogical practices that stand against the rise of totalitarian tendencies in seeking to struggle in opposition to barbarism, in this case, the screendance *Fôlego.* The idea of this work was to discuss and analyze *perception policies*, resulting from new strategic perspectives of survival, thus creating sensitiz-

ing actions for possible debates on appropriations of places, on ways of living and different characteristics of inhabitants of cities:

> Within the scope of a planetary division of plundered labor that began with the European colonial expansion, which is characterized by the intensification of its deregulation, by the multiplication of migratory flows of men who become black in the international system of the necropolitical sharing of those who can live or must dying, and which at best presents the self-entrepreneur as the most successful form of what the free worker has become in our time, it would be necessary to recognize that the black becoming of the world is not just what awaits us. It is what, since the invention of the race device, has never stopped happening to us (Corrêa; Vieira, 2019, p. 398, our translation).

Consistently, current necropolitics, whose developments generate death policies, nationalizes the disposability of bodies by capital and was implicated as part of the work described and analyzed below.

Screendance: a poetic expansion for dance in contemporary times

It is possible to think that screendance questions the compositional structure of dance, as well as its receptivity and its relations established with viewers. Such language enables tracing different paths for creation in dance and searching for new modes to organize body and movement through its technological nature.

Screendance is a hybrid artistic expression, resulting from the communication between dance and cinema. As stated by Angeli (2020), screendance explores the relation of the elements present in these fields of knowledge as a form of creation. Its expressive nature involves areas and knowledge of the bodily, technological, imagery, and audiovisual universes.

Hybridity – inherent in screendance – arises from the convergence between dance, language composed by body and movement, the poetry contained in its gestures, by its expressiveness, the scenic space, and the other elements included in its process of creation. Screendance dialogues with cinema, the art of the imagination and illusion, composed of video, camera, screen, technologies and the creation of images from virtuality, capable of capturing, transforming and changing the temporal and spatial references of movement, reconstructing its qualities and its reality.

Its hybrid and unified condition enables screendance to expand the boundaries of dance and incorporate new ways of seeing the body through virtuality, as stated by Rêgo (2013, p. 119, our translation):

> In screendance, dance is intentionally transformed by video technology, giving rise to a hybrid language with multiple possibilities of expression. Through the manipulation of time, space and body-image edits, the scope and nature of corporeity are expanded, virtualized.

By transforming the body into images, screendance establishes different relations with movement – since the process of shooting and editing images provides new modes of perceiving time and occupying space – and, with that, makes it possible to experiment with different manners of thinking, performing, experiencing and transmitting its poetic content, in addition to enabling different connections with the spectator's reality and perceptive universe.

Images, from the point of view of Costa (2012), are fraught with meanings and, in this sense, "the world leaves its marks on each image in an indicial relationship" (Costa, 2012, p. 211, our translation). In this condition, when body and movement are transformed into images, new meanings come to compose their virtual construction, becoming a bridge for the work's expressive communication with the viewer in conjunction with other narrative elements, such as space, scenic elements, and sound, among others.

Considering screendance productions and their poetic approaches, the camera and the audiovisual setting promote multiple variations in relation to the organization of these elements of the work. As a result, new possibilities of reading the creative material are produced by reorganizing the elements, allowing the establishment of new connections with the scope of the sensitive:

> The association of shots in a given sequence creates in the mind a meaning, which is determined by the verification of its connection, creating a need to mediate each shot and its relation with the linear arrangement of facts/framings. Thus, this assigned order (intentionality), from one shot to another, creates an interpreting subject responsible for causing the mind to infer and recognize these connections diagrammatically and produce (effect) a comprehension of the whole, or area of information (Santos, 2013, p. 3, our translation).

Accordingly, the viewer follows the screendance according to the movement in its condition as an image, in which the body is perceived through the screen and cordinated with the other narrative elements. Then, the audiovisual medium constitutes another possibility for dance, now in a filmic format, using textures, shots, framings, colors, transpositions and juxtaposition of images, clippings, among other elements that create other meanings, thus projecting different views and meanings for the viewer.

With each different combination or interrelation of the elements of screendance, new perceptions can be proposed to the viewer. These explorations, initiated with the presence of the camera in the process of composing the screendance, create other desires as to the work, enabling the exploration of different possibilities, the establishment of relations with other intentions, and the creation of other gazes at what is seen on the screen.

In the case of the screendance *Fôlego*, the proposed elements' organization can lead viewers to a sensitive and provocative experience, because the work's poetics aims to dialogue through urgent thematic lines, constituting a provocative element regarding the violence committed against black bodies in contemporary times: "[…] such process allows ideas to come together and create new perspectives, new ways of seeing, new rearrangements, leaking into the conduct of a person, changing their sensitivity and thoughts" (Santos, 2013, p. 8, our translation).

In view of this, screendance reveals new paths for dance, as it makes use of the connectivity between different languages, of the cyberspace and of other elements that provide different possibilities for the use of time and space in movement, now adapted to the needs of a technological reality that permeates such context. Thus, its virtualized nature pervades the elements present in the universe of dance, establishing new modes of performance and transmission, in addition to different ways of approaching the social and collective context of the subjects.

About Fôlego

Fôlego [Breath] begins by revealing two half-naked black bodies, lying in an abandoned shed, hunched over each other and covered with a red paint that resembles human blood. The floor and bodies stained by the paint are framed by the camera from a *top-down* perspective, and the cam-

era movement starts from an open shot to a *detail shot*, framing, at first, the whole setting of the space.

Then, the camera slowly approaches the bodies, revealing details of them, such as the shape of their muscles, the movement of the breath and the traces of the paint on the skin, thereby aiming to expand the senses of the viewer, as well as whet their curiosity.

Figure 1 – Initial scene (*top-down* shot) of *Fôlego* (2018), by Diogo Angeli. Source: Image provided by the author.

The scene proceeds portraying the movement drawn by the bodies in this space, framed from different angles. Lying down, the performers begin their actions in *spasmodic* movements, with muscle contractions created through directed improvisations, suggesting a certain state of agony, while the red paint is seen running down the same bodies, on their hands, arms and back. However, the screendance is edited so as to show the blood in a contrary movement, coming from the floor towards the bodies, running on the skin in an *antigravitational* direction. That is, the movements of the performers and of the red paint are seen by the viewer in a kind of retrogression.

The bodies rub and mingle, intertwining arms, legs and trunks in an attempt to leave the ground. The bodies demonstrate feelings of intimacy, collaboration, tiredness and pain. The contact and support created by the bodies enable them to stand up and explore movement in other medium and high-level spatial planes.

Figure 2 – Movement of the bodies in *Fôlego* (2018). Source: Image provided by the author.

When the performers manage to stand up, viewers notice that their hands are tied with thick ropes, tied to the roof of the shed. The bodies continue their movements, now held in space by these ropes, as if they were hanging, suggesting a connection with the slavery of black people during colonial Brazil.

The hands slide over the red paint-stained skin in a kind of reverse action, reconstructing the paint splashes that run down the skin. In addition, the screendance features a chromatic effect that isolates the red color from the other colors, enabling viewers to view it in a vivid and contrasting manner, highlighting it from the other framed elements.

It is also possible to perceive the existence of a chromatic transition in the course of the screendance. The images of the bodies and setting start out in black and white (not considering the red paint that remains red throughout the entire video) and, gradually, as the narrative unfolds, the performance turns into a color motion picture. This effect leaves the paint with a vivid and visceral aspect, adding intentionality to its presence on the screen, thereby reinforcing its intentions.
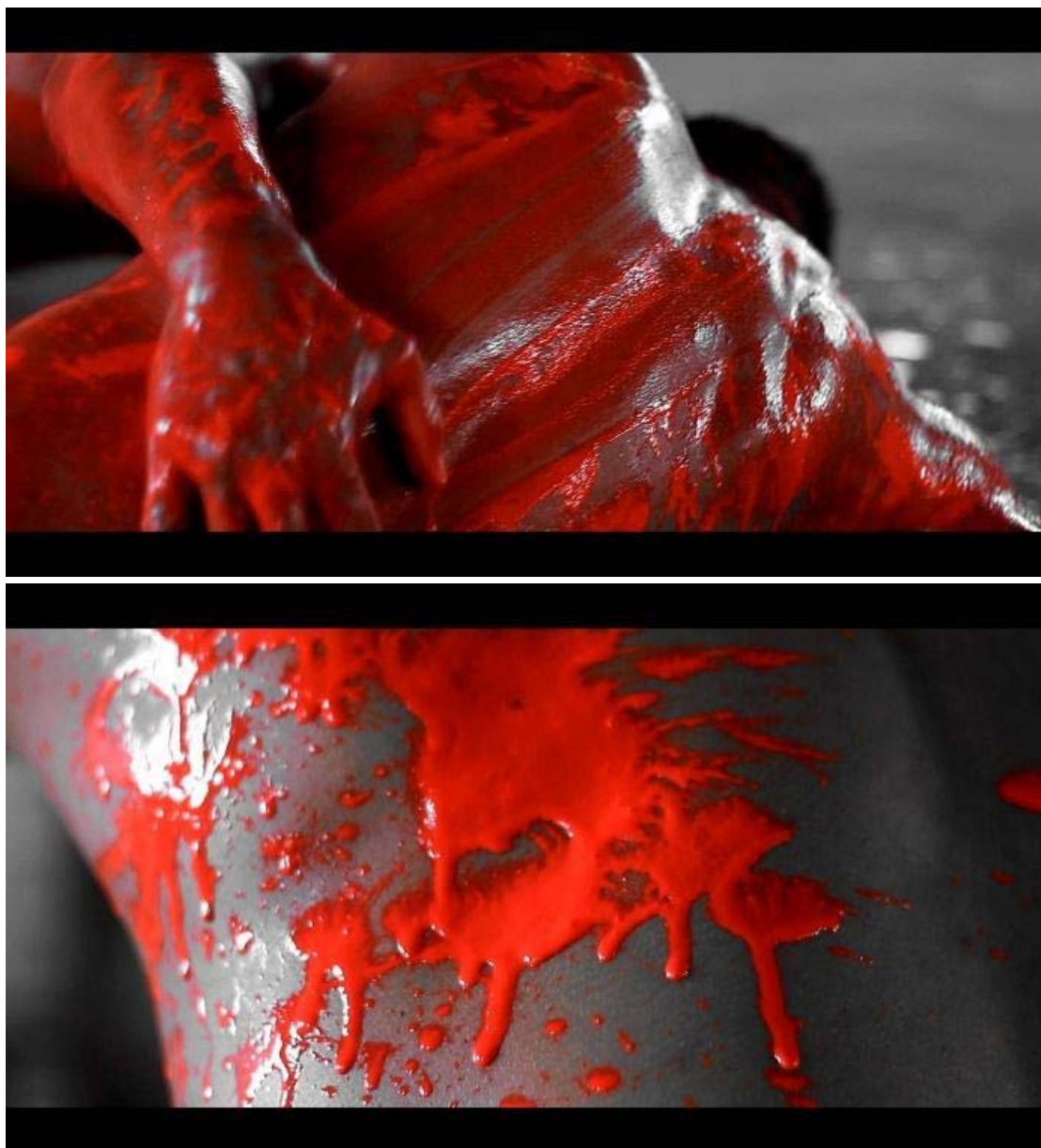
Figure 3 – Paint in *Fôlego* (2018). Source: Image provided by the author.

Over the course of the performance, the paint is removed from the performers' skin without help of hands or any other tool, only with the force of gravity forged by the reverse state of the video. The paint is thrown into random directions in space, being removed from the skin.

Without the paint, the camera performs a circular panoramic movement and reveals an open perspective of the scene, in which it becomes possible to see the two bodies tied by two suspended ropes and a dirty and abandoned shed, occupied by remains of boards, wood, and iron machinery.

Figure 4 – Bodies and setting in *Fôlego* (2018). Source: Image provided by the author.

Finally, the bodies are shown by the camera from a contre-jour angle, using a *vertical traveling shot*, and the scene is cut to the same image displayed at the beginning of the work: the bodies lying on the ground and covered in red paint.

Given the above, it can be seen that the work explores resources related to movement based on its virtualized context. This work highlights the notion of screendance as a language that creates other states of the body, enabling its own editions in the use of this language.

Fôlego: violence, black body and the traces of Campinas' slavery

Body, space and movement – elements emphasized in the narrative of the screendance *Fôlego* – enable viewers to build different perceptions due to the aesthetic approach. Such fact occurs due to the potential of these elements in the composition of the screendance, whose organization and manipulation in virtuality enable different modes of connection between the work's internal elements and external elements – related to the author and viewer's cultural, social and political context –, such as time, space, existential reality, and perceptive universe of the subjects who receive the work, for "[…] the idea of dramaturgy of dance does not only involve the body, but also the correlations that surround and compose the whole of an artistic performance or work" (Velloso, 2010, p. 192, our translation).

When considering the reading of the body, in this sense, the author Suquet (2008) thinks of the body as a resonator that reverberates the artist's intentions in direct and indirect ways, producing phenomena that enable its reception to overcome issues present in the material world, creating intensions and desires that spread over the sensitive imagination of the viewer and give rise to other poetic states:

> The observer exercises then – and ever more – his perceptive faculties in a displaced urban landscape, suffused with uncontrollable flows of movements, signs, and images. All contemplative distance is invalidated, the city dweller participates in the environmental mobility, their mental representations are irrevocably marked by the lability of forms (Suquet, 2008, p. 513, our translation).

Thus, elements such as the ropes that tie the bodies, the red paint symbolizing blood, the contorted positions and the actions of the bodies during the narrative of the work, the scenic space, among others, denounce such conducts by revealing to the viewer signs about the history of violence practiced against black subjects.

In addition, the work's performers are part of the cast of the company Eclipse, whose work developed with street dance belongs to a certain social reality and dialogues with suburban communities by electing urban dances and *hip-hop* culture as language and voice of expression for their discourses, as, according to Lima and Silva (2004), *hip-hop* is a movement of the sub-

urbs, black body, less favored classes; it is a social movement that enables giving voice, visibility and representativeness to such marginalized communities, since it carries issues and problems related to the conditions of life of the suburbs to the artistic, political, and social context.

According to Cunha (2004, p. 2, our translation), the vulnerability zones of Campinas were created due to "populational growth and the peripherization of the physical-territorial growth," caused by the high migratory flows in the process of expansion of the city in the 1970s, especially in the southeast and south directions. This growth resulted in structural effects that affect the communities that occupy such spaces until today, creating zones of social vulnerability.

The suburbs often have precarious housing, are devoid of essential services and lack spaces for socialization and leisure, security and effective political actions that can minimize such differences. Thus, the city space is divided between the rich and the poor or, so to speak, those included and those excluded.

In addition to exclusion, violent practices also affect blacks and suburban communities, showing situations of injustice by allowing camouflaged attacks and aggressions, creating different ways of being practiced in the face of laws and legislative norms and finding blind spots that allow impunity and deliberation of certain conducts.

The history of violence and sovereignty of the European nation in relation to the black Brazilian population, dating from the colonial period in Brazil, reveals hegemonic discourses, based on European economic and political purposes, and favors the white man and the Capital, causing a wave of terror and slaughter that haunts the black body – the enslaved body of yore and the suburban body of today –, as pointed out by Gasperi and Theotonio (2020, p. 6, our translation):

> Upon the end of the slavery period in Brazil, violence against black subjects gains new contours and persists through other forces. In particular, the forces from public security, through military corporations, led by the power of the State, whose operation is strengthened in the political and social settings through the marginalization and criminalization of such subjects (Gasperi; Theotonio, 2020, p. 6, our translation).

Moraes (2006, p. 122, our translation) reinforces this condition by stating that "[…] Brazil is at the top of the list of the most unequal countries in the world, housing people with absurdly unequal qualities of life, incomes and opportunities and that Brazilian society contains blatant social contrasts, as a result of the inequality of the capitalist system." Consequently, black bodies continue to be targets of racist practices, injustices and violence, which affect them from multiple directions: "[…] sovereignty is the capacity to define those who matter and those who do not matter, who is 'disposable' and who is not disposable" (Mbembe, 2016, p. 135, our translation).

Thus, by representing the exploitation, aggression and violence against black bodies, the screendance also creates spaces to reflect, question and criticize the political system and the position of society in relation to such violence, making it possible to analyze the conditions of existence of suburban black bodies that, historically, carry a heritage of exploitation and killing, being pointed out by the authors Gasperi and Theotonio as "[…] enslaved human beings, whose bodies experienced all types of torture and deprivation, and came to live – in a post-slavery period – almost always on the sidelines of capitalism, in the face of a situation of evident dangerousness" (Gasperi; Theotonio, 2020, p. 8, our translation) and whose inequalities have not been resolved.

Considering the choice of black dancers performing the screendance *Fôlego* enables orienting the viewer's gaze toward the high rates of violence practiced against this portion of the population.

In addition to the questions elicited by the analysis of the bodies and movements present in the screendance *Fôlego*, the space chosen by the work also deepens such discussions by electing the city of Campinas and Estação Cultura [Culture Station] as places of exploration, providing the establishment of other connections and leading to other developments about the context of slavery, now based on a specific focus: the city of Campinas.

The space chosen for shooting the screendance *Fôlego* was the old railway station of Campinas, which, in 2002, was transformed into a cultural space – the 'Mayor Antônio da Costa Santos' Culture Station –, coming to be administered by the municipal government of Campinas. The above space has been used by company Eclipse since 2006 as a venue for

meetings, rehearsals, practices and *hip-hop* events, and is also shared with other urban dance practitioners and communities from Campinas and the region.

For this reason, the space has become a reference point of *hip-hop* culture for Campinas and the region, for bringing together consolidated artists of this niche and for representing a place of struggle and representation of these communities and their cultural values, factors that add to and empower the demonstrational discourse of *Fôlego*.

In addition, the space features important elements about the cultural history of the city that communicate directly with the political and social discussions reflected by the screendance *Fôlego*. Before becoming a cultural space, the railway station was closely connected with the coffee-related economic expansion of Campinas and, consequently, with the exploitation of black bodies.

According to Guazzelli (2014), it is from 1850 onwards that coffee production in the West region of the state of São Paulo develops as a powerful and profitable economic complex. As a result, Campinas is elevated to the category of city in 1842 and becomes a dynamic hub for the Brazilian economy, and much of this growth is due to the creation of the railway system that enabled such development, in addition to housing the history of the use of slave labor in the city.

The so-called *Coffee Barons* of Campinas were rural lords born in sugar-producing families, and this market is considered responsible for consolidating and supporting coffee crops. Campinas, before its consolidation as a city, was considered one of the most important villages in the economic cluster, in which slave labor was widely exploited, as can be observed in the populational distribution of the period: "[…] in 1775, the population of the cluster consists of 266 people, rising to 6000 in 1836, of which 3950 were slaves" (Guazzelli, 2014, p. 14, our translation).

The relation of the enslaved human beings with the construction of the Campinas railway system reveals important aspects about the use of slave labor in the region, as well as about the powers and conflicts regarding the ownership and use of enslaved human beings. The implementation of railroads gave the city a socioeconomic boost by facilitating the flow of coffee production from Campinas to other Brazilian cities, leading to im-

provements in sectors such as commerce, transport, communication, roads and energy.

Although such implementation improved the speed of movement of goods, the use of slave labor in the construction of railways was prohibited by law, in order to protect work in coffee plantations, which were experiencing a time of scarcity and labor crisis, forcing the establishment of an immigration policy and free and paid labor:

> The Feijó Law, signed by the regent Father Diogo Antônio Feijó in 1835, vetoed the use of slaves in the construction of railways, thus protecting crops from a significant loss of labor. Despite the restrictive law, slave labor was employed, but arguably to a lesser extent than expected if the law had not been created (Zambello, 2005, p. 51 apud Guazzelli, 2014, p. 32, our translation).

Although the railway managers proposed changes in relation to the use of slave labor, they are not exempt from blame, as it is observed that the use of free labor did not represent a thought with humanitarian intentions, but rather a clash of powers in the face of the time of scarcity of enslaved labor, in order to ensure that work on crops was not interrupted and/or impaired.

Guazzelli (2014) complements this information by saying that the workforce used in the Campinas railway was mostly composed of national workers, coming from the state of Minas Gerais, and European immigrants, who came to Brazil from 1885 in order to abandon their former work in agriculture. Thus, "[…] the railroad introduced a regular work dynamics that had not existed until then, directly influencing the formation of work habits within the existing forms of hiring free labor, which until then was mainly employed seasonally" (Guazzelli, 2014, p. 33, our translation), promoting important changes in the hiring of labor and boosting the state's economy.

However, this *free labor* still maintained the slave thinking, since, at that time, the working conditions were not good. The exploitation of railway workers was evident, as they were subjected to low wages (with little protection provided by the State), excessive working hours, unpaid overtime, lack of a health plan that could support the victims, collective and precarious housing for the lowest positions, poor sanitary and hygienic conditions, among other factors that exemplified the situation of exploitation and the capitalist intentions of Companhia Paulista. By combining cheap labor, high

profits, and lack of competition, the company became "a highly profitable enterprise for the agrarian capital" (Guazzelli, 2014, p. 34, our translation).

In addition to reflection on, in-depth approach to, and denouncement of such issues associated with the slavery of black bodies in the construction of the railroad in Campinas in the past, the space explored by *Fôlego* enables broadening the reflections in relation to the forms of slavery and domination of black people in the locality of Campinas and also in Brazil. Necropolitics can be seen even more in the economic relations established, being understood through the axes of the capitalist system and of the digital age, which segregate and categorize forces – such as developed and undeveloped or developing countries, as well as owners and workers –, maintaining relations of power and exploitation, especially over poor and black people.

In the case of Brazil, Porchmann (2022, n.p., our translation) states that the country is undergoing its third phase of slavery, linked to digital goods and services, in which "[…] countries producing and exporting digital goods and services combine extraordinary internal profits with favorable results of foreign trade that, because it is deregulated, produces more inequality in the world." All this profitability stem from a *camouflaged* exploitation practiced against the workers or the weaker forces of this duel for the offer of informal and neoliberal jobs; for example, digital goods and services such as transportation and food applications, which offer reduced, disproportionate wages, without social rights, labor rights, or any type of collective or union representation.

These practices are again directed to the impoverished population, mostly black people, highlighting other faces of exploitation in contemporary times, in which "[…] human time is consumed in the uncessant production of data, revealing the desperation to access – legally or illegally – any activity that provides some credit needed to meet the debt of one's own survival" (Pochmann, 2022, np, our translation). In addition, several cases of work analogous to slavery have recently been found in the city of Campinas, as pointed out by Gasparelo (2021, np, our translation):

> In the last five years, from 2016 to 2020, the 15th Region Public Prosecutor's Office for Labor received a total of 291 complaints related to slave labor and recruitment and trafficking of workers. Of this total, 87 complaints came from the city of Campinas, which had 12 TACS (Terms of Adjustment of Conduct)

signed and 2 public civil actions filed on the subject. Once again, Campinas had the highest number among the 599 cities, which together totaled 57 terms of adjustment of conduct and 23 actions on the subject.

The choice to shoot the screendance *Fôlego* in the space described above is due to the fact that this venue features important elements about the aforementioned history, revealing data that add to the political and social proposal of the work, thus unveiling layers about the city's slaveholding past in parallel with the exploitative and violent setting to which the suburban population of Campinas is still subjected.

Finally, the screendance's soundtrack is also a tribute to the Campinas-born composer maestro Carlos Gomes, who attained major international prestige with his classical music and creations, becoming the most important operacomposer of Brazil. This soundtrack consists of the version of *Ave Maria* that is part of the opera *Il Guarany* (The Guarani), composed in Italy by him and performed by Ruth Staerk. The artist was inspired by the elements of Brazilian culture, which makes his works a tribute to Brazilianness, to the native peoples of Brazil and to the culture of the country, representing an additional element to the manifesto, which dialogues with questions about visibility, subjects, dignity and respect.

Final considerations

Based on the reflections addressed by this text, it can be stated that screendance has a questioning, experimental and multiple character, promoting new perspectives on dance productions by introducing technology into its creative process. With the advent of screendance, the creative possibilities of dance could be expanded and the creation of *Fôlego* enabled leading the body and movement to achieve new poetic states, explored through their virtual and image condition, making it possible to produce different dynamics, qualities and compositional structures in relation to the work and explore different relations with time and space. In addition, the flexible possibilities of manipulating the narrative and its elements by using audiovisual technology enabled the construction of other relations and readings regarding the reception of the work, making it possible to find multiple modes of approaching the socio-political issues and problems presented in *Fôlego*. Thus, the transformation and organization of the bodies, space and narrative elements of

Fôlego through virtuality enabled the convergence of different paths and meanings for the poetics of the work, since the creative material conceived could be manipulated by screendance, building relations and creating symbols that sought to challenge the viewer's gaze in different ways.

Considering the venue of the shooting and the depth of this set of references in connection with the work, it became possible to revisit the history of the *Coffee Barons* and the slaveholding legacy of Campinas, which lasted for decades, being directly associated with Campinas' railroads and the Culture Station. When looking back at the same warehouses of the station, which today are empty and house the art of the local suburbs, it becomes difficult to dissociate these facts from an astonishing reality that constitutes part of the history and economic rise of Campinas. This space, then, evokes a dichotomy of realities in the work's narrative, showing, on the one hand, an obscure and perverse past and a reality fueled by violence and the exploitation of black bodies; on the other hand, a transformative present, a cultural space, an action of resistance and visibility that embraces the black culture and social minorities of Campinas.

Thus, the narrative elements forged by the screendance *Fôlego* enabled the connection of the political action of the work with the social reality of the city, with the *coffee march*, slave labor and violence against black persons, leveraging reflections on the supremacy of a white elite and its preponderance in the current political decisions of the city, on the present resistance forces that do not keep silent, on the situation of the city's suburbs, among other statements. The black body, accordingly, expanded such references to a broader context, revealing situations of exploitation, discrimination and violence that persist in contemporary times, becoming a key element for the narrative, as it symbolizes and directs such field of struggle, proposed by the work.

Notes

[1]   Screendance available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3pswwOzObw&t=213s. Accessed: Jan 27, 2023.

2   Among the main exhibitions of the work, *Fôlego* was part of the program of the International Screendance Festival Freiburg, held in Germany, in 2021; in addition, it participated in the International Meeting on Videodance and Videoperformance of Valencia in Spain, in 2020. In Brazil, the work was part of the third edition of the Sans Souci Festival of Dance Cinema - Brazilian Edition, in 2022; the 2021 Dance Exhibition of the POIESIS Program for Qualification in Arts; the Midiadança Ibero-American Screendance Exhibition, held in Ceará, in 2020; the 12th São Carlos Screendance Festival, held in 2018, among other events.

3   Cia. Eclipse Cultura e Arte is a dance company based in the city of Campinas (SP), founded in 2002 and directed by Ricardo Cardoso (Kico Brown) and Ana Cristina Ribeiro (Ana Cris). The company operates in the Brazilian and international artistic-cultural scene with proposals that research the language of urban dances, exploring the cultural universe of hip-hop from a contemporary perspective. In addition to the work of creation and research, the company works with social projects, taking art to suburban and needy communities in Campinas, providing art-related courses, experiences, and training.

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