Pedagogies of Movement with the City: Performance, Collaboration and the Urban

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Abstract

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What does it mean to approach the city from the perspective of the poetics of collaboration in performance art? What are the constraints of created by a pedagogy of *site-specific* performance in the urban setting? How does the pedagogical turn relate to a movement practice, aimed to be articulated in and with public spaces?

The city is explored from the perspective of movement that spans the disciplines of dance and visual arts through relational techniques, improvisation and composition. The suggested approach is interdisciplinary and culminates with the production of a series of workshops, performances and video works.

Movement is approached as both a concept and a procedure that is composed within the interstices and disjunctions of a city's material configurations. Concepts such as rhythm and choreography are considered in the light of process philosophy to bring forth an inversion of hierarchies and deterministic tendencies between actors and locations that prevail in the tradition of performance theory.

Keywords: site-specific, movement practices, performance, research-creation.

For Tomás

with whom I share my passion for learning in movement

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Preamble

If you have taken this book in your hands I ask you to close it right after you finish
reading this page.

I ask you to stand up if you are sitting,
to pull the floor with your knees;
Stretch your legs.
Attune to a sound that has become silent because of its continuity.
You might at this point decide to sit down and do any of the other things that you have
listed in your *to-do* list for today, or you might just pursue this small choreography right
now.
Outstretch your right arm,
touch your nose, feeling the shape of its corners from the outside.
Without releasing your arm, begin to walk, but instead of starting from your feet
on the floor
start from your fingertips,
towards the closest wall you have available.
Touch the wall.
Keep your hand on the wall for just a quarter of a second and release.
Then stretch your hand (you might want to try to do it with your other hand).
This time, keep your hand almost touching the wall -
but never touching it.
Your body's surface stays only a few centimeters from the wall for at least one minute.

Stay. It is just one minute. Waste it in contemplation.

When the minute is over, walk toward the window closest to you.
Stand with your back to the window and close your eyes.
Draw with the most detail you can imagine, in your hand, the landscape you see from
the window.
Take a mental note of at least three immobile things that are framed
by that window;
And now think about three things that always move within that framing of the landscape,
which are recurrent.
Take your time.

You would not have read another sentence for this length of time.

After listing this collection of movable and stable elements, turn to face the window and
compare it with what you now see. For half of the time touch the glass with your hand.
And for the other half, don't.

Introduction

The Slip, Florianópolis, 2009.

What exactly was I learning in all those years of learning? If education is made to empower people, how is it that it seems to produce ever greater complicity in a mad world? (…) And aren't art and philosophy both equally versed in making a viewer/reader take a distance on the things she thinks she knows too well? How is this distance, produced by philosophers or artists, different from the distance produced by the schoolmaster? And just what is this letter I am writing and has it not been written a million times before?

(The Beaver Group in O'Neill and Mick, 2010, p.241).

This research project starts from the city, grasping it from disciplines that traditionally investigate the urban realm from an expressive point of view. As a visual and performance practitioner I approach relational practices as techniques to articulate the urban realm, in order to invent it as experiences of togetherness. What I propose in this project is a move beyond subject-based questions of performativity to inquire into the *city as* an event (Dewsbury, 2000, p. 473). I do this through a focus on movement techniques, aiming to activate other possible intersections between bodies and cities than through the metaphor of form (Sennet, 1996).

The result is presented as a body of video works available online. In this body of work I suggest an ontogenetic look at the fundamental concepts of space, body and collaboration in order to think about the traditions of site-specific performance. Focusing on the event of gathering, I attend to the ontogenetic qualities of these concepts, as explained by Erin Manning, in their qualities of emergence, an approach that challenges stagnant organizations of signifying bodies (2009, p. 25). The video pieces are a result of the techniques that activate such ontogenetic forces.

While presenting contemporary performative works, instead of an aesthetic approach, which I understand to emphasize signification and subjectification, I am interested in strategies of collaboration as tactics to move cities. Cities are understood as mobile nodes of a choreographic practice, itself always in development. Throughout the artistic performances, I highlight techniques for movement that extrapolate the art practice and that challenge the

frame of the site-specific. In other words, what I call *pedagogies* are suggestions made within the frame of an art practice, that bring forth articulations of body politics, aiming at contributing to the understanding of urban performance as a production of knowledge about the urban field.

Noticeably, my voice remains that of a practitioner interested in procedures that contest and invest in how knowledge about the city is validated. Methodologically I remain curious about minimal (and not spectacularized) urban events. My voice is also the voice of a researcher and teacher, who understands how dangerous theoretical sedimentation can be to constrain art practices to come, and cities to come.

The political force of ephemeral works set in public spaces relies on how the body is defined *in situ*. I return again and again to the term *collaboration,* struggling with the use of *site-specific* as a designation, emphasizing processual philosophy to claim alternative foundations for the notions of body and site. I often experiment with the implications of contextualization to the creative process and with the use of intuition as a method to define actions of gathering.

The bellicose vocabulary employed to refer to performance practices, such as 'interventions' and 'actions,' became discomforting and I found myself more interested in privileging the notion of an event-based generosity that is capable of bringing forth other kinds of intensities and relational forces immanent to the urban field. By generosity I refer to a rare reciprocity in the economies of public art: the offering of resources that doesn't rely on a hierarchy of 'giving'. I look at performances that articulate and produce the urban radically in their

humbleness and fragility; radical because of the openness they generate, an openness that is emergent in the development of abilities for improvisation, which allows me to think about the urban body from a perspective of creative risk, instead of a planned composition.

Ultimately, my recurrent question in the development of this project is this: What kind of body politics are reinforced by the theoretical framework developed by the public art field? How can a pedagogy of movement recover the experiential field, and thus suggest new politics of the encounter within the urban frame?

In this dissertation, I share techniques to generate collaborative procedures, revert traditionally employed relations between body and space, (where space is configured as a container for the body), and raise questions of presence, of the body beyond flesh. My inquiry involves relational objects and how they infer a potential for bodily action. The method is the investigation of notions of choreography as compositions of movement with space that interrupt and generate spatial practices (or the practicised[1] spaces).

Visual artists have inherited the expanded notion of location as experiential field, while exploring the legitimacy of playfulness as an authentic practice. In this context the body is often treated as a zone of meaning, signification or as an allegorical tool (McEvilley, 2005). Additionally, the vestiges of the modernist constitution of a passive observer, who is an anonymous subject, wandering and taking notes on a crowded field of relations, rarely allow

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[1] The term is used as employed by Michel de Certeau (1988) in the *Practice of the Everyday Life*. It also refers to what Jane Rendell has remarked to be a new position of site-specific practices, that relate not to site's geography but to the practices that produce location (2006, p. 15).

for an understanding of the body that is more than a tool for perceiving, but which composes *site* as it moves.

As for the contemporary dance field, despite Trisha Brown's cityscapes endeavors and Yvonne Rainer's research on everyday movement and spectatorship, *site* is often treated as a stage out of the theater; it remains a container for the body. It is recurrent in *site-specific* practices to suggest that location is a mere frame for a reified gesture. While the body is implied as a tool to produce meaning, space remains a static arena. My claim is that notions such as the responsive body depict space as "a showcase, a container of the body experience", and therefore are not sufficient when dealing with urban performance (Webb, 2002, p. xiii).

In order to overcome such conceptual limitations that look at site-specific performance, I suggest an understanding of the body as proposed by José Gil, a body which "opens and closes itself up without ceasing to reach toward space and toward other bodies" (2001, p. 69), a body that is able to permute with the environment. In the urban field the body is always overlapping, intersecting, leaking. Indeed, no body is bounded, contained; it is rather discontinuous in its spatial relationships.

The decision to approach this project from a pedagogical perspective began with the questioning of the role of the artist in academia, and with the unavoidable question explored in the first chapter: Why do we need artists with PhDs?

The practice-based research I engage in seeks to resist the programmatic institutional structure in order to develop a mode of thought that is immanent to the openness of the practice it seeks to describe. I want to avoid modes of inquiry that are, as Brad Buckley points out "obsessed by what constitutes the equivalence in studio or creative work to a written thesis" (2009, p. 81). Particularly following the visual and performance arts engagement with identity politics and post-colonial theory, it is crucial for me to invest in, as an artist/academic, strategies that validate the knowledge produced through a reflexive studio practice. Being accused of mere expressivity in such a contested field as the urban is a risk, however minor in relation to facing comparisons with methodologies that have served other disciplines of knowledge, or to be held to preconditioned categories of what constitutes knowledge.

To whom does the knowledge about the city belong to? Who are the ontologies of space and bodies serving? How can we move between taxonomies to rethink the problematic of collectiveness, gathering, and participation that are implicit in those subjects?

Practice-based research represents a discussion of methods in a most profound manner because it seeks to learn from an area of thought that does not necessarily emphasize language: it seeks to develop concepts from within the practice. The approach that ensues must therefore be transversal, moving across different ways of knowing, in movement. Such an approach is not necessarily compatible with currently accepted modes of producing knowledge with regards to site-specific and urban performance, which privilege historical context of

location, reviewing only the uses and functions of art's claims. Instead, my approach investigates how art and the city create techniques for rethinking what a politic of the moving city might look like. I ask: how can I engage with what the body can do from the perspective of how a body moves? The engagement with specific urban questions is not secondary to the art -it is in tandem with it, transversal to it. Such an approach requires a pedagogy of itself.

In this regard I wonder if the site-specific has not overly privileged the production of a symbolic economy, and if this symbolic economy has become a pedagogy in itself. As an artist I dig into other disciplines to understand how the production of an art event touches on themes that have concerned philosophy, geography and art history. Nevertheless that which is produced in the studio or, in the streets is an inquiry within a system of knowledge in itself. Once I position my practice within the notion of a pedagogical turn in the production of contemporary art I do so in order to defend the importance of being able to negotiate with other disciplines while preserving the practice's own ontogenetic role. The dialogue with other disciplines should not prescribe nor confine the creative practice.

Paolo Virno mentions that institutions or disciplines offer both shelter and threat at the same time. Virno writes that it is because the institutions suggest a criterion of relevance (Raussig and Ray, 2009, p.100). Given the current interest in research-creation and practice-based research, this project was developed in the midst of a redefinition of institutional inquiry for an art practice. This is no doubt a deeply political moment, when artistic practices are consolidating the

possibility of abandoning the shelter of other disciplines to experiment with forms of validating art as a mode of thought within academia and within their objects of inquiry.

Rosalyn Deutsche, observing the interdisciplinary field that has emerged from the practices of public art, alerts us to the danger posed by the fact that that interdisciplinarity can "unite in alliances that fortify an authoritarian epistemology" of each of the disciplines (1998, p. 196). For this project my process was to try to avoid specific epistemologies from both dance and visual arts, seeking a vocabulary of movement directly emergent from the practices at hand, as well as concepts that could transgress the apparent coherence of disciplines. Research-creation is defined here as a cross-disciplinary practice, as a method of instigating inquiry and composing with the results.

This project is a dance of the visual body, a folding of architectures, a history of invisible events, of walkers who are displaced from their communities, of unimportant bodies that carry memories of locations. For its cross-disciplinary characteristics, I've opted for a vocabulary and for procedures that can foment an interdisciplinary pedagogy for site-specific urban performance; one that is able to articulate the urban with a focus on the generation of movement where movement is considered at the same time extensive and intensive (Manning, 2009, p. 18).

I don't mean to dismiss the importance of engaging with a historical de-construction and reconstruction of location as regards urban art practices. On the contrary, it is important for me to inquire as to why an art practice has been

subjected to articulate history and to which notion of history is being privileged as the source that conditions site. I have opted to create a document of movement, in movement (the video pieces that are the core of this research), to bring forth an approach that is mired in a process philosophy wherein the body is not singular, wherein the site is not specific, but conditioning, and the conditions are defined by which bodies move with site, and by how they move. This is an art practice that fosters their abilities to move, to move spaces of gathering. To do otherwise would be to assume a preexistent body that enters a stable space wherein the body produces signs and signifiers; it would presuppose a stable body, an enunciating subject that could become neutral and acquire an initial state of rest. As much as site and bodies are preconditioned, this work is about techniques that can stretch such conditions.

The performance works presented in this dissertation point toward movements of the "pre-individual", where what is foregrounded is not yet a body as such but the forces of relation. My proposition: think of the city as event, as the forces of relation that are embodied in it. Think of the city in movement, as a movement of thought.

My approach to performativity is aligned with the description formulated by John- David Dewsbury. He writes: "performativity thus comes out of convergences that are either connective (if…then), conjunctive (and…and), or disjunctive (either… or)"; dimensionalizing requires a sensual placing, an unstable corporeal constitution (2000, p. 481).

Following Dewsbury's definition of performativity, it is vital to understand

that the body is not considered as a *medium* in *Pedagogies of Movement with the City.* What I foreground here is the notion of body as feeling, body as affective tonality (Whitehead, 1978, p. 231). The fallacy of a subject, existing behind a discourse produced by gestures is replaced here by a focus on a moving body, where movement engages as much in the production of effects of signification as with effects of presence. Movement is defined here as proposed by Gilles Deleuze, a qualitative change. Movement is what differs in duration, a quality of transformation that "no longer [is] what differs from other things, but what differs from itself" (Deleuze, 2004, p. 37). The practices I explore always engage with modes of movement with the city, which is itself in movement.

To move with is to shift what was once considered a stable body into a becoming body, to think of the body as a field of relations, an arena for incipient encounters and exchange. It is to open the urban to *ifs, eithers* and *ands* as provocations for being together.

Materialist connections between bodies and cities have been thoroughly explored, e.g. in the work of Richard Sennett, but whereas in Sennett's deterministic position the built environment acts as a definitive force constituting the body, the approach here is what Manning, via Boccioni, might call a physical transcendentalism (Manning, 2009). By physical transcendentalism, I refer to the concept of body that transcends the barriers of flesh (and of architectural constraints). A body is composed of what is felt, perceived and experienced. I want to avoid the emphasis on a body that is *a priori* understood from a physical and biological point of view and, while materiality remains essential (in particular

to relational practices) I want to emphasize that it is the production of events that constitutes the process of worlding, which allows sites to emerge and bodies to collide.

While Sennet claims that how we imagine spaces for the body results from how we assemble community and distribute political power (1994, p. 21), his emphasis remains on the production of subjectivity from the perspective of the production of architectural forms. The body of techniques proposed here considers a reversion on his assertion, where the performative practices actively articulate the feeling for site. Feeling, a key concept in Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy is understood as "the pulsion that transduces thought into becoming-concepts" (Manning, 2009, p. 220). As much as such a move seems conceptual, these are notions that establish hierarchies of knowledge within the performative field with unavoidable implications to any creative process, particularly within the highly politicized realm of site-specific performance works.

In the first chapter I define *pedagogies* as the techniques used to assemble political forces within body movements, and this text investigates how such techniques compose concepts through ephemeral choreographies, moreover inquiring on the role of improvisation that is set outside of the stage for a pedagogy of participation that extrapolates the aesthetic composition.

I chose to work with practices that blend and source the most rooted movements of the everyday. I persist in the exploration of rhythm and of choreography as crucial elements for such a pedagogy. Interweaving poetics and politics is a refusal to accept the limits of disciplines that play in the composition

of the urban fabric. In so doing I am concerned with affordances that are not conditioning the encounters they create.

In the second chapter I depart from the work of the Brazilian choreographer Lia Rodrigues to approach movements of the everyday and to investigate positioning as a micropolitical strategy in order to overcome political divisions in a city overly fragmented by socio-economical divisions. Throughout, I resist the vocabulary of the site-specific. I stress that the dichotomies of *space/actor*, *real/represente*d and *every-day flows/suspension* don't always work to urban performative practices because we move across them in experience.

To advance toward the video component of the research the following chapters are a compilation of texts and photography from collaborative workshops that took place in different cities. While I worked in various cities the strategies I created to engage participants were considering particular issues of dislocation, such as how the travel time affects our engagement with the urban.

The videos and images shared here were not the final goal of the workshops. The valorization of the object that results from the art practice, even in collaborative or community works, remains problematic. I am equally interested in the process of gathering as I am in the compositions. As a result, this project should be understood as a collection of video pieces that point to a set of techniques for improvisation and composition. Through them I activate and rethink the borders where politics, art and pedagogy intersect in a practice of site-specific performance.

Choreographies of a Transient Pedagogy

Still from (Un)Folding Zagreb, 2009.

The point of coming together in curiosity is that we don't then have

to come together in identity; we, the readers of J.L. Nancy,

encounter we the migrant or we the culturally displaced or we

the sexually dissenting, all of them being one and the same we.

(Irit Rogoff, In. O'Neill & Wilson, 2010, p. 39)

There couldn't be a more complicated way to critically approach a performance that takes place outside of an educational setting than from its pedagogies. There couldn't possibly be a more complicated mode to think about what has been pointed out as a pedagogical turn[2] in contemporary art than starting from such performance practices. What does it mean to attribute pedagogical roles to a performative practice? To consider the pedagogical turn as crucial to this research means to challenge how site-specific performance is being thought of, but also to ask how and what these artistic practices teach about bodies and about public spaces. How can we create instruments to learn about the ways we move, inhabit and become politicized about the shape of our public spaces?

I think about a pedagogy that seeks for an alternative entrance into what has been produced in the past ten years in the discourse on performance art in public spaces. I refer to performance as bodies in action and to public spaces as sites that co-compose with such bodies in action outside of the frames of galleries and museums. They co-compose with everyday bodies that are not necessarily expected to encounter an art event. Named as site-specific practices, or urban happenings, my cut is of a category that receive as infinite names as their strategies to articulate and wonder about specific problematics of

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[2] The pedagogical turn refers to the notion of the educational setting and teaching practices as an art form. It addresses practices from the beginning of the 20th century, such as the Bauhaus and the futurist initiatives that suggested a form of teaching intrinsic related to the processes of art making. It also refers to the comportamental teachings implied in the practice of contemporary art. See http://fillip.ca/content/a-pedagogical-turn (retrieved on January 2012).

contemporary cities, actively engaging with and responding to how urban planning suggests modes of gathering.

Precisely because these practices have an undetermined structure between spectatorship/participation and choreography/improvisation, they form a moving subject for analysis. Where does the critic position herself? Whose bodies can be traced as the performative bodies? In the constructed situation, viewers, performer, observer, videographer have their positions combined; they compose with the field an object in motion. Performance is a set of practices that are inscribed between the definitions of relational art, social sculpture and situations for collaboration, with an intrinsic pedagogical component that requires alternative critical modes to be approached, which are characteristic of the works framed within the notion of a pedagogical turn (O'Neill and Wilson, 2010; Barad, 2003).

I frame the techniques for learning, for inquiring about the not-yet-thought that such performative strategies invent, as a movement of thought. A movement of thought is, according to Deleuze, that which is able to articulate the machinery of thinking, which allows concepts to move- in this case, thought on the production of movement within public spaces (Deleuze, 1983). The pedagogy I suggest here is transient and it is not an interpretative method for the interpretation of site-specific performance. It is a logic of empirically moving with. It is transient for it connects practices of experience of the shared realm.

When I think about the tradition of site-specific as the re-contextualization of the art object (Kwon, 2002) the connections of a performance practice in urban

spaces and a pedagogy of movement are still approached separately. My claim is for procedures that can embrace the problematics of body presence simultaneously with the articulation of site, thus constituting a pedagogy of transiency.

Performance is a term that resists classification; it is a category of creative practice that has to be defined in action. The concept of performance, mostly known through Roselee Goldberg's writings, has been based on the notion of presence; moreover, on a human presence. It mostly reinforces the artist as the producer of meaningful gestures (Goldberg, 2004, p. 17).

In the attempts to define performance among the fields of visual arts, dance and theater, I shall return to the notion of performance as a work not based on an illusion, but which generates an event, a reality (Hoffman and Jonas, 2005, p. 15). This definition overcomes the anthropocentric use of the term and allows me to switch the performative element to site, or to participants of a collaborative pedagogical setting. Performance does not always make the body the object of art; instead, it activates a practice that generates a situation. The pedagogy of performance that I focus on does not center on the body, or on the location of the object, but on the situation; it refers to a performance of relatedeness and to the ability to collaborate with what is presented as the conditions for the event.

A pedagogy of movement with the city does not claim to develop a singular technique to teach artists how to make their work functional or more expressive. Rather, it investigates cross-disciplinary boundaries from the artistic

practices that can teach us about the potential for collectiveness, friction and political engagement in the shared spaces of everyday life.

Commonly, such spaces are assumed as abstract: emptiness where traffic takes place -traffic that is often meaningless. The zones where people wait for a bus, the threshold of entering a store, an office or a public park are highly performative landscapes, but are performed with suspended attentiveness. The investment I make in poetic gestures interweaves what can be identified as established patterns for crossing and performing the everyday in such spaces, where I assume the role of a provocateur of qualitative encounters with the pedestrians. What can be generated from such encounters? The techniques employed to move these encounters are the transient pedagogy. It is how space-time is created to reach and disseminate a potential content that emerges in the event of co-movement in and with the city. Pedagogy is what teaches an artistic practice, but a transient pedagogy aims for the content of such practice to be dispersed in attentiveness and, in the case of my approach to the urban. It explores dissent in the patterns of movement established in the city (Verwoert in O'Neill and Wilson, 2010, p. 27).

The awareness of an "educational turn" doesn't change contemporary practices themselves (and this is how it differs from being understood as a line of art education), rather it changes how the art practice engages with other disciplines. A transient pedagogy for performance in the city is an approach of procedures for the urban.

Were the body of works of Pedagogies of Movement with the City to be contemplated just from the perspective of the videos generated from the workshops situations (the art pieces), it's pedagogical concerns would most likely not be noticeable. A transient pedagogy is neither self-explanatory nor normative. Once the works are framed in a traditional aesthetic approach, e.g. privileging the generated spectacle or object, the ways through which bodies engaged with space during the live performance easily disappear. How the occasion articulates collective engagement is often ungraspable in the documentation. In the videos the field easily becomes a stage; the gesture, a staged representation that can be detached from the 'real' realm of quotidian practices, so that the pedagogical procedures have to be activated in the discussions or in the descriptions that contextualize the making of the work.

Observing the increasing interest in artists activating public spaces I was often discouraged by the alienation of use and occupation of such spaces, leading to discursive performative compositions. Stubbornly, I opted to develop tools for enabling a pedagogy that is elusive in its use and comments on spatial practices. Can we remain engaged with site-specificity and escape performing determinism?

My answer is to always apply constraints for improvisation in the pedagogical approach, so that what is the norm can be grasped as what has been learned and agreed with so far. Often when I propose movement investigation participants ask whether they are "allowed" to do that in public spaces. The possibility to act doesn't necessary imply the ability to act. In this

sense, the practice of performance becomes highly political, as it actualizes a latent event/gesture through the creative composition (Rogoff in O'Neill and Wilson, 2010, p. 36). What can we challenge and how can composition lead us to think critically about how we want to pursue collectiveness and difference in the threads of the urban environment?

This is, without a doubt, a discussion of methods- but of methods that are as ephemeral as the locations and bodies they attend to. A pedagogy is, in this case, a platform; instead of a structure that incites hierarchies of fruition, it thinks about potential, it actualizes it. The art of working within a pedagogy is the ability to grasp such potentialities[3] "inherent in the magic of social encounters and the power to activate these potentials in the act of facilitating collective cultural manifestations" (Verwoert, in O'Neill & Wilson, 2010, p. 25). The goal of a pedagogy is to sustain the communication between parties -to host, to foster.

When I refer to a pedagogy there shouldn't be an assumption of an end, nor a mastery of a subject. A pedagogy of site-specific performance needs techniques that aim not at overlapping fields of knowledge but that develop an investigative practice toward an unorthodox movement. It requires the invention of tools that can be equally engaged with experimentation and contextualization, daring artists and walkers on their own skills to move with the experience of the urban, relationally with each other and with what is latent on site.

A transient pedagogy is not a pedagogy that belongs to art academia, but is transient as it engages with moving bodies, with the potentials of location. It

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[3] Potentiality is a crucial notion for process philosophy. Whitehead explains that there cannot be a static actuality, because all actualities are moving, changing and evolving through their potentialities (1960, p. 99). "The potentialities in immediate fact constitute the driving force of process" (1960, p. 100), he writes.

fosters qualities of engagement that allow disciplinary taxonomies to be cross with other fields of knowledge. As Sue Baker states, "contemporary art may no longer be a discipline in itself but rather a place where disciplines intersect and interact" (in Buckey and Conomos, 2009, p. 38). It is a practice of procedures.

A pedagogy of movement with the city is a practice of research that thinks through performance and reaches what the variations of movement and improvisation enable us to think about the urban condition.

To talk about a pedagogy within any field of the fine or performative arts today that only addresses traditional notions of the teacher, student, artist and public would be to dismiss the fact that the spaces of aesthetic education are indefinable (Madoff, 2009, p. 31). The spaces of aesthetic education are all spaces of practice. This awareness has been taken as a goal for urban and site-specific practices, since the beginning of the 20th Century, in the vanguardist trials, to underline expressivity of conventions of public behavior (Greene, 1986, p. 57).

Raoul Vaneigem writes:

The reversal of perspective turns knowledge into praxis, hope into freedom, and mediation into a passion for immediacy. It enshrines the victory of a system of human relationships grounded in three indivisible principles: participation, communication and self-realization.

To reverse perspective is to stop seeing things through the eyes of the community, of ideology, of the family, of other people. (Vaneigen, 1994 p.188).

Vaneigem explicitly addresses the institutions that most strongly coordinate the pedagogies of movement toward the general public. The Situationist International alternative to any institutional framework was to suppress art itself, leaving the transient pedagogies remaining (Debord, 1995, p. 138). Instead of completely avoiding the creation of an object, Gene Ray explains that "surpassing art means removing it from institutional management and transforming it into a practice for expanding life here and now, for overcoming passivity and separation, in short for "revolutionizing everyday life" (Rauning and Ray, 2009, p. 86).

Despite my discomfort with Vaneigem's affirmation that such a reversion would lead us to start with 'oneself', when considering the self as the solid unity of experience, the subjective base of everything, his claim is a valid counterforce, grounded in the context from which he is writing.

The self is not a solid unity in public spaces, nor are public spaces themselves a unity or generalized location. Rosalind Deutsche points to the fallacy of public spaces as a common good, reminding that they are instead a site for different groups to demand their freedom and rights. She writes:

The 'public' is defined either as a unity or, what amounts to the same thing, as a field composed of essential differences, dilemmas plaguing the use of public spaces can be attributed to the inevitable disruptions attendant on the need to harmonize the 'natural' differences and diverse interests characteristic of any society. (Deutsche, 1998, p. 57)

Since an artistic practice mediates perceptions of the city, it can, Deutsche defends, help to question and resist operations that want to structure urban sites and give visibility without neutralizing differences.

A pedagogy of movement with the city creates emphasis on the singularities of our experiences in shared spaces, thus being suppressive of neutralities. A body in action in a public space is more than an engendered body or a dancing body: it is a body that situates the public. A body carries all these characteristics at once and performs them according to the specificities of situatedeness.

In the transient pedagogy we go from language -the supra institutional structure that sustains all other institutions (Virno, in Raunig and Ray, 2002, p. 108)- toward a corporeal state of sharing. The walk and movement work as a pre-articulation of the shared. Movement doesn't coincide but contains a reality that is intuitional instead of institutional.

To operate on this scale doesn't imply a de-politicization of the art practice, which doesn't necessarily lie on the subject or on a critical social comment; often it lies on how the work mobilizes individual and collective energies. As Exposito describes, "the production of networks and flows that don't heed pre-existing boundaries and instead establish their own kinds of public sphere -a concept that we're probably starting to find a bit static- is surely one of the most important inventions to have emerged from political creativity in this new cycle of protest" (Exposito in Raussig and Ray, 2002, p.151).

Maurizio Lazzarato calls for a political action that is considered in the light of the event, which is to say that it acts as a form of becoming, a two-fold creation, as a "possibility for living" (Lazzarato in Raussig and Ray, 2002, p.163). A transient pedagogy is a political action. It reaches toward the invention of

modes of action. Such modes should not be dislocated from their contexts. They are ephemeral and belong to the field from which they emerged.

A transient pedagogy is a form of coordination, encouraging both a state of invention and a logic of difference to surface. Coordination is understood as "the contentious site for transforming multiplicity: from the subjected and enslaved multiplicity to a new multiplicity the outlines of which cannot be measured in advance" (Lazzarato in Raussig and Ray, 2002, p.167).

Coordination might be performed by the choreographer, the curator, the director, or the performer. Thus it is not defined by a specific role — rather by the gesture of distributing invention, instead of a realization of an ideal pre-configured plan.

Such a pedagogy is a practice of the present. It establishes procedures of improvisation because it doesn't predefine movements to come. It should not be confused with a practice of *laisser faire*, because it is deeply engaged with the situation and the field. Site-specific practices have been charged with the role of reviving a location's history. The pedagogy of movement I propose does not necessarily have to take this responsibility. It doesn't mean to dismiss how architecture and urban history charge the practices of the present or the negotiated gestures of the everyday. It is not a question of historical alienation. I do not want to rely on a humanist discourse about universal conditions or the importance of individual speculation. I rather align with Whitehead's notion of history as a construction of importance and defend the Situationist investment in the creation of public spaces as a series of events. The ideology of history, as

Vaneigen attests, "has one purpose only: to prevent people from making history. What better way could there be to distract people from their present than to draw them into that sphere where times slips away?" (Vaneigem, 1994, p. 231). Since a transient pedagogy aims at moving between relations, material traces of history would be considered relational mediations. They allow me, as an artist, to access architecture as a diagrammatic force for the encounters to happen.

Deleuze and Guattari describe the diagrammatic features as a plane where action, or the rules for action, will rest on. It is an extraction of tendencies that form the conjunctive force (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 40; Manning, 2009, p. 124). The diagrammatic features are the structures that delineated tendencies for movement, or for attentiveness, which compose the field.

A pedagogy of movement embraces the role and economy of play, avoiding what Situationists called "falsified forms of play" (play with rules that are so constrained that there is no room for invention), and therefore does not need to culminate in a representation or presentation of the experimental and improvised practice. Performance art inherited the modernist tradition of artists representing and being inspired by the urban environment, a tradition Rosalyn Deutsche refers to as a set of practices with a particularly expressive and opinionated tone. Thus the approach to the urban realm as the ultimate site for experimentation developed in the futurist practices and was sedimented by the Situationist works that define performance as a practice beyond the representational constrictions of a subject that inaugurates the tradition of a 'playing with' (Deutsche, 1998).

To think about a pedagogy of movement with the city I refer to Joseph Beuys and his known ability to transcend institutional practices for the invention of an alternative didacticism (Ulm in Mesch and Michely, 2007, p. 78). The pedagogy of movement that I seek is equally disengaged with the production of value attributed to the object and immersed in the production of creativity as an end, as it produces potency that can be articulated in the collective field. It pulverizes decisions to produce a field of collectiveness, often resulting in an ungraspable change in the diagramming of site. Thus it has, within the event, pulled on forces that had become stagnant but which are latent to location.

Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the task of a pedagogy should be modest, and it shouldn't claim encyclopedic knowledge of its field. Pedagogies, instead, are about the engagement with singular moments, and only such an approach might safeguard learners from the disastrous consequences of stable predefined forms of knowing (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.215). The notion of a pedagogy is also brought up by Deleuze and Guattari to point out the limitations of categorizations of the functions of disciplines. According to them, one should avoid pedagogies where, for instance, the arts are entitled to teach non-artists to feel, or philosophy would teach one to conceive and science would determine how non-scientists should know things (1994, p. 218).

A pedagogy of movement with the city doesn't teach the predefined content of a discipline, it focuses on the ability to articulate relationally with the field, pushing its diagrammatic forces. The city in this pedagogy is neither the

subject nor the object of analysis (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 148), but a partner of the experiential.

In the dance with the urban that takes place in this practice the notion of rhythm plays an important role. The urban field is defined by the overlapping of rhythmic encounters which it enables to happen. Rhythm is commonly referred to in architecture as the spacing between repetitive elements, particularly referencing the dynamic between empty spaces and ornamented or built areas. In his last book, Henri Lefebvre (2004) moves from a Marxist perspective toward metaphysics of the everyday life, claiming for the foundations of a new science, called rhythmanalysis. Lefebvre develops the concept of rhythm as a measure that results from the relation between a body and an event, for instance the rhythmic encounter between the attentiveness of a body in motion and the surface of a building. The building would not be considered a surface appealing to perception and use, but as an event of spacing.

Throughout his writing Lefebvre obsessively creates relations between present and presence to demonstrate how practices of repetition, endurance and change reinforce space as the most fundamental organization of power. Bodies, as de Certeau similarly argued, resist the brutality of the urban, a brutality manifested in the politics of space, in quotidian acts of repetition, endurance and change. The everyday is described by Lefebvre as what is formed from repetition but "absolute repetition is only a fiction", he writes (2004, p. 7). The minutiae of such concepts are what imply the political implications of the pedagogies of the site-specific. Once I suggest that, as Lefebvre's asserts in *Rhythmanalysis*,

everything that is available to the senses occurs from a relational perspective and therefore is not inherent to site, I might be able to underline what was thought to be of little importance in the composition of the everyday spaces -that which is repeated and which situates encounters.

I return here to Whitehead's notion of a matter of fact to undo the dichotomy between the performative body and the space. For Whitehead the matter of fact is that which endures, but which can only be seen in an instant. The landscape endures, as does the body, in a dynamic permanence. *This* instant is the only graspable occupation of space, and *this* occasion is the only final real fact. He writes that "an impression is nothing else than a particular instance of the mind's awareness" (Whitehead, 1978, p. 146), and it is from a series of impressions that the body situates itself and what it can reach.

Whitehead suggests that the definition of environment is irrelevant because it requires an understanding of the finitude of things -the aforementioned separation of the ambient as an outside sphere of the body, for instance. The sensed experience of a site resonates with the body. Whitehead refers to nature as the world that derives from sense-perception. Sense-perception is what can be discriminated as an external fact from our body and that which composes forms that dominate experience qualitatively. He writes that "the appeal to life and motion is interwoven with the presupposition of the supreme reality as devoid of change", which results from one of the supreme characters of our existence being "dismissed into a subordinate role in metaphysics" (Whitehead 1978, p. 55, p. 72, p. 80, p. 109). In this pedagogy of

movement the body shall not be considered subordinate to site and relationality is conceived of through the assumption that the field is also in motion (in the varying degrees of what is experienced and felt *with* site).

Within a transient pedagogy for *site-specific* performance, I claim attentiveness to the isorhythmia between body and space, which can only be grasped once they coincide for a brief instant (the actual occasion). As such rhythm becomes an analytical tool but also a mode to intervene in the conditions marked in the repetition of gestures and movements of the everyday. The repetition of gestures causes, according to Lefebvre, a "dispossession of the body" (2004, p. 75), which could only be overcome through an engaged attentiveness to the accident. What I call accident is the unpredicted alteration of patterns. The accident can't be predicted nor determined. In other words, it is an impossible task to conceive a pedagogy for attentiveness toward the accidental or the incidental except as a training toward an improvisational practice. Before that, it is crucial to conceive the space of a performance in its most active and mobile qualities. The accident incites a spatializing operation as it invites the body to resituate itself. As described by Deleuze, the accident opens up a space between two planes (2003, p.109).

The accident activates how affect establishes the awareness of location. Affect is understood here according to Manning:

> Affect is not emotion, though it does play on the idea of movement within the word 'emotion'. Emotion is affect plus an awareness of it.

Affect is that which grips me first in the moment of relation. (Manning, 2007, p. xxi)

Elizabeth Grosz, complementarily, conceives affect as "torsion of the body itself" (1995, p. 32). Such a notion allows us to access the concept of space that is not dependent on the mind as the center of perception (Whitehead, 1966, p. 171), but apprehended through intuition. Whitehead refers to intuition as that which precedes the direct relation to objects in the immediate representation.

Intuition is not a passive feeling but rather a conscious effort, referenced as a mode of relating memory and things that can be momentarily seen, thus transcending the materiality of what presents itself to the senses (Mularkey, 2006, 15). Henri Bergson, intuition is a method to approach qualities of duration where knowing coincides with the generation of a reality that doesn't subordinate time toward spatial representations. Deleuze, while commenting on Bergson's concept, emphasizes that it is the differences of intensities that compose the method of intuition, a relevant remark for the distinction and intersections of performer and site that I am suggesting here: both belong to a continuum but differ in intensity and rhythm (Deleuze, 2004, p. 22). As he writes on intuition as a division of tendencies, Deleuze suggests that what we can grasp in our relation to the environment are these tendencies, rather than actual things. The categorical division between space and subject, for instance, derives from duration as much as it derives from matter. As argued by Deleuze, "Space only ever presents, and the intelligence only ever discovers composites, e.g. the

closed and the open, geometric order and vital order, perception and affection, perception and recollection" (1994, p. 35).

As I suggest an approach to spatial engagement from an experiential perspective, it is crucial to acknowledge that the notion of experience emerged in the beginning of the 20th century much in relation to the development of modernist logic, with a focus on the subject (Whitehead,1968, p. 3). I propose the notion of

The Slip, Florianópolis, 2009.

experience beyond such an opinionated constriction (which have originated the hermeneutic tradition in the field of aesthetics), but linked to what Whitehead conceives as a matter of fact. Whitehead explains that in the engagement with the world, "affect and reason attribute the sense of importance, which will then enable us to attend to the matter of fact" (Whitehead,1968, p. 4).

In this conception of a transient pedagogy of the site-specific, the urban is considered as the realm where the matter of fact is attended to in movement. The urban is the ultimate space for relationalities. Whitehead writes:

> What space presents to the understanding, and what understanding finds in space, are only things, i.e. products or results. However, between things (in the sense of results) there are never, cannot ever be, anything but differences of proportion. It is not things, nor the

states of things, nor is it characteristics that differ in nature; it is tendencies. (1968, p. 34)

What activates such tendencies is what I understand as the relational field. As Whitehead suggests, matter of fact emerges from habit and is "an abstraction arrived at by confining thought to pure formal relations, which then masquerade as the final reality" (Whitehead, 1960, p.18). In this sense, the transient pedagogy I propose establishes that what are specific to *site* are the tendencies that can be activated through how it is experienced.

Following Whitehead's perspective on how body and environment relate in the constitution of the relational field, neither should be considered as a preexisting entity to the experience. As emergent entities, not much specificity remains, since *site* is understood as the event of siting. He writes: "I am in the room, but the room is itself a component of myself in the world" (1960, p.163). A body, for Whitehead, is composed with the environment and it engages with it through various centers of experience that impose themselves on each other. The "feeler" is recomposed by what it feels. What Whitehead defines as a feeling cannot be traced and is not definable from a collection of data. An object does not come before the feeling for it, rather, it is a potential to an in-form feeling. It incites what can be felt. Whitehead writes that the feeling of the stone is in the hand, inferring that *feeling* is not subordinated to an object's appearance and neither to the perceptual machinery of a stabilized, (su)rendered body. (1960, p. 23). In my proposition for a transient pedagogy Whitehead's presumption that

one cannot define where a body begins and where external nature ends is crucial to consider how performative practices can move what was considered as space as a given.

Once the notion of *site-specific* performance remains predominantly based on meanings attributed or articulated at a specific location by inserted corporealities, the notion of permanence instead of movement (*difference)* is reinforced*.* Any concept of what is the physical world relates to experiences in time, Whitehead writes (1967b, p. 106). As much as it seems a minimal conceptual consideration, such an assumption aligns with the notion of material determinism (of architecture toward spatial practices), and is based on a hierarchy of endurances that reduce both location and the body to an essentialist contingency of matter. I opt instead to consider the performative potential from what it moves, how it incites movement *with*. Lucy Lippard traces such emphasis as part of what she defines as "*new genre public art",* a category of practices where the artist operates a shift from the physical conditions to the conditions of gathering that are enabled (Kwon, 2002, p. 111).

I remark, within my position in relation to a pedagogical approach, that to think about a site-specific practice in terms of an occurrence is a move that avoids what Kwon calls an auto-biographical, or subjective experience, a recurrent tendency between the functionalism of a community-based practice and the expressiveness of a modernist tradition of object/event making, to be displayed in a public space.

The pedagogy of movement with the city doesn't play with the idea of an isolated body. It generates novelty by the aggregation of expressions; it requires decision and reduction and it moves through the consideration of unexpressed possibilities. It entertains alternatives and develops tools to afford relations to come.

A pedagogy of movement with the city is not a doctrine. Its concern is with the nature of the concepts of the body and of space that site-specific performances have been reinforcing. To touch upon such concepts requires engagement, but how to regulate engagement? And what does it mean to regulate engagement? To think about embracing things that are not planned, a pedagogy of movement with the city considers qualities instead of things. This is a recurrent proposition in participatory art practice in that it appeals to affect and to the emergence of potentials with the environment.

As we engage in the routines of our own daily life, (walking, driving) pathways coincide for a certain duration. A landscape becomes a reference and we conceptualize "the city" as a shared experience. The pedagogy of movement with the city is sensorial and anti-expressionist.

Despite all the political and artistic movements' achievements of the past sixty years, the discussions around public space, for whom it is transformed and who are the people represented in its spheres, are far from being exhausted. Institutional and social power, community regulation, gender struggle and what is individually understood as the "sense of place"[4] are issues that trespass the most

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[4] Dolores Hayden (1995) wedges the term "Sense of Place" to describe characteristics pertinent to various fields of urban studies, such as geography, architecture and the arts. A sense of place is to her an aesthetic

ordinary of everyday practices. These are topics that inform the transient pedagogy explored here. This pedagogy inserts itself in the vast field of studies delineated from the intersections between bodies and cities, from Walter Benjamin's allegories of the urban characters, Lefebvre's criticism against modernist normativeness and Touraine's rejection of the authoritarian organization of the city space to contemporary feminist critique which claims that cities are projected as a fantasy of the body (Grosz, 2001).

This pedagogy is directed to anyone, from artists to urbanists, who are looking to gain awareness of possible modes of intervention by the creation of modes of contact and points of attention.

I call this set of techniques a pedagogy of movement with the city not seeking prescriptions, nor conclusive explanations, but rather an increased complexity of the conversations that the aesthetic experience enables (this is the reason why the critical practice implicit in this pedagogy is experimental and not exploratory).

Maxine Greene writes: "We have to appeal to people's capacities for 'choice and valuation', to their imaginative capacities, to their ability to take initiatives and attend actively" (1986, p. 61). This assumption is implied here to direct participants of the performance, as well as other walkers, to viewers who are in the field of the action.

This pedagogy can only be thought as a practice of collaboration, of a collective movement. It is through modes of collaboration that I find allowances

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concept that refers to something similar to a "personality of a location". What she calls "the power of place" is then a force that nurtures citizens' public memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory. Give examples that according to each one's individual uses the sense of the same place will be completely different.

for resistance. As ordinary as the event or the gesture might appear to be, they are not effortless. They require an orchestration between bodies to operate transgressively. Such engagement constitutes more than apolitical opportunities for spatial commitment; it ultimately becomes an articulation of the political force insipient to public spaces. The question of collaboration is not exclusively linked to social responsibility, which might erroneously lead to a functionalist framing of creative practices. The political here belongs to orders of being within the communal, and by engaging with these pedagogical practices I am also interested in how the notion of a community can be refined (in the practice of site-specific and community arts) (Deutsche 1998, p. 67).

The transient pedagogy seeks mechanisms that trigger a radical complicity. The task accomplished might be erased following the performance, but of utmost importance is the exercise of collectiveness that has been performed. The performed gestures enable a certain version of the *polis* -they encourage exchange (Manning, 2007, p. 8). How they might inform the political life of urban dwellers depends on the continuous exercise of complicit acts, on image-creation and transmission and on enactments that can be counted as sensible (2009, p. 153).

My own obsession with a pedagogical approach derives from the abundance of works that claim to have political content, but which are based in a strict normatisation of gestures. For an art practice to be politically articulated, it does not require being discursive; rather, it has to emerge from a self-reflexive procedure on the ontologies it animates. The outcome of thinking site-specific in

terms of a pedagogy of procedures for movement that crosses disciplines is that we are able to potentialize critique. A pedagogy is that which turns "form to context to engagement" (Kahn in O'Neil and Wilson, 20010, p. 119). As a pedagogical experiment this work mobilizes strategies, carrying out the need to move politically toward an articulation of the collectiveness prior to being able to define the agenda of interests (the common route of site-based and community works) (Rolnick and Guattari, 2007, p. 443).

A transient pedagogy of movement with the city creates adherence to the spaces of collectiveness without becoming normative on the use of tools, and therefore it is a pedagogy of risk. Gathering for improvisation is risky for a compositional practice as well as for a teaching practice. Daring to do so already nurtures the space of collectiveness differently. It requires mastery without knowing.

Chapter 2

Lia Rodrigues, a Tale of Encounters

Lia Rodrigues Company at rehearsal, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

And isn't it in our dreams, in creating, in motion,

that we begin to build new worlds?

(Lia Rodrigues, 2010)

The actual is not what we are but, rather, what we become, what we

are in the process of becoming- that is to say, the Other, our

becoming-Other. The present, on the contrary, is what we are and,

thereby, what already we are ceasing to be.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.119)

Lia Rodrigues Companhia de Danças is a contemporary performance collective, based in one of Rio de Janeiro's larger *favelas,* the *Complexo da Maré.* Since their move to this neighborhood in 2003, their compositions have been influenced by experimental strategies developed by director and choreographer Lia Rodrigues, in an attempt to challenge and make sense of Rio de Janeiro's spatio-political tensions.

Rodrigues arrived at *Maré* invited by choreographer Ivaldo Bertazzo, who was teaching dance to local kids and engaged with community organizations such as the NGO *Redes da Maré*.

By that time, artists or artistic organizations receiving public funds for cultural production were required to offer, in return for the financial support, what was called a "social counter-part". The social counterpart consisted of the inclusion of an initiative in the scope of the proposal which would serve the community. Mostly, the invitation took the form of workshops, free schools of dance, etc. The state's official view of the role of art was extreme. As a result, it vectored artists to seek immediate and tangible engagement with pedagogical practices. Artists who were not specifically trained for an educational practice had to invent teaching techniques that could be included within their own process of making a piece.

The model has been overly criticized in the past ten years, mainly for how it generated a series of unsuccessful, unsustainable cultural initiatives. The one-year commitment implied in most artists' contracts didn't provide enough time for the endeavors to properly form a dancer (in the sense of a formal technical

education) and neither did it permit the artist to achieve a more profound link with the community in order to develop a continuous engagement between the art practice and local politics. Projects turned over often and remained shallow short-term interventions whose effects evaporated as fast as the policies could implement other models of funding distribution. From this implied obligation of public policies, few artists started to engage in the development of radical pedagogical practices that showed to have interesting aesthetic implications in their productions. Their work was privileging an intuition to what an art practice could do *with*, *from* or *to* this particular production and social constraint.

In a radical move, instead of accepting the format of teaching dance workshops at a designed community, Lia Rodrigues decided to propose to transfer her company into the slums. Her community of intervention was to be her own middle-class dancers, who were deprived from experiencing the dynamism, the rhythms, dangers, codes, corporealities and imaginaries of a large part of their own city: the *Favela da Maré*.

How many cities are in one city? Could we say that number is equal to its inhabitants? Or is a city as the sum of the conglomeration of societies it holds? If, as processual philosophy suggests, each actual occasion originates a society, we arrive at an infinite number and at the impossibility of grasping what defines a city. Rodrigues' work tries to understand the complexity of variations and the impossibility of defining what a city is. The choreographer of *That what we are made of, Incarnated and Pororoca* investigates the borders and symbolic divisions of Rio de Janeiro in a silent political procedure. She doesn't

choreograph on such topics, but her dance extends the choreographer's restless passion and critique to Rio's landscape. The city's architectural, political, economic and imaginative layers become elastic through her propositions of border crossing. Thus, Rodrigues redefines a spatial order of where bodies can go in the fragmented cityscape of Rio de Janeiro. Her question in the end is, how do spatial politics constrict circulation, how can an art practice act upon such restrictions and how do they subjectively affect a dancers' body?

Rodrigues' choreographic procedures are made up of a composition mode and a pedagogy that involves a very subtle and unspoken technique of generating movement. The regimen on which they base their creative practice is nothing less than radical. Every day, she has to go to *Favela da Maré* to work and her dancers have to accept and respond to the invitation to learn how to articulate their trajectories from the *Zona Sul* to the slum. Rodrigues' stubborn presence in this isolated neighborhood is a gesture against the opacity of these other layers that also form what a city is. Instead of 'what can a professional dancer teach at *Maré?'*, she asks 'how does being there change your dancing body?'

There is no easy answer for such a question, especially when the terms of the inquiry are not always set as the theme of her work[5]. To maintain the rehearsal space at *Maré*, to work to build a theater there, to store cleaning products at the front room knowing that they won't necessarily be found there the

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[5] The theme was elaborated in her piece *Pororoca*, a term that defines the encounter of Brazil's largest river with the sea. In the piece Lia explores her impressions of *Maré* and the sense of collectiveness and communion she experienced from the contrast of corporealities lived in different neighborhoods.

next morning are radical acts of micropolitics[6]. Her practice and her resistance to remain at *Maré* for the past ten years invent a procedure of choreography that challenges constrictions of circulation. While placing her company in the middle of the restrictive politics of circulation that form Rio's political terrain, Rodrigues' practice expands the definitions of what dance can be *for* and do *with* the urban terrain.

The *Favela da Maré* slum is a place of exclusion, where almost 130 thousand inhabitants are deprived of effective urban planning, transportation systems, and basic infrastructure initiatives. *Maré* is made up of sixteen subdivisions of small municipalities, and it is also divided internally by organized crime according to the areas that are controlled by the two factions of a drug cartel. The NGO *Redes de Desenvolvimento da Maré* was a community initiative that aimed to prepare young adults to enter university. It later became involved with fostering art education projects that hoped to offer alternative education and political engagement. It is still to this day, the organization that assists Rodrigues' permanence at *Maré,* and it is with them that the choreographer is now building the model of a 'new school of dances'[7].

"The slum goes beyond the territories it occupies", reminds architecture historian Paola Berenstajn Jacques (2001, p. 106). Jacques investigates the notion of occupation as a process which takes place in distinct levels: the filling of abandoned sites within the city (material occupation of shelter), the modes

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[6] During one of my visits to the company in 2010 the dancers were upset by the fact that their cleaning products had been stolen and they had to therefore rehearse on an extremely dirty floor for that day.
[7] Rodrigues is sensitive to what courses and classes are to be offered and tends to work on the counter flow of a dominant discourse that predefines what a dance is.

through which these settlements move around a general formalization of the city, and the dislocation their inhabitants draw over the urban fabric. Rodrigues, through her presence at *Maré,* acts upon the latter consequence of the slum's occupation of an urban terrain.

What she enables is a movement where the dancers, the inhabitants of Alagados, (the part of *Maré* where the company is now based), and her captive audience from the *Zona Sul* cross zones of exclusion, regions of socio-economic divisions and meet in the spectacle of dance.

Arriv

Looking for a dancer's house, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

Traveling together to the rehearsal, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

Rodrigues works with the creation of 'traditional' pieces for the stage and her choreographies have been acclaimed internationally for their dramaturgy elaborated with few scenic resources other than the dancer's bodies: simple or no lighting, ordinary or no scenography, often with no music on stage. She always premiers her pieces at *Maré* and with few exceptions performs predominantly there while in Brazil. The choreographies belong to that location. When one watches Rodrigues' performances at a theater, they become a narrative about the body, but watching her play at *Maré* transforms the pieces into a sequence of presences with incredible variety. The doors are open and the audience is heterogenous. Eventually, someone enters whistling a song and sits on the floor. She sits on plastic chairs during the intermission and talks to the kids who came to watch with exciting curiosity. What can a body do? They ask: What does it mean? Her answer is to continue there,

questioning, enabling such an encounter to take place. Her permanence at *Maré* as a contemporary dance company is as much of a survival strategy as it is an aesthetic choice.

I argue, as a pedagogical remark on movement with the city, that Rodrigues' choreographies start much earlier than when

the spectators can see something on stage. Her *Rehearsal of Pororoca, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.* choreographies are defined when enabling the complex activities of risk and engagement in the realm of everyday practices. The simple fact that her dancers have to travel to, enter and inhabit *Maré* to rehearse reverses the normal flow where most people who live at *Maré* work at *Zona Sul* (the richest area of the city). In addition, during her showing seasons the performance becomes a unique permission for the viewer to overcome constrictions of circulation in Rio de Janeiro and inhabit this otherwise impenetrable territory of the *favela*.

More than presenting a dance that represents what a body can do, Rodrigues invites the viewer to articulate their own bodies differently. One cannot attend her performances in the same way as one would in any theater. Your body is already different when the favela, in its symbolic invisibility, becomes a tangible part of a shared geography.

When we enter *Maré* we are confronted with ne[w]

alignments" of the city, and there is no other

way into the work than through experiencing

the city differently (Manning, 2007, p. 15).

The choreographic experience begins when

we have to take the bus, instead of taking a

car or prearranged transportation, to get to

Maré. It begins the moment we have to

Dancers preparing for rehearsal, 2010.

cross the borders of known safety and enter the slum.

It is then that Rodrigues becomes a choreographer who invites the audience to

exceed the regimen of aesthetic experience from the fictional to the re-invention

lunch in the neighborhood of Maré, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

of the city (Rancière, 2009, p.76). No matter what happens on stage, the setting of a choreographic procedure has already been established in the crossing of Rio's isolated neighborhoods; a crossing performed silently on a daily basis by her dancers and

massively by her audience on a given performance night.

After ten years of stubborn permanence at *Maré*, Rodrigues has sedimented these procedures. They became pathways and possibilities against the violation of spatial restrictiveness that are intrinsic to a city's structure. Remaining at *Maré* instead of coping with the logic of a visitor is her strategy to undo the dichotomies of power that strongly mark local politics in Rio de Janeiro.

Rodrigues' practice is relational, as it is ultimately, as Nicolas Bourriaud describes, based on the orchestration of encounters and defined by the micropolitics of conviviality (2002, p. 9). Instead of offering simplistic answers for what a pedagogy of social exchange should look like within the framework of dance Rodrigues proposes friction as the basis for a process of genuine dialogue (Mouffe, 2005).

After attending her performances and interviewing Rodrigues I proposed a procedure between her dancers and I: following the tour that celebrated the company's 20th anniversary and in the midst of their creative process for a new piece, I invited them to have me shadow their work trajectory. The proposition was simple: I met the dancer in her/his house early in the morning and then followed them to *Maré.* On our way we would talk about landscape, their impressions on the speed with which the city was being transformed in preparation for the Olympic Games and the World Cup and the concept of presence. I repeated the process with three dancers, none of which lived at *Maré.* I was mostly interested in documenting their relation with the environment between their houses and the rehearsal space.

Rodrigues often conducts her rehearsals with her eyes closed, which was particularly striking to me as a directing technique. By doing so, she claims to sense the intensity of the connections being performed, which are for her more important to be practiced than form. In *Pororoca,* the piece they were rehearsing during my stay with the company, Rodrigues exercises points of arrival, formations and intentions. Such a gesture gives a clue to her understanding of the composition attuned to the notion of presence, and similar to her engagement with *Maré,* an act of political resistance. Presence is defined by what extrapolates the body form, what qualities are attributed to the shapes it produces. By shape I am referring here to the dance vocabulary as much as the shape of the city produced in the trajectories her company generates in Rio. In her politics of permanence presence is performed dynamically, in the ability to move beyond established patterns of circulation.

My procedure with each dancer was initiated at the gates of their homes, where we started walking together through their daily routes. Since this was not framed as an interview, we were often in silence, walking side by side, sharing the noises of the buses and cars, impatient for the wait of the long journey ahead. Eventually we talked about presence, and discussed particularities of this contested term for performance. Often referred to as a synonym that indicates a level of awareness, when applied to events that happen within a cacophony of the city, the notion of *full attentiveness* becomes inaccurate. To presume a complete awareness, considering the peculiarities of site, would mean to forget the ephemeral qualities of a site and the fact that it is actualized in the occasion.

A notion of full attentiveness could mislead to a return to the dichotomy between actor and location and to the idea that the environment pre-dates the event of sensing and of positioning. Rodrigues' work evokes presence as flows of permanence that emerge between bodies and site prior to knowing, thereby informing spatial conditions and configuring another register of encounters that precede meaning. Presence is the dispersion in resonance with what is presented.

Such a claim is found in the works of Jean Luc Nancy and of H.U. Gumbrecht, where presence configures another register, complementary to meaning and therefore differing from awareness (knowing). Such a clarification is important in particular with respect to dance theory, which still privileges the interpretation of signifiers produced on stage in order to analyze how a dance practice produces conceptual bodies. Jean Luc Nancy's idea that presence is that which produces more than sense is crucial in thinking about a pedagogy of movement with the urban. Nancy describes presence as strictly related to the idea of decision, of a "disclosive projection and determination of what is factually possible at the time" (1994, p. 85). Nancy rejects the tendency to understand the presentation of bodies or of the object as what holds to an essence. Presence is what is actualized in the tendency for movement. Under such a definition we are able to avoid a critique of performative bodies beyond an affirmation of a signifier and avoid the accusation of substantialism (contained in the reification of form). For Nancy presence emerges when there is an impossibility of permanence, both in the agitation and siting. Gumbrecht calls the "effacement" the tendency to

associate presence with the rhythmic ability to perform movement and change (2004, p. 58). To come into presence is a process that is characterized by a being in movement with (Nancy, 1994, p. 170).

Presence, in Rodrigues work, sets an organization of potentials between that which hasn't taken shape yet, a becoming extensive with location, with the possibility of crossings. The choreographer requires the dancers to cross the city and enter the field of exclusion from a reversed perspective so that they can be called into the creative method in a procedure that goes beyond the vocabulary of dance. To work with presence, or to be present, in this sense, means to become available to become yet another body, to learn how to navigate in an inhospitable environment.

The encounters enabled by Rodrigues' choreographic procedures test effects of presence that target the urban space from potentially risky contacts (Tonkiss, 2005, p. 71). Such contacts generate a multiple contiguity of presences, what would constitute, for Nancy, a "topography of distinctions" (2003, p. 181). This topography of distinctions is what ultimately defines the political engagement of Rodrigues' work. The political becomes an invisible topography, generated in the dance's convergence of differences and its challenge of territorial limitations.

I met C. on the second day of my residency. He was moving between apartments, struggling, like many other *cariocas,* to find affordable rent at *Zona Sul.* When I entered *Maré* with C. I felt safe and was unaware of the eight-year-old kids who were selling cocaine just two steps away from the theater. C. told

me I had better put my camera down. Nobody was going to rob me, but there was too much being revealed that I wasn't even aware of in the surroundings. After four years at the company he had learned how to navigate *Maré*. With him I walked feeling as if I was walking anywhere else in the city, a feeling that made me unaware of the most obvious differences.

On the next day I was following N., who had recently auditioned to enter the company. I felt strongly that I was in danger while walking with her -because she was afraid. She was still resonating with an incident that had happened a week prior to my arrival, when the dancers had to leave rehearsal because two different drug cartels had initiated a dispute just a few meters away from the theater. I asked her why she chose to dance for Rodrigues and her answer had no particular politicized complexity. She said it was because of the aesthetic of the pieces, because of the company's vocabulary. She was indifferent to their presence at *Maré*.

After having spent a few days with the company I was surprised to hear from her dancers that they would rather be rehearsing at *Zona Sul*. They saw no point in going to *Maré* if it wasn't to develop a directly social work, or to teach workshops to the community. It is hard to grasp how Rodrigues' strategy of presence works as a diagrammatic force for generating movement (political and on stage). Location and its relation with participant bodies is Rodrigues' diagram. Rather than being a prescriptive mode, a teaching of a practice (of art, of politics or of social articulation), it is the force that suggests the tendencies for movement to come.

In Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the plane of immanence I found an interesting mode to think about her composition strategy. They describe the plane of immanence as a structure that precedes any form of language. Language, in turn, is inscribed in it.

> The plane of immanence is not a concept that can be thought, but rather the image of thought. (…) It is not a method, since every method is concerned with concepts and presupposes such an image. Neither is it a state of knowledge on the brain and its functioning. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 37)

One might confuse the plane of immanence with language, possibly due to not taking into account notions of presence and present immediacy that Deleuze and Guattari's work imply. The plane of immanence is not the structure, but the movement itself where the structures relate to each other and where they derive from.

I adopt this concept to discuss Rodrigues' work to offer a counterpoint to the tradition of community intervention from which her practice started. The conditions of the work create a field on its own, which takes place prior to the plane of composition. This field remains an unrehearsed choreography of trajectories that will remain unseen but which inform the relational practices on stage, between dancers, with the public and with the community. In Whitehead's notion of the *extensive continuum* the philosopher defines that which holds the

potential for divisions, simultaneously encompassing temporal and physical entities. As described by Luciana Parisi and Steve Goodman, it "expresses a general scheme of relatedness between actual entities in an actual world" (Parisi and Goodman, 2009, p.3).

Whitehead writes:

Extension, apart from its spatialization, and temporalization is the general scheme of relationships providing the capacity that many objects can be welded into the real unity of one experience. Thus, an act of experience has an objective scheme of extensive order by reason of the double fact that its own perspective standpoint has extensive content, ant that the other actual entities are objectified with the retention of their extensive relationships. These extensive relationships are more fundamental than their more special spatial and temporal relationships. (1960, p. 67)

The city is maybe the most graspable field of extensiveness we can relate to. Experience in it is, similarly to how Whitehead defines the relation of extension, precedes temporal and spatial divisions and refers to the potential for all actual relatedness. The action of relatedness and how experience becomes a category of space itself (and not a feeling for a preexisting *space*) ground why Rodrigues' presence is a potent activist gesture, *Rehearsing Pororoca, 2010.* transformative of the potential of the performative body as an intrinsic and unique pedagogy of movement.

Rodrigues' pedagogical and creative practices assert that it is only by allowing mobility to overcome trajectories and modes that have been stabilized that one can change the perspective to think and to move from urban isolation and segregation to a politic of inclusion of difference.

All movement counts. All movements affect the ability to improvise and to compose. It is not irrelevant that the dancers spend one hour prior to warm up cleaning the floor, or that they have only cold water to shower after training, or that eventually they have to leave the rehearsal because of gunshots. How the environment resonates in their body movements becomes graspable only in permanence, in Rodrigues' resistance in remaining present at *Maré.*

The role of ephemeral interventions (dance, performance or visual arts) is to preserve a sense of inadequacy and thus, openness to site. If this role is functional in any sense, it should be for upholding time and space for the yet unimagined differences to be performed. Rodrigues' permanence at *Maré* is not any less ephemeral after ten years, because her work is based on the insistence of what is ephemeral in the experience of the quotidian based on the resonance of movements that are performed distinctively and privately by each dancer before their arrival at the theater.

The body in Lia's work escapes essentialist definitions. It is more than flesh, and it moves beyond overly culturalist definitions and subjectivity accounts because it is composed as a collection of circulation and collaborative practices instead of subjective impressions.

When I made my proposition to her dancers I offered to cook them dinner on the same day of the procedure in return for their time and for allowing me to shadow their trajectory.. When I scheduled my visit with *P.* I noticed how much I was generalizing what a body is, what a body needs, in my rough conception of what I could cook for them. *P.* was on a raw food diet. Such a simple individual choice made me have to rethink my procedure from scratch. If I were to follow *P* in her morning private ritual I had to get to her house at 4.am., sing and eat raw mangos. We took the bus and talked about her moving back to Rio after being gone for fifteen years and whether or not this was the same city for her. We talked about singing in the bus and about the changes the city was going through. I asked her if she had any favorite sight on her way to work, any particular moment in which she liked to pay attention to the landscape. We were just crossing a beautiful view of the ocean at that point, but she mentioned that her favorite moment was when the bus entered a tunnel, which was for her a kind of suspension of the city in itself. We talked about being abstracted from the trajectories and how much of the landscape was informed by its physical conditions in comparison to her own experiences and concepts about Rio.

What it means to have a body and how do we learn to develop this knowing with the sense of creativity and self-invention required by the environment was an ever-present question to me during my procedure with Rodrigues' dancers. Through training and methodology, a dancer learns what it means to have a dancing body. Rodrigues invests in the notion that it is what one does while not dancing or training for dance that informs spatial practices that will

feed improvisation methods to compose on stage. It is how space is practiced outside of the composition that politicizes a *site-specific* endeavor. If, as Elizabeth Grosz points out, "architecture is the domain for the regulation and manipulation of made-spaces" (2001, p. 267), practices such as Rodrigues' affirm that the body is the site where such regulations can be contested and re-choreographed in silence.

Dancer at rehearsal, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

Participants of (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.

Having once begun to architect their surroundings, human beings never stop. A person turns a desert or a forest into an architectural surround by how she moves through it. Advancing and cutting paths, fending for herself and defending herself, she uses her limbs to erect enclosures or break them. That which has been architected blocks, guides, facilitates, comforts contains, or suggests containing.

(Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. 44)

When does a body count?

This rigid question emerged informally from a workshop I was leading with Christoph Brunner and Sara Wookey as part of a performance studies conference in 2009 (PSi15). The group was experimenting with a task-based sequence of movements in the old part of the city of Zagreb. At a particular point in the improvisational score, we were being directed as a collective to a given route, walking from the studio we had departed from toward the uptown area. We followed clues, which pointed out specific catalysts to be sought for in the environment -for instance, waiting for three yellow buses to drive by in the street in which we were standing clues that qualitatively changed our walk. They changed our walk in the sense that a walk in the city is never simply a dislocation. It is a walk as Michel de Certeau understands it -the movement of writing space- and it endures as long as "objects emerge in relation to events of experience." (Manning, 2009, p. 67) Pragmatically our rule was simple: we were to observe/collect objects/events. Once found, the object-events would trigger our collective moving forward.

After warming up in the studio, we started walking in the direction of the old uptown. At one point, the group was leaning against the stone wall of a tight corridor. This corridor served as a shortcut passage. In this location, we were instructed to wait and switch sides across the corridor walls each time a single walker crossed in front of us. After a single walker had passed us three times we would be able to finally leave.

We waited. We waited and watched pairs, groups, and crowds of tourists walk through our corridor. The urge to continue became palpable: it was

collectively felt. No *single* person passed through. Someone from our group asked: shall we simply ignore the rules and decide to proceed silently, despite our initial agreement? [8] We waited despite the fact that some of our group members observed others fidgeting and wanting to leave.   And even then, we diligently stayed, without speaking, controlling our restlessness, and waiting further. The wall was dirty; full of old and undone *graffiti* interventions, and all we had to do was enjoy our wait. It had to be an active waiting, because we didn't know when or how the catalyst we were waiting for would arrive or appear in the surroundings. One single walker, the group changes sides, then waits; second single walker, the group changes sides, waits; a third single walker, we wait until we, would walk one by one, in the direction of the large stone stairs that were resting about thirty meters from the narrow corridor we had started from.

What we couldn't have predicted was that the participant who had received the task of being the cameraman for that session, Troy Rhoades, would decide to search for a variation of frame composition for the documentation and cross the group through the corridor. At that point, from the discomfort of our wait, we asked: does his body count?

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[8] The described negotiation took place silently, with the reading and rereading of intentions, as one of the rules was not to talk for the duration of the work.

Allegedly we were waiting for *any* single walker to enter the passageway, so why were we concerned with whether he would or not count? The rules we were following were based on a presumed duality that defined the roles and positions of the performers. "The

Still from video, (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.

audience certainly plays a key role in most attempts to define performance, especially in those attempts to separate performance from the other behavior", points Marvin Carlson's in history of performance studies (1996, p. 15). Interestingly enough, such a duality might be verifiable in theater performances, but it seldom applies in the analysis of most of urban works, where the counterpart of the performer is not the audience, but the environment itself.

Our group, constituted by the performers, stood still and waited. The passersby and the environment formed a rhythmic surrounding, emphasized by our distinctive stillness. "Rhythm is experiential duration that dislodges any concept of universal time" (Manning, 2009, p. 23), and it is the rhythmic difference here that delimits the audience from the performers.

What could be imprecisely indicated as the "audience"[9] for our practice was composed of those watching us (with more or less interest) perform stillness. However, they were being observed as well, but in a reverse pattern. We waited for the city to perform something particular. Our inability to predict when and where the 'clue' would arrive was related to our condition as visitors. There was no rehearsal and the rhythm of this encounter could not be foretold.

In this setting the cameraman was performing something that challenged the described binary network of relations. He was a single person walking in front of the wall where we were standing, so why wouldn't his movement be accounted for? One of the answers, I would chance, would be that he was neither waiting nor blended into what we had defined as landscape-he was something else. The city itself was being actualized in the event of our plasticized improvisational movement techniques. In the performance of every-day walking, as far as the specific dance-derived techniques with which we were experimenting at the studio every morning were concerned, the city was a result of the performance of dislocation techniques. It was not a scenario, but an emergent experience.

This story touches on various issues that are relevant for the critical approach of improvisation-based performance, once the peculiarities of public spaces are taken into account. The described moment of indecision illustrates how a simple constraint for collective movement challenges the definition of landscape as that which surrounds and what is considered to be appropriated in the process of appreciation.

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[9] In the strict sense, I defend that it is the viewers of the edited documentation piece who primarily constitute the audience, which will only emerge after the completion of the event.

The impossibility of defining and predicting situations to come extrapolates the limits of the aesthetic composition. It becomes a method that provides us with the endless exercise of facing always-emergent dissensus. The works presented here deals, in various degrees, with issues of collective improvisation, where challenging the limits between action and environment happens within movement practices.

The repeatedly evoked reference in the approach of contemporary art (along with issues related to art market values) is Rancière's work on the political dimension of collaborative practices, which substantially takes place in his writings on performance. What Rancière refers to as a 'fabricated aesthetic experience' results from the creation of novel forms of political subjectivity (Rancière, 2006, p. 62). Such a claim is rather crucial in an inquiry regarding the ethical aspects[10] of performance-based work in the cityscape. It implies that politics are immanent to the field of aesthetics, and that the latter is not a mere representation of the former. The *sensible* is the shared, writes Rancière (2006, p. 42); aesthetics appears as the framework referring to the articulation between what is made visible[11] and what is thought (felt). In collaborative practices the political dimension of the work appears as early as in the mechanisms at play in the planning process[12]. There is no need to be concerned with *"inventing some real or fancy monument or creating unexpected situations to generate new social*

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[10] One of the recurrent themes in performance studies is the recurrent inability to deal with pre-existent practices, or the historical dimensions of the city. (Kaye, 2000; Kwon,2002; Deutsche, 1998)

[11] Rancière names 'visible' whatever object is formulated to be prehended as art, weather it is a spectacle or an art object.

[12] Jane Rendell raises the concern with the stages of planning while discussing Social Sculpture premises. She writes that it is in the earlier stages of planning that true collaboration takes place, not when the structures are already laid down (2006, p. 173).

relationships in the poor suburbs" since to be political, he asserts, is to exist in the regime of the shared (2009, p. 79). Rancière cautions that *the political* is feasible in "a fictional ontology, a play of 'aesthetic ideas" and is not displayed on the most visible of the artwork layers[13] (2009, p. 67). According to such notions of the political dimensions of the work, there is ultimately no distinction between the relations that are active in practice (choreographic/improvisational rules) and everyday experience. Outside the framing made by the documentation of the event in Zagreb, our actions were barely visible due to their micro-spectacularity as well as their length.

In the following accounts, I situate my position in relation to the cities and the duration of the works rather than the pretense of being able to create a neutral critique of a 'content' or form. My condition of a volatile body, ephemeral in its dynamics of crossing disciplinary limitations, is not less important than any part of the city's public or official history that the performances might evoke. Such a choice of emphasis in the qualities of our presence is not *naïve* and does not serve to highlight any sort of subjective approach. On the contrary, it results from a care for positioning and situating the experience, which defines the voice from which I speak about *places.* It derives from mindfulness of the constraints as constitutive of the practices. What the work frequently addresses is the event of the collective itself in its intensities and visibilities. The event is the enactment of relational politics, being performed in public spaces. As the story I shared earlier about the confusing relationship between cameramen,

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[13] The severe critiques that supposedly politically engaged art works have received, were partially discussed in the chapter A Tale of Encounters.

performers/audience/location exemplifies, as soon as we leave the studio we cannot predict how the sharing of movement impulses and the modes of organizing our collective dislocation will be orchestrated. The work becomes the structure that changes the ways in which we could have predicted our movement, rehearsed in our preconditioned bodies and thoughts. The preconditioned body is that which holds to similar gestures everyday -it is what is repetitive as formative gestures of that body. The precondition is the dance of what a body has already become. All bodies hold to a collection of constitutive techniques. Eliciting movement from such techniques, for bodies have not been previously trained to 'dance' requires teaching how to generate material from the tradition of gestures and patterns that the body holds.

Collaborative practices, to be truly collaborative, require an opening for dissensus. Dissensus becomes in itself a mode of engagement within the gaps, between what is felt (in Rancière's terms 'thought') and what makes itself visible (the gesture/or medium for thought). In the search for effective participation, one has to face the visibility of this force, a process that is often absent in the practices of everyday life. Dissensus is the concept that points to the preservation of the most complex link between the aesthetic gesture and the practice of politics. Making dissensus visible, as a modality of collective intensity of togetherness, implies that an aesthetic practice is profoundly political. The articulation of such intensities might be defined as a field of political pedagogy, and it is in the consideration for such pedagogy that my interest for collaborative practices starts. They are techniques for distributing the sensible. They

presuppose ideas of participation and of negotiation of dissensus in a collective performative mode.

In the last fifty years collaborative practices have taken a central role in the reframing of art outside of the modernist autonomy, nevertheless, to define *authentic* collaboration remains a challenge. Anytime a practice is overly normative, it is not opened for dissensus, so it is a matter of how to define the rules for participation. Any gesture that might be considered extravagant from what is already being performed in the urban realm (what precedes the work) incites the presence of dissensus in the general composition of bodies.

Optimistically, the aesthetic regime, according to Rancière, has the ability to establish its own rules and evoke dissensus as a binding force toward the evoking of a possible communal body. (2006, p. 14). He writes:

> The politics of works of art plays itself out to a larger extent -in a global and diffuse manner- in the reconfiguration of words of experience based on which policy consensus or political dissensus is defined. It plays itself out in the way in which modes of narration or new forms of visibility established by artistic practices enter into 'politics' own field of aesthetic possibilities (2009, p. 65).

The practices of sited actions discussed here are threads of collective engagement woven from the sharing of parameters. The result is what has been filtered, with no consensus, from the improvisations of movement and how *site*

engaged in the practice. The works are a composition of disagreements, of dissonant bodies -bodies that act politically because they are public bodies[14]. They don't need to speak to politics, because the particularities of experience of dissensus and consensus find expression in how they move collectively. These practices seek not expression but negotiation between regimes of visibility composing with the distinction between bodies and the shared environment. Such ephemeral composition works as an exercise for expanding the threshold between these two entities- landscape and body, transducing their unities.

What the choreographic tasks suggest is the undoing of the definition of environment as a synonym of the shared realm. Instead, we might work with a definition of the environment closer to how David Leatherbarrow (2004) defines landscape: the place of the recurrent experience. Nonetheless it is important to reinforce that my use of the term s*ite* refers to that which situates and emerges from attention, prehension and engagement, linked to the singularities of experience, but never isolated from the surroundings. Prehension is defined by Whitehead as an appropriation (1960, p. 150) which partially derives from the body and partially not. He wants to avoid the notion of the world as a physical given, distinct form thinking or perceiving. Prehension is what constitutes the process through which the becoming entity grasps its environment. It is through the prehensions that the becoming entity takes form. A prehension doesn't define an object, but the relation between bodies- the becoming entity in its ability to

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[14] Further work on the definitions of public bodies can be found in the writings of Elizabeth Grosz, who maintains that the contribution of post-structuralist thought to architecture lies in the "indeterminacy of address, the openness of all systems to the undoings the future proposes" (1995, p. 136). Such questions are crucial to the bio-political thought of Judith Butler.

relate to the entity/object. A prehension of a chair, or of a building's entrance, for instance, constitutes the movements it elicits. It is the process of prehension that invents the subject (Manning, 2009, p. 11).

Because the taking of form can only be decided in the event, on the cusp of the moment, choreography cannot work from an imitation process. The movement emerges on site, from the tacit agreement to share the rules for movement. The agreement is the rule, which means it becomes the spinal structure for movement, but always with a margin for consensus or dissensus of the gestures to be performed. It exists before the decision for movement takes form. It is the possibilities for movement, immanent in the architecture but also a catalyst to the relations established between participants. The movement that is immanent in the architecture can be felt through the diagrammatic forces and the intensities that a building's structure draws out for the body to move through.

The pieces on each one of the *Sited Actions* are not to be read as a theoretical confabulation on the origins and resonances of the works. My wish is for them to extend the reflections on the possible reconfigurations of the sensible that contemporary performative practices are engaging with.

In the work *The Human Condition*, philosopher Hannah Arendt contrasts the shared space of the city with the domestic zone. Arendt asserts that we are spatially bound, independently of how singular our experiences in the world are. (Arendt, 1998, p. 244). The *politikos* life and the domestic define two orders of existence, overlapped in the performative activities that traverse those spheres. Arendt offers a return to the body in her political theory; not only of the human

body, which according to her is actor and sufferer, but the body of the world, which is simultaneously both, experience and experienced (Arendt, 1998, p. 13). We are thus able to establish in the architectural configurations the condition for one to decide to act. Such configurations are not deterministic: the actions re-shape the world immediately (in terms of how they make sense of the environment). Architecture becomes a legacy that overcomes the body's mortality when Arendt addresses, from a historical perspective, the dimensions of self-reflective tendencies, where the decision of acting and participating (in speech or in gesture) shapes the environment, thus suggesting bodies and relational politics to come. The recurrent concern to define the city beyond its physical constraints, from the people and the relations they build with each other, is expressed in Arendt's preoccupation with the "living together" (1998, p. 198) of the *polis*, where collective movement derives from the legacy constructed and inherited in the urban topography. Rancière, complementarily, points to the articulation of modes of togetherness as the political force of aesthetics, i.e. art practices, which becomes feasible in the bodily positions and movement, functions of speech, and in the parceling out of the visible and the invisible (Rancière, 2009, p. 19).

Also addressing the conventional fragmentation between gesture, politics and built space, Rosalyn Deutsche remarks that "visual space is, in the first instance, a set of social relations. It is never innocent, nor does it merely reflect, either directly or through contrived mediations, 'real' social relations located

elsewhere -in, for example, the economic relations producing the built environment" (Deutsche, 1998, p. 197).

The investigation compiled in this series of works is concerned with such relations, by means of considering techniques for performance that extrapolate a traditional narrative structure. What they invent cannot be foretold because it is produced in movement. What the techniques invent is more than a procedure that serves to reify the objects one can see as traces of the event. They are propositions that open us to shared possibilities of facing alternative patterns of relational politics between the participant group and the environment. Manning clarifies that "the essence of a technique of relation is not on its content per se but on its capacity to become *more-than* and to create *more-than*" (2009, p. 41).

In this sense, the set of techniques, and how the propositions are shared, address the question of affective politics, and provoke relational bodies in the interval that precede the visible spatial politics. The interval is the expression of duration before it is shaped into movement. It is the movement of the tendency before it is actualized into a gesture or action. As defined by Manning, the interval is the residual of movement. "It is not a thing but a quality" that preexists actual occasions and it remains immaterial because it perishes in the moment it is transformed into the actual occasion (Manning, 2009, p. 20). The interval is a close concept to Rancière's notion of dissensus because it retains the potential for difference. In disagreement or agreement the potential, and the positions, have already been defined.

Returning to the *(Un)Folding Zagreb* project, our permanence in the city was minimal, so we had to challenge the conceptually sedimented idea that the city was some stable entity, displaying itself for our visit. The main challenge was to create modes of expression based on improvisation, modes which would allow us to play in the redefinition of our own roles in that location academic tourism?

The wall situation described above, when duration became so feasible threading the city's experience, is shared here for other reasons than simply as an illustrative event of the complex relations between the presence of a camera/ documentation device and a performative practice. Rather, it emphasizes the complexity of arriving at a decision, the interval between searching, prehending and acting an exercise between aesthetics and politics. The individual urge to proceed, the private negotiations of restlessness, the hesitation in taking the

decision to continue: all this points out the complexities of acting in public spaces. Foremost, the story illustrates the difficulty in defining the positions and the roles of the performative body in the city, in particular in practices that neglect the structure of a theatrical or spectacularized structure[15]. *When does a body count?* is a question asked silently every time the movements of passersby cannot be easily separated from the script. It is a question asked once movement moves together with its source, rather than arriving as a representation by advised actors. In the works developed in this series, we have to constantly decide *the when*, between what was being already performed in the environment and our own movement, configuring a choreography of relations. This is not an individual decision. It surfaces from a collective attunement, a dispersion of planning that traverses every scale that constitutes the ecology of the body and the collective. Even when following specific rules or tasks, improvisation gains a quality of consistency between participants.

At first sight the clue might seem simple and leave little space for doubts, but, as an example, imagine we had to walk together once a person wearing a yellow shirt walks by. Movement is not only dependent on the probability that someone wearing a yellow shirt walks by, but also on our attentiveness -on everyone's attentiveness. It is not simply the yellowness, but the ability to orchestrate collective attentiveness and holding back, suspending the tendency that initiates movement. Movement becomes the dynamic between permanence and retention of prehended impulses. The decisions have to be simultaneously

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[15] As a theatrical composition I am referring to the tradition that divides and determines the roles of audience and performer, stipulating a line between the artistic action and the public reaction. (Kershaw, 1992)

negotiated silently within the group: when does what I have seen count? Shall we proceed?

For dance, more specifically in the field of instant composition[16], such questions have been explored in the tradition of improvisation, especially through the work of Steve Paxton and Trisha Brown. These choreographers have explored everyday movements and developed bodies of work that engage with particularities of architecture or the cityscape. Where I depart from their work is the notion of an engaged body, which can create movements from the relations with other dancers and with the architecture in a mode where sequences are never regimented as such. The proposed employment of body techniques in my practice is often inspired by Paxton's exercises for the spine and Brown's reversion of architectural relations, applied to non-trained bodies. When Manning writes that what is moved in relational techniques is not "you but the interval out of which our movement emerges," (2009, p. 17) I am lead to think about the impossibility of predicting how the proposition that was triggered as a tendency for movement will land *site*.

A body is always trained in the singularities of its experiential techniques and through them it offers a resistance for new bounds to be experienced. The qualities of movement that engage a body should not be rehearsed, so that they can enunciate a feeling for site. It is the ephemeral composition that reveals the

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[16] Instant composition is a practice in dance inspired from the early works of Steve Paxton. As defined by teacher Bettina Neuhaus: "it is the art of composing in the moment. In contrast to a set choreography where the process of decision making happens by developing and polishing the material for many weeks in the studio, an improvised piece demands a different way of working: Here the dancer has to create, compose and perform all at the same time in the performing situation on stage. An instant composition can be completely open, or be predefined by developing a common language between the performers, or by agreeing on a score. But every time the piece is performed in a very new way." (Neuhaus, [site], n.d).

relations and enables is to grasp the field. Moreover it is unproductive to focus on the form of a gesture.

The studio exercises that precede our walks are meant to warm up the architectural connection between the physical dimensions of body and of architecture, in other words, to play as tools for improvisational gesture as a situated form. We walk while experimenting various tendencies of alignment with each other, as we were walking on a sidewalk, creating striated lines, falling eventually to observe how the singular decision infects the general environmental composition. After the studio routine, we reach out to meet other bodies, other speeds; the surroundings are actualized in the movement of urban constraints, and emerge as a prearticulation of form that originates the gesture that will become visible in the documentation. Movement appears as a result from attunement to the surroundings, as a quality of being together and collectively investigating *what body counts* in the experience of *site.*

The propositions serve to provoke intensities in the process of engaging with the everyday, animating situations with which one might have otherwise engaged with more or less interest. In this sense the aesthetic propositions operate suggestively as a move between comfort and discomfort, inviting us to face the distinctions between presence and awareness. The discomfort derives from the uncertainty in the decisions: does it count? Comfort is the attentive rest, lying in the certainty that a decision is to come. It is a rest that seeks for the next disturbance to activate the following movement. As a choreographer I can't know

in advance how movement will move. I merely define the parameters for collaborative engagement.

The desire to engage in relationships with the audience, with the environment, in addition to the process of making compositional decisions, is intrinsic to *site-specific* practices (Lacy, 1995, p. 37). In the propositions described here such a desire is complemented by a discomfort with the limits of collaboration. As a technique, I seek to implement a certain confusion, which often arrives as 'playfulness' or 'disquietness', qualities described by Alana Thain as crucial for research-creation (Thain, 2008). Such qualities appear mainly through the establishment of improvisational clues (the proposed tasks for action) that depend on events and occasions that strike independently from workshop participants' decisions.

The *Movement with the City* series doesn't engage in a distinction between audience and actor, but derives from a concern with collaborative composition, with the process of research-creation. I share the definition of collaboration suggested by Stamatia Portanova. Using Alfred North Whitehead's philosophical vocabulary she writes that collaboration is "the creation of a *nexus*, a 'togetherness' of occasions of experience, every actual entity being in its turn the temporary singular 'encapsulation' of many different and diverging potentials" (Portanova, 2009).

Movement with the City assumes that what moves in the city moves the city: every body counts. Despite the fact that some of the practices shown here establish a small audience for the duration of the work, there is a persistence (not

always successful) of avoiding the tempting trap of performing *for* a public, *in* a city. Instead, participants are invited to loosen the performative act into an experimental field of what might become possible and transgress established patterns of movement. They are invited to pay attention to less loud tendencies for movement. Transgression is understood as a challenge to focus on the experience of *site* by participants, when actions cease to point out the city as a scenographic element, and participants must leave the condition of observers and collectors of spatial practices. My initial assumption in each of the works was that workshop participants move the city as much as all other pedestrians who watch the performance, as much as the bodies whose movements we don't see moving.

The procedures that are shared here are merely that: procedures for movement with the city. As simple as it might sound, what such an approach implies, in terms of techniques for teaching and creating *site-specificity,* is that once the idea of a performative condition (understood from an art practice point of view) as a state of exception[17] is abandoned, the performance takes place outside of the pretentious position of a comment on the urban field. The performer can escape the habit of displaying movement as a symbolic act. Every movement counts. The movement of thought becomes sharable, appearing in the moment of indecision sensed by participants; it appeared in the attentiveness to the cameraman's movement and was shared in the interval of our attention to move, in the prediction of *how* we would move. "The interval is not a thing, but a

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[17] I refer to the term from Carl Schmidt and Giorgio Agamben to define that which is distinguishable from the law, but remains under its umbrella. (See Agamben, 2000)

quality", explains Manning (2009, p. 20) and as such, it is in the interval that precedes our movement that the attunement to our 'task' changes the quality of our bodies before we decide to move.

What was sought, in the following projects, were ways to think about movement as that which makes a body always count, and as an experiential zone of organizing the city and ultimately as an inventive and participative process: practices as a way of building; practices as escapes; practices as imagined spaces; practices as *habitat.*

To that effect *Movement with the City* relies on the notion that the city doesn't allow for rehearsal. The city is always performing itself, and in a rhythmic continuum there is no rehearsal for its landings. As asserted by Richard Wentworth, the city is the experience and "there will never be enough diary keeping, cinema making etc. that can grasp it" (Wentworth in Borden, 2001, p. 403). It happens through movement and in the moving.

The definition of propositions implied here is borrowed from Rancière. In his aesthetic theory propositions are conditions for engagement that configure temporary communities of senses. The community emerges in opposition to the paradox of expectation that a traditional performance would orchestrate, based on the roles of performer vs. audience discussed earlier (Rancière, 2006, p. 51).

The choreographic tasks, which I also call 'scores', don't constitute definitive sequences to be presented for an audience. They are suggestions for engaging with flows and surroundings. The work starts when the group is challenged by propositions for movement that activate how a site will eventually

land. By landing I am not referring to space-taking or an arrival, but to a qualitative fielding, an attunement of awareness that might be leading the body to prehend space from memories, from other affects that juxtapose a perceptual scanning of location.

The question W*hen does a body count?* resonates in various other situations throughout the works conducted in the months following the Zagreb workshop. The inquiry addresses the condition of the artist as a visitor to the sites where the work will happen and, despite the various temporal gradations of permanence in the practices shared here, I still consider myself as a visitor to all of the cities with which the works engage. And as an eternal visitor, I find myself compelled to ask: when does my body count and what is it accounted for? This became our refrain.

Participants at (Un)folding Zagreb, Still of video, 2009.

The procedures shared here are aimed at fostering a practice of the urban field from very simple conditions, where movement is an inventive force, not a symbolic act. No matter how long I stay, I share ephemerality as a primordial condition of participants: because we always move, the qualities of the city move as well.

Inventing corporeality with the environment, with the force of the collective, often means a hyper-awareness of the position of being a foreigner: one who is

always moving but accepts to engage with propriety, because it is a body that shares, and therefore, counts.

The techniques employed are procedures that invest in qualitative differences, which I trust to be the political force of performance art practices. They modulate intensities and mark singularities as an operation of participation. As experimental as such an approach might seem, it is far from self-indulgent. The political dimension appears in the exercise of collaboration. Collaboration might often be triggered by a singular commotion with self-indulgence, when one dares to step in and move what seems to be inert. In *The Emancipated Spectator*, Jacques Rancière (2009) discusses ideas around the fragmentation of spectator and the performer. The clarification of the political problems of such an opposition is relevant for the methods of work I will share in this chapter. Being a spectator is not considered to be a good thing, for viewing opposes knowing (based on the distinction of life and representation). There is a state of ignorance that is presupposed by the spectator, which is opposed to acting. In other words, there is an implicit separation between the act of knowing and that of acting. In the following research-creation processes, I search for an intensity of experience that can be composed as a frame of the city's movement, where knowing a city results from acting.

Thain defines research creation as a process that concerns the engagement with the "creation, exploration and use of techniques for the generation of newness, not the radically new as a break but newness as

emerging from modes of participation, contact, transduction and relation—those which produce a 'novel togetherness'." (Thain, 2008, n.p.)

As a result we see a method where collaborative practices are investigated as techniques of emancipation (Rancière, 2009), where the reversal of roles between environment, performer and audience takes place fluidly and extrapolates the aesthetic dimension. For the emancipation of spectatorship to be achieved, there needs to be a blurring in the roles between those who act and those who look; an exercise that *Movement with the City* engages with.

Despite the experimental and improvisational character of the performances, all the works outlined here resulted in a final composition. The swing from the political to the aesthetic appears, I want to argue, not only in the event itself, but in the editing of the materials generated by the participants, a particularly fragile process, because documentation is always a settling of information, a delimitation of what was reached. This implies that the composition obeys the agreements within the group, which means a loss of individual control of the final form of the documenting material.

After the propositions are given, my concern is with how to compose with the forces of togetherness and trim the confluences between participants and the city. It is still during the process of filming or photographing the improvisation that the collaborative nature of the editing starts. There needs to be an attunement and a generosity between the videographer and the performer. The moment of improvisation is fragile and often broken once the camera approaches, particularly when we have such an intense partner for movement: the city.

When it comes to editing, I often call the material a multi-dimensional puzzle, and I believe that video artists (with whom I have been working) often have difficulties in editing such polyphonic materials. We cannot know in advance what will be generated, and the unpredictable is often a zone of discomfort. Making the final video, editing the photographs -this is in itself a process of fielding. It requires that we revisit the interval of movements that had enough potency to be visible (or that were intense enough to attract the attention of the videographer). Thus, during the time of the editing, in the combination of more and less intense gestures I sought to represent the interval of the movements. What is filmed is the immediacy of the relations but it is not all that which was moved in the event. Moments of circulation, where very little could be defended as being "performative" were still composing the event and were already opening up the space of the relations in the building for more challenging actions to be executed. Most of those do not make it to the video- they are the intervals within the final composition.

The composition process is less a matter of aestheticizing the experiences than it is a means of engaging in an understanding of the event. Whitehead (1968), in *Modes of Thought*, suggests understanding to be a process that involves a composition, so that, as such, it enables access to the event as a unity. We are always composing what a city is, as we try to make sense of the orgy of events, memories and practices by putting them in reference and situating our movements within it (1968, p.46). For Whitehead "the mass of our

moral, emotional, and purposive experience is rendered accidental" (1968, p. 109), it does not depend on the exteriority of matter of facts.

The research-creation works of *Movement with the City* discuss body movements executed by bodies that were not trained to dance. Participants, with few exceptions, were trained visual artists and writers whose bodies have developed a technicity to be instrumental toward another creative media, with a less formal practice with movement composition. Such bodies count, act and perform the city. The pieces to be shared here are approached from the techniques that enable the body to operate the surroundings and itself, beyond being two distinct geographies: they are the urban experience made into a movement of thought. Some techniques are inspired or selected from schools of theater, such as Augusto Boal's notorious flocking exercise[18], or dance, such as Mary O' Donell's Open Form Composition, Body Mind Centering floor exercises, and Paxton's hip sequences. Others were elaborated according to the challenges of the cities I was working in, by myself and by my colleagues with whom the workshops were developed.

The selection of exercises and practices compile modes of participation, adapted *in situ*. They are based on simple abilities, such as walking, weaving and climbing, aiming at extrapolating the specificities of such techniques according to the tendencies of the locations where they are being articulated. The techniques employed in the studio are more than warm ups: they invent possibilities for action; they suggest a vocabulary for engagement with one's own bodily

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[18] In this exercise participants are asked to move, assembled as a cloud, together, with participant who is in the extreme position of the 'flock' leading the movement. As the group turns, lieder switches, according to the direction the flock is moving to.

architecture and also with the environment that surrounds. The propositions repeat themselves in various ways, but in each scenario they invent bodies differently. Site and participants modulate their potential in co-composition. As I write, I signal to such techniques as conceptual fields in themselves, and point to how such creative structures trigger negotiations between what is proposed, what moves, and what remains as documentation.

My interest in procedures as an urban art practice, as previously said, doesn't relate to individual expression, but to the ability of engaging *with.* The city, grounded as a process and an event is hard to grasp and therefore demands investment in the exercise of participation. As written by Rosalyn Deutsche, "the phantom of public spaces is inaccessible to political theories that refuse to recognize events -like social movements- that cannot be grasped in preconceived conceptual terms or without recourse to final intentions." (Deutsche, 1998, p. 325). This series doesn't claim to "make visible the invisible", nor "create awareness", but to promote the exercise of being responsive and participatory with the urban as an *evented* experience. To be responsive, space needs to be conceived differently. My interest in exploring the following works is to foment ways of thinking about the body and space, in their rhythms and architectural limits, in terms of engagement. As Portanova writes, "every concept of an individual always implies a relation, a not always easy or fluid *collaborative substitution*, between thoughts and perceptions, between perceptions and actions, between the subject in formation and its own past-future selves." (Portanova, 2009, p. 4). Such relationality takes place in the domains of the

overlapping of bodies in the city (the human body, the architectural body, etc.), but it has a trace in the immaterialities presented as tendencies for participation. This work invests in a renewed appreciation of how performance practices resonate over time in the threading of such relations, freeing themselves from the immediacy of a spectacle.

The pieces of writing that I share in the following pages derive from the need to think through the concepts developed during the city-events. They result from the need to recover what was given as a processual gift to the participant group, recollecting the landings we arrived at. They should not be prescriptive, but complementary in order to resonate with the other documentation materials and together construct a landscape of practices, an always-ephemeral cityscape.

Chapter 4

(Un)Folding Zagreb

with Christopher Brunner and Sara Wookey

Still from video, (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.

(Un)Folding Zagreb was a research-creation project, developed as a Shift for PSi.15 (the 15th Annual Performance Studies International Conference). Together with the call for participation, organizers from the University of Zagreb launched an invitation for flexible discussion formats around the 2008 conference's theme. Previous editions of the PSi have engaged in tentatives for including performance practices at the conference's schedule, completing the dominant models of semiotic or anthropological analysis. Instead of splitting the axes of thought between artistic practices to be shared through the displaying of performance-based work and cultural-aesthetic theory discussed in thematic panel divisions, S*hifts* should be proposed as a thought in motion, a work in progress, a research procedure -not necessarily as being a final artistic product.

I invited colleagues Christoph Brunner and Sara Wookey to work on a proposal conceived by a daily studio practice, followed by a series of collective walks. Planning was initiated from a conceptual agreement on what would constitute an experience with the city. We departed from the interest in the development of parameters for a creative and investigate process that would address Zagreb not exclusively through the demarcation of its feasible geographies or official history, but as a complex of performative (not always performed) memories, quotidian gestures, transfigured in its own daily movements; ungraspable as a whole.

Additionally we were curious about ways through which presence could be choreographed, starting from the conference's traditional gathering,

and dissolving into the spaces of the dance studios, diving into *derives*. Not so much concentrated on a final 'performance piece', our interest relied on how the trajectory could be suggestive to discussions on performance theory, in the daily gatherings that followed the experimental walks.

Participation at *(Un)Folding Zagreb* did not require any previous training in dance or other specific movement technique. It demanded the simple abilities of circulation and curiosity for urban exploration, added by an interest for research in relational movement as a constitutive layer of the urban fabric.

The work we planned to develop throughout the period of our stay would incorporate and infiltrate a practice of sightseeing. Often taken for granted as a neutral mode of circulation, sightseeing is a highly politicized act. It implies permission for circulation in the current environment of social control. Allegedly an intuitive course, it works as long as the permission for circulation is granted. Could we, based on improvisational strategies flip a few conventions of touristic behavior through the city's central locations?

As a technique for our collective practice we developed studio sequences that would later be re-located and adapted into the city. Rather than using the studio as a warm-up and rehearsal space, the daily practices were concerned

with arriving at a procedure for dislocation. We arrived at sightseeing with a durational understanding for site (city, square, sidewalk, etc.) and unconstrained by predetermined notions of location.

To *(Un)fold Zagreb* would be to develop a type of sightseeing that could reflect the actual concern with performance theory that each participant was carrying through their conference participation. Situations were not conceived as a scenario, known and rehearsed, rather being suggested by movement sequences. The suggested sequences included instructions to slow down the pace of the walk, at other times participants should move as if they were drawing a specific shape at the public square. Sometimes the instruction would be to simply look for patterns in the landscape, or to collect moving objects that surrounded one's own walk. Each of the propositions worked as attunements of attention as we explored the city's urban spaces.

Reflexively, the movements developed by participants were expressive to how *site* was being felt, tracked, traced, *prehended*. Such a process is close to what Deleuze refers conceptually as *spatial foldings*. In an effort to escape the dualist distinction of an *inside* and *outside,* determined by a stable division between body and *ambience* Deleuze describes techniques for a becoming with architecture through the idea of a continuous movement (Deleuze, 1993). A fold is a contraction that shrinks as it reaches forward. In the instant of moving forward resides the attempt to grasp the extension of the entity's own dimension. The body that folds is suggested as a zone that is not passive (not a receptive set or tools for perception). It is that which perceives, but which in itself is turned

into a microperceptive system of relating and distinguishing inclinations. To perceive an object is to perceive an event and what we characterize as sensation is not isolated form the body's movement (Deleuze, 2003; Whitehead, 1967).

The work asked how a performance practice could consist in an investigative procedure on architecture, memory, local heritage: a Zagreb being grasped in movement.

Instead of a performance that would overlap with the city spectacle, we made a contrary movement, trying to identify the specific qualities of our presence on site. During the months that preceded our arrival, we started to research Zagreb's official history, becoming acquainted with a few of its contemporary urban concerns. Catherine Ingraham addresses issues of positioning in relation to how a theory of architecture is woven, by suggesting that the history of built spaces has to register the position from which it is being written. The history of architecture is the history of positioning, she writes (Ingraham, 1996, p. 106). Ingraham's concern with how the non-human is considered in architecture theory strengthens the demands for alternative narratives to describe, inscribe and generate critical thought on spatial politics. Mostly the voices that have been engaged with this concern point to the lack of attention given to gender and class and among other categories of thought in spatial theory, in architectural writings and urban planning. Elizabeth Grosz defends that questions of class, queer theory and woman studies have spread in academic practices of all disciplines though she shares her concern with the future of feminist theory in her inquiries:

How is (feminism) to be located into other discipline reforms, into other fields of knowledge? How is it to be located relative to the range and variety of interest of women, understood in all their differences; relative to what remains unsaid, relative to what remains unspoken, or unrepresented in that knowledge? To what can a feminist theory aspire? What can it name? What can it produce? How can we produce knowledge, techniques and methods that bring out the best in ourselves, that enable us to overcome ourselves, that open us up to the embrace of an unknown and open ended future, that bring into existence new kinds of beings, new kind of subjects and new relations to objects? (Grosz, 2007, [keynote])

The reference to feminist theory doesn't suggest that the practice (or the art product) addresses exclusively feminist issues, but rather signals its interest in the complex relationship between creatures, ephemeral cartographies and geographies. Architectural thought is always a thought about how the body is sheltered, but also how we demand it to move.

Aesthetic experimentation in *(Un)folding Zagreb* is a means to invent techniques for spatial and relational politics. The same questions Grosz places in relation to feminist theory highlights my investigation on how performative practices and relational aesthetics address the urban realm: *"How can we produce knowledge, techniques and methods that bring out the best in ourselves, that enable us to overcome ourselves, that open us up to the embrace of an unknown and open ended future, that bring into existence new kinds of beings, new kind of subjects and new relations to objects?"* The danger of the techniques Grosz evokes is that they often address predictable concerns, or, as she adverts, utopias that respond to contemporary anxieties (and *Still from video, (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.* modernist architecture is the best example of planning to a future that never arrived).

Relational techniques often lack the ability to solve relations that weren't expected.. Accordingly, the main challenge for relational art practices, and its field of producing significant participation, is to promote the exercise of hesitation as the possibility to experiment with

(Un)folding Zagreb. Still from video, 2009.

difference and to experience difference with the unknown, and thus foment agency and collaboration as the capacity to act within difference. The project of a *reversible destiny,* developed by the architectural and conceptual work of Arakawa and Gins, is announced as an endeavor against an announced mortality. They describe:

> Another way to read reversible destiny -a less radical way, but for some people, we are giving to understand a perhaps less terrifying and therefore more inviting way- is as an open challenge to our species to reinvent itself and to desist from foreclosing on any possibility, even those our contemporaries judge to be impossible (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. xviii).

Conditions, positioning and the field of action need to be taken into consideration so that performance can maintain its ability to invent, to improvise

without foreclosing into patterns of body relationalities. Embracing the position of the *stranger* puts us at a specific situated point of view to work with spatio-political tensions and brings a peculiar quality to improvisational composition*.* To be a temporary visitor implies an absence from political decisions and means the acceptance of a position where the body might have a role in the local economy's dynamic, but otherwise, doesn't count. It could be argued, contrarily, that there is no more comfortable a position than that of a stranger who has little preconception of what is contingent and what is transformable. The stranger exfoliates the urban surface and invents territories in a process of recognizing what was previously unknown in the contractions between its own movements and territory. Such a position has an extensive history and marks most of modernist artist practices (Huyssen, 1995), but it is in Baumann's work *Modernity and Ambivalence* (1990)*,* through the recovery of Simmel's theory on strangeness, that the ideas of friendship and enemies is presented as the essential forms of *socialization* performed. Bauman writes that while "friends are those for whose well-being I am responsible before they reciprocate and regardless of their reciprocation", enemies "are called into being by renunciation of responsibility" (Bauman, 1990, p. 144), but both are bonds of accountability to others. The stranger, in its turn, has no fit. It is undecided and unknown, and as such its potency is undetermined. Recurrent critiques to artistic practices that act upon geographies with no prior knowledge on its political or historical dynamics (when a stranger is invited to develop a temporary intervention or action to address a local political tension) are enacting a tendency to always locate the

stranger in the position of a *friend* or of an *enemy*, as it is described in Bauman's theory.

As for site-specific performance, the *stranger* sanctions the resistance against the friend-enemy dualism, permitting the actualization of the present experience to be part of the performative gesture. As Bauman writes, it is not a matter of being "yet undecided", but being "undecidable" (1990, p. 149). In the performative event, the stranger is an always-temporary being, and as such, her movements are launched as unsettling techniques of becoming.

Resistance is performed by the stranger in her micropolitical enactments, within the relational field, in gestures that take over untraceable moments of attention, through which the experiences of public spaces are woven from. The aesthetic practice, and the product it originates, is anchored in the exercise of collective instability and in the repetition of micro communal actions.

Still from video, Still from video, (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.

If we are to go back to the traditions of architecture history, what is used as evidence to the discussion of power relations are material arrangements. The performance of building, of making is made of micro communal actions that can be re-arranged through artistic practices within the scope of a relational performative work. It is exactly by disturbing *positioning,* that the praxis of arranging within materiality can be discussed.

Ultimately the engagement of an art practice with micro communal actions ought to foster open-ended possibilities that can seek for spatial and urban politics that feed and sustain a politic of strangeness in the everyday. If, as Catherine Ingraham (2004) asserts, the city and its architecture doesn't speak for itself, we should constantly ask whom do we allow to speak for it? How can we secure that the discourse that surrounds and sustains the concept of the urban is as fluid and dynamic as the performances enacted from and with the environment?

In (*Un)Folding Zagreb,* we aimed at fostering a praxis as described above, which could be carried by participants to other environments. I aimed at offering constraints to move and explore the very conditions of our academic "tourism" in that urban environment, addressing that which could possibly be articulated by us in that city, not neglecting our positions, accepting the constraints of our *foreignness.* While establishing an invitation for constant strangeness, we could investigate the emergence of the city from micro-collective interferences, which were within our reach to be created from practices of instant composition. How can the city emerge from an unstable position: a non-'sightseeing' perspective? What can it reveal? What are we able to, as a collective, to expose to ourselves as singular points of attraction?

In the workshop planning stages, we started thinking about processes of (un)folding and discussing our shared understanding of the city as an event: an entity that trespasses its architecture and history, which materializes and dematerializes itself in each of the encounters that emerge. As visitors and

essentially strangers to a city with a complex political history and specific architectural setting, we engaged in research without the intention of claiming authority on Zagreb's history, but as a mode of gaining vocabulary (iconographic, historical and political) to improvise and build up the task and choreographic propositions for the workshop. We were worried with the lack of intimacy we had with each other (as the group didn't meet prior to the event), and with the site (only a few of us had previously been to Zagreb).

Above all we were concerned with strategies that would take advantage of discomfort and foment the experiment around qualities of movement. It was not a matter of considering the performative work as capable of 'revealing to the public' aspects of public life, a recurrent and pretentious assumption of urban performance. Instead, while focusing on the experience (the event), the interest was in developing abilities to capture, underline and invent intensities through our navigation. Despite our sympathy for the Situationist assertion of space as a singular and ephemeral narrative, our interest in similar playfulness arrived with the intention of playing with unsettled codes for moving together. Moreover, we were interested in the abilities of the body itself to intersect architectural determinism and the impulses of a collective body as complementary forms of actualizing sites and space. As in de Certeau's assertion, the body comes into play as a means to define, territorialize and deterritorialize space, inventing it in concept and in experience (Certeau, 1988). Art historian Malcolm Miles writes, as he addresses how body movement informs and constitutes the city as experience:

The underlying difficulty of a trajectory is that it allows no exception or escape. The free tomorrow will always be tomorrow. We need another concept of history, another insight into art's production. Lefebvre's ideas are liberating here, drawing attention to the sudden insight of everyday experience: a moment that transforms as its memory lingers. Unlike points on a trajectory, moments are non-hierarchic. There is no guarantee the insights gained will become unified. Just as conceived space is the space of plans, so conceived time is the time of trajectories; and as lived space is the space of occupation, lived time is the time of insights and interventions which tend to occur among others, the traces of which, in some cases, provoke a shift of awareness (Miles in Brasil, 2010, p. 355).

Our time with the city was divided between conceptual blocks, a division that was based on elements that we were able to gather prior to our arrival (official history, accounts, pictures we collected from the internet).

The structural categories for activities and research were established as:

Day One: Scales, Bodies, Heights.

Day Two: Borders, Fences, Bridges.

Day Three: Silences, Waits, Invisibilities.

The creation of such vectors helped us to give necessary constraints for the creative engagement while simultaneously inviting attunements to the local vibrant architecture. Instead of thinking in terms of stylistic categories or feeling mobilized by the intense political history of the city, the conceptual blocks allowed us to include visible elements in the practices and discussions. Latent and being presented in the façades, relations were being articulated in our moves, but also imagined and exfoliated affects. *Bridges*, for instance, pointed not only to feasible 'bridges', but also signaled to possible experimentation on how our actions bridged palpable elements at the square. Figuratively it suggested what we could bridge in terms of practice and in terms of our own limits. The concepts were simultaneously sustained and discussed through the experimental modes the environment was generating from attentiveness and improvisation; they enabled us to move otherwise. Concepts are "movable bridges", writes Deleuze, and as such, Grosz evokes, they are not necessarily identified within discourses, nor are always propositional, rather they address events (Grosz, 2001, p). The concept, as elaborated by Deleuze and Guattari is already an act of thought that produces *site*. Thus, we addressed Zagreb initially through concepts, carefully chosen for their ability to be "incorporated, incarnated or effectuated in bodies" (Grosz, 2001, p. 21). This permitted us to avoid the seduction of architecture as plain historical evidence and fully explore the potentialities of our presence there, but mostly to question the delicate ways in which our positions (and performative choices) might potentially address architecture history in the works that succeed this project. What we were intrigued to unfold was not *a* city itself, but feeding,

exchanging and fomenting the discussion of the process of creating and practicing urban and spatial theory.

How do we invent techniques open enough to work with an environment and its flows, but which simultaneously make sense when improvised together? How do we develop propositions that contribute to the collective force in their ephemeral moves in the definition, identification and invention of a city? How could we predict conditions, genuinely considering them without constraining the experience to come, thus avoid inventing bodies, restricting what they could enact and how they move with the city?

During the preparation time, the city and our experiences with it populated our engagement on a virtual plane. The concept of the virtual is evoked here as with the aforementioned conceptual blocks anchoring our research. Zagreb remained virtual yet already immanent in the development of our relations with each other: not there, but already there. Once we arrived, the structure of the daily routine consisted of activities in the studio, followed by an exploration at a chosen site and a conclusion where we shared the collection of actions we had experienced and what had been found out in the movement investigations.

Initially we had planned to compile a piece to be performed for an audience by the end of our third day of improvising, a plan we opted to leave behind so that we could actively engage with the moment and not have to anticipate a final composition. A coherent narrative aimed at an external audience was postponed and compiled later, with the use of the documentation videos that were collected. Clearly we did not want the practice to be gathered as

an "impression about a city" and retrieved from a rehearsed vs. performed walking procedure. Such a decision allowed us to concentrate on the strengths and rhythmic forces of our group on site, without the distinction between a rehearsal and a final piece.

Responding to our call for participation, eight participants in total joined the workshop, from a variety of fields such as dance, performance studies, theater and visual arts. None had known each other previously to our encounter. Taking into account the group's heterogeneity, we proposed a sequence of physical warm-ups in the studio that played with the idea of folding, exploring the body joints, and the reachability in various directions. On the floor we started from corporeal folding in, and moved toward a folding out, onto the studio (mostly based on *Body Mind Centering* sequences), followed by some simple sequences exploring pressure and weight.

Alternatively we would start with our backs on the floor, fold our fingertips, hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders; passing over our chests, stretching our arms toward the opposite side, and pulling the weight from our hands until our body had to flip onto our bellies, resting over the bowed arm. Participants would be advised to experiment, relaxing in this rather unusual position (for those with no dance training, in particular), prior to reaching with the opposite foot onto a diagonal, which draws a force that would move the back once again to the floor.

Next we experimented with loosening our joints. For instance, while still lying on our backs, flexing our knees and letting go, each side at once, rising rhythmically and without controlling the stretching back of our legs on the floor. Another exercise we played with was the drawing of full body spirals and the possible qualities of smoothness created with such a movement. At standing positions, we played with walking and how the attentiveness to the group would could create pauses and striate the space. Such techniques were employed with the aim at waking qualities of movement and opening up to corporeal possibilities (rather than abilities) that could become suggestive for experimental vocabulary once we reached the city for the second part of the work.

Video Still, (Un)folding Zagreb, 2009.

As for the propositions for the outdoor activities, we chose to invest in subtleties, on delicate gestures that included sense deprivation (in particular sound with the use of ear plugs); the use of disorientation techniques to provoke unknown physical relations with the site; proposals to interact with the locals in various social manners (asking, being solicited to help, interrupting, listening, etc.). We also had tasks to measure space, search for silences, and select elements to connect to or disconnect from, for example.

The first proposition we explored asked participants to work with partners, one person witnessing the other, evolving a movement improvisation for twenty
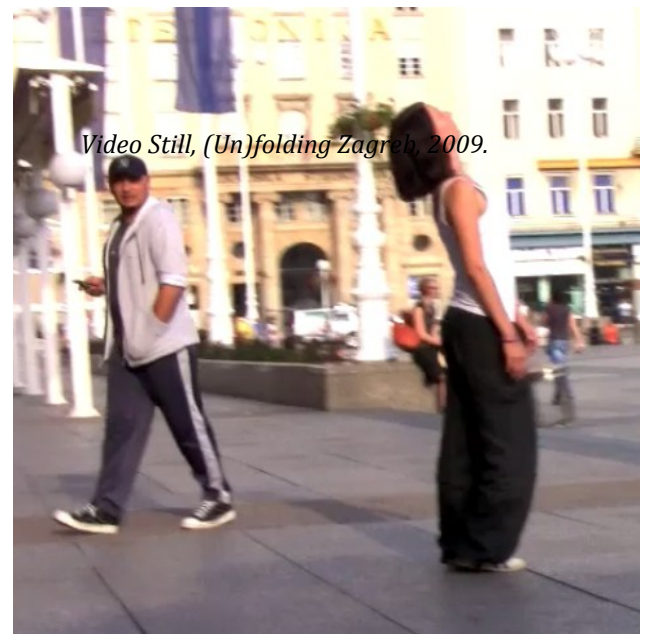
minutes in the main square. The determined area had the size of a large soccer field, and was a location where all daily actions revolved around a bronze statue of a national hero (Josip Jelacic) on a horse whose tail serves as a meeting point for locals. Buildings of various sizes, hugging the lines and flows of walkers in their various criss-crossings, framed the square. Walkers drew circles around their tourist guides, others crossed the area symmetrically, mirroring the lines formed by the electric poles, while a few continued with irregular movements and contours, as they took shortcuts toward the perpendicular streets. Many waited for trams, which drew lines in the terrain and pointed to potencies for movement.

As we arrived halfway through our explorations of lines and flows, our bodies folded into the movements established by the bodies of the other pedestrians, that of the statue, of architectural structures and of moving trams. Our presence was only subtly differentiated from the everyday performances already taking place, and which would continue long after we were gone. Such subtlety is once in a while challenged by a profound gesture from someone at the square who marks their presence more dramatically, such as when one workshop participant, after sitting for several minutes in the sun at the edge of the low round fountain, slowly and methodically began to slip into a fountain. After fully submerging, and witnessed by laughing children, she stepped out and walked away. Due to the enormous scale of the square, those who were not around to witness her dive barely noticed the quality of her dripping body crossing space. The body was erased to a minimal dimension. Thus it was her movement that contributed to an emergence of site, to those who witnessed it, as

noticed through delicate noise or rumors that dissipated with little echo. A child at the fountain mimed the action by lifting his arms up above his head, performing the dive out of the water.

This action addresses a familiar struggle for researchers and artists engaged with urban performative practices: the impossibility to rehearse an enactment that emerges rather spontaneously from everyday practices. It is rather impossible to suspend preexistent practices and act on site as a non-event. On the other hand, the difficulty of responding to time specificities of *site,* which can hardly be predicted in an urban setting, requires very refined improvisational abilities.

As I mentioned above, the city is not a space of rehearsal practices; therefore my investment in the studio is toward the development of techniques for improvisation that respond and find meaningful situations, engaging in effective encounters on site. The ideal of an urban art practice that always constitutes a *performance* is a utopia of hyper-awareness where every body and every gesture would matter: each active event invents *site.* Each step is a rehearsal for the next, but is already folding with site, informing how we situate ourselves with the city. I am defending a practice of constancy that is always active. I am not suggesting that a performative act such as diving into the water fountain, for instance, would have been less authentic if rehearsed or planned, but rather exploring the idea that every time there is an enclosed relation between action and site, there is a performance. Such a broad definition of performance is widely discussed by Carlson. In his work Carlson exposes how

the definition of the performative act has evolved in the past decades, being defined between intention, awareness, audience and the displaying of technical skills. Richard Schechner's idea of "restored behavior" is commonly referred to define what constitutes performativity, based on the idea of a role-playing structure that can be repeated. For Schechner, even an action identical to any "real life" act would constitute a performance on stage, while its "real life" counterpart would be merely 'done', and not performed (Carlson, 1996, p. 4). There is a difficulty in applying such distinctions to experimental urban practices, due to the impossibility to separate the corporealities of the performers from the "real life" of the city. There is no counterpart, but only responsiveness, in such a way that the performer has the ability to situate pre-existing events (both corporeal or architectonical) with an active response and an unrehearsed engagement.

In *Writings on Cities* Henri Lefebvre (1996) develops the idea of the situation as the force of engagement that is essential in the construction of encounters in the urban realm. In his later works Lefebvre suggests that actions might be a powerful force in the development of urban utopias as it enacts the consideration of possibilities within the impossible (architectural determinism) (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 21). The performative state could be understood as a utopia of intensive engagement and participation. While playing with the city's denial of 'rehearsal', the performer maintains a privileged context, within which a theory of the urban can emerge from within its practices (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 106). The performer is able to momentarily play with movements that are latent, but not

practiced, such as the dive in the fountain in Zagreb's context. Performance creates a pause in motion in the suggestions of a sensed space created once action/gesture is indistinguishable from *site.* The city's elasticity becomes palpable to the performer who is awake to the passages of stillness, enacting in a layer of the urban where urban planning always arrives too late to create *with* (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 209; MacKendrick in Lepecki, 2004, p.150).

To create *with* requires collaboration to be thought of where partnership doesn't happen only in response *to*, in other words, arriving too late. Complementarily, working with partners allowed us to have a performance without rehearsal and a rehearsal without performance. We developed what we called a *triple-gaze* effect where the group was divided into couples. The ones observing should be caring for their partners, and also editing and selecting moments to be shared once we would all come together in the end. After the work in couples we gathered all participants daily in a sequence that evolved through each one of the witnesses re-performing and recollecting moments that were observed. The re-performance took place not in the same exact local where it was initially witnessed, but is enacted as a translation of affects, by the witness. The observer of the water fountain dive, for instance, re-performed the quality of slipness at the stairs that surrounded the fountain: a performative gesture that was referencing a moment that had already disappeared, and which couldn't possibly be repeated, and which emerged not as a result from a previous rehearsal.

After our work on *scales, bodies and heights,* our second day started in the studio, this time a very small and constricted space. The rain on that day was so intense that we were unable to go out. The city was brought into the room in a series of exercises that invented relations between participants, and revived our memories of the square. The dynamics included Boal's flocking exercise, compositions with stillness and theoretical discussions. The practices of this afternoon were crucial for us to develop the collective force of the group, which we had already tangentially addressed in the previous day's research, through the duo- dynamics.

On our third day we established a route that emphasized collective movements and an itinerary to be walked simultaneously, where we depended on each other's movement choices to proceed. Such a forced dependency amplified the tensions between the collective. Having to wait, holding on to non-executed movement, and thus remaining open to inventive responses never ceased to be a challenge. We walked creating figures of walls and bridges; we trespassed limits of areas where tourists were not signaled to enter; we experimented composing close to the buildings in areas where all other walkers circulated in the center zones of the squares.

The last task the group received was to walk from the upper town back to the main square wearing earplugs. This was one of the only 'self-reflexive' tasks, inviting a more introverted action. It activated our own memories of locations we had circulated in during our intensive work. Despite being a rather powerful proposition, the action didn't make it to the video editing. In contrast to other

experiences of narrowness and enclosure (day two in the studio and day three along the narrow pathway), the proposition tuned us as a dynamic audience to the rhythms of the city. The closing off of hearing let the city take center stage. Our investment in movement turned us to an appreciative mode of speed, falling with one's own walk. The filtering of sounds emphasized our own gestures and enforced the orientations of our trajectory, as we walked individually, though obeying a collective course.

In this last exercise, some witnessed people praying under the bridge, some dared to enter renovation structures of the historical buildings, concentrating on the texture of the pavement stones, others took part in a group of children playing with bubbles, and many observed the flux of tourists. The feeling of an invisible community with these total strangers, who were sharing a simple procedure of walking, made me weep. Being the less-obvious of all propositions we have experimented with, each one of us uncontrollably assumed a very specific quality of walking, one that maybe even an attentive observer couldn't have perceived. As we walked toward the main square, the place that had been the starting point of our unfolding process, we were sliding back to the beginning.

(Un)folding Zagreb was a performance that moved away from encounters of a predefined territory (a city), and became a process of refolding from the singular toward the shared, from the ephemeral gesture toward methods of understanding local events we witnessed: a student strike, a national holiday, and all manner of unnamed urban rhythms. Yet, the composition of our

unrehearsed practices was just beginning to (un)fold. The challenge to revisit Zagreb and mount, collate, and cut what had been captured in the documentation was yet to come. Documentation became a register of how we moved information and propositions within the group and the video is a trace that makes such relations tangible.

I trust the city as the ultimate collaborative realm (Arendt, 1998), where the political happens through movements and encounters in their spontaneous, forced, radical or banal qualities. Maybe romantically and pre-modernly, I trust the urban as more than a site condition, but as an arena that can be defined by relational movements: a movement *with*. *(Un)Folding Zagreb* suggested collaboration as a manner to sense the city's coming into being, into a movement of collective reaching toward. More than a question of performing *together,* we were pursuing how presence happens collectively, looking for the city that would emerge from the intersection of our singular experiences, but which needs variations of singularities to make sense and resonate the city as a modulation of dissonances. After all, through physical actions we folded practices with a city that we didn't leave behind, but which we carried on to other projects. Nothing moves outside the relational.

Chapter 5

ANDARES- (The Walks/The Floors)

A Residency on Urban Exploration

Co-directed by Loli Menezes
Editing/Video by Marco Martins and Lucas Barros
Performers: Silmar Rigo, Asdrubal Martin,
Angela Waltrick, Cleístenes Grott, Bruno Bachmann,
Fernando Weber, Marina Baldini, Suzana Sedrez

A view from Edificio das Diretorias, 2009.

In March 2010 a group of ten people was invited to participate in an art residency at Edifício das Diretorias (EdD), located in Florianópolis, Brazil. Their backgrounds varied and included a curator at a street art gallery, an art teacher, a dancer, a sculptor working in the public art field and a visual artist. Edifício das Diretorias, a modernist building from the late 50's, is situated in a downtown neighborhood and is today the home of the province's Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation, hosting its three distinct secretaries: SIE, DETER and DEINFRA. It hadn't previously been the stage for any artistic event.

A view from Edifício das Diretorias, back façade, 2009.

The idea for *Andares* was seeded two years earlier, triggered by other interests than the pedagogical and conceptual concerns that would later become central to the work. One afternoon, as I was working at a friend's house across the street from Edifício das Diretorias' rear façade, my attention was caught by the plasticity of the building's stairway, a continuous zig-zag that revealed some of its internal rhythmic flows to the outside.

Loli Menezes, a videomaker and set designer with whom I was working on another piece, challenged me into developing a collaborative project for those stairways. We approached the building with curiosity and an investigative spirit, spending hours contemplating how the light crossed the windows, considering

the strength of the modernist lines and engaging with how the fading bright colors reinforced the repetitiveness of its modular structure. At first, we were only observant to the details of the surfaces, yet we soon became curious and astounded by the fact that such a vivid building could exist at the margins of prehensive disappearance.

The building's massive architectural presence has been effaced from our daily routes. In spite of the proximity and entanglement with our everyday routes, the EdD is yet another preserved building that has been excluded and erased from daily entrance; it has become a skeleton that is rarely attended to; vanishing from the inside out. Considering that this is a public building, this process has been partially determined by the functional uses that have been attributed to its spaces. It was in the discovery of its attributed uses that *Andares* started to take form: an ordinary building: not too old, not too abandoned, not too precious. Thus, it is a landmark of the local architectural history and the site where most of administrative and planning concerning the province's cities takes place. The building disappears because it merges with the foreground of the spaces of circulation. It becomes a surface that is not attended to by the walker.

David Panagia, in the epilogue of *The Political Life of Sensation* asks "how and why does one attend to an appearance?" (2009, p.152). As he addresses the appearance of images in the media, Panagia asks how the economies of attention ignite the emergence of new political subjectivities, defending an ontology of sensation that can sustain a variation on the Kantian and phenomenological ethical-aesthetic paradigm, which establishes hierarchies of

making sense of the world that privilege the immediacies of the surfaces. As sustained by Brian Massumi in *Semblance and the Event,* an object appearance is also an event, "full of all sorts of virtual movements" (2011, 43). I privilege the notion of appearance as the relations afforded by the object within the singularities of moments.

The regimes of perception that are at play in the experience of the city are at the core of the discussions on how architectural heritage is managed to integrate the contemporary lives of the city. How we attend to architecture, as an aesthetic appearance, or semblance that transcends the surfaces preserved, is contingent to the attributions of use and to how the economies of attention of urban spaces are managed. Panagia's concern with the generation of intensities that allow images (and by images he refers to that which is sensed) to trigger responsiveness and engagement is key for urban works such as *Andares*. It is though in the process of prehending, and sensing that such surface disappears to give raise to the associations of uses, potential for movement that the object holds.

The event became the source of intensities for attentiveness, which considers an ethics of participation sustained by a model of aesthetics that is not based exclusively on the visuality of the performance; it is the concern with responsiveness that we found a conjunction between the aesthetic and the political fields, toward what could become sensible from the uses and praxis that were constitutive of the building. Panagia describes how politics begins with the

act of rendering perceptible, arguing for an economy of appearance that challenges the sensible beyond the dynamics of vision.

Sill from video, Andares, 2010.

The notion of fragmented sensorial fields (where vision is disjoined from any other perception in the prehensive process with the environment) leads to the misconception that semblances are disjunctive from other sensorial qualities (Panagia, 2009, p. 46). If a building's role is just to remain visible, it easily disappears to the senses. Projects such as *Andares* suggest that they shall remain being crafted in experience, always activated and investigated as traces of history but also as virtual technologies for contemporary encounters.

Andares proposes a theory and a practice of aesthetics that accounts for the creation of strategies to "allow appearances to count as sensible" (Panagia, 2009, p. 153) in the urban field and, as such, become a resource for the emergence of political engagement. The endeavor, taken by many participatory urban works, requires the understanding of what is accounted from experience to transgress the system of symbolic meanings based exclusively on the vision. To initiate such a project, the city, as much as the architectural traces identifiable as one its constitutive layers, needs at first to be conceived not as a stable setting where events unfold, but from an experiential and dynamic surfacing of events.

To think about *EdD* from the point of view of its appearance would mean to ignore the central fact that it has become one among many other disappearing structures left in the urban fabric. Brian Massumi writes that "a building is a technology of movement" (2002, p. 204), and as such, heritage should be thought from the perspective of the urban movements it generates. In summary, I signal here toward two distinct and co-dependent dimensions of the city: the first

is the latent potential for movement that is inherited through architectural buildings— virtual movements that belong to a time-specific political organization; secondly, the dimension of the singular experiences of urban crossing, and heterogeneities of

Sill from video, Andares, 2010.

attentiveness toward the, allegedly shared, surfaces of appearance. Panagia's account of how the smell of the bakery turns the space of the piazza into a space of taste, how the invisible aspects tracked by the sense of smell renders perceptible the piazza as another location landed in the event of flavor through smell, is intriguing, but what is not accounted for is the fact that many might not notice the space-event that is so remarkable for them. To others, the experience of the piazza will be that of the hurry, of the discomfort caused by a tight shoe, of the sound of a bike's broken chain. Very rarely when we refer to shared spaces are we actually addressing the same space. Space is generated in the modes of attentiveness and engagement that become available in the singularity of prehensive processes. From such a perspective, architecture should be designed for the actions it invites (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. xxi), considering which questions it poses to the body and to the forces of relationality it helps to sustain.

Such forces are underlined in my practice of public art. As a means to sustain a constant territorial destabilization, public art reminds us of the complexity of urban experience. Panagia's work describes the role of aesthetic

endeavors, as they locate fissures, or disruptions, in the referential schemes through which we make sense of the environmental experience. Instead of the recurrent image of a "rupture" (in the quotidian patterns but also in the conceptual schemes that guide our abilities of attentiveness), I choose to use the notion of a care, an attentiveness that seeks to foster the ability to be responsive, where reconfigurations of senses become possible relationalities.

To work at Edifício das Diretorias meant we needed to address very stable rationalities from its very end points. We were diving into a bureaucratic space, with very little critical practice involved in the process of spatial planning and a particularly strict understanding of the role of architectural planning for the political life of a city. Even stricter was the common understanding of the role of public art in the articulation of urban relationalities by the workers with whom we would engage.

The building represents the beginning of modernist architecture in the province. A project by engineer Domingos Trindade, it was inaugurated in the late 1950s. The sketch was inspired by principles of Le Corbusier's architecture. With pilotis in its main entrance, a central free area, a flat roof and large windows marking its façade, EdD has reinforced horizontal lines that activate the playing of transparency between the indoor spaces and the cityscape. Prior to its inauguration the building was announced as a monument that would "enrich" the urban experience, a statement that illustrates some of the modernist plans for the downtown city areas (Castro, 2008, np).

The city center of Florianopolis has, since its inauguration, undergone reconfigurations as dramatic and visible as the embankment of a 600.000m^2 strip of the ocean, in the 1970s. The embankment was demolished with the excuse of "opening up space" for highways and has taken with it a significant part of the Portuguese colonial heritage. A less tangible implication of this project has been the removal of the ocean's proximity from the downtown-pedestrian area. In spite of that, the region that surrounds the EdD remains densely populated, with a set of vivid and overlapping spatial practices. One of the current uses of the otherwise merely ornamental curved marquee that is designed as a frontal element at the EdD is as a shelter for people waiting at the bus stop. Every early evening the building's entrance becomes an overcrowded zone, where commuters wait in front of the façade that was once planned to be an 'enrichment' of the urban experience because of the contours of the marquee.

The area that surrounds the EdD is a site of preserved architectural heritage, comprising several buildings such as the Neoclassic Palácio Cruz e Sousa, the Cathedral initially build in 1675 and renovated several times, and the city's main square, Praça XV, the foundational landmark of the city with its fully arborized area and cobblestone.

Under an intense gentrification process, the city has faced vivid debates around the models for preservation and the attribution of use of its downtown areas. When defining uses for the historical buildings pragmatic occupation is often the only variable in the discussions. How uses will enable modes of circulation and of encounters in the city center becomes an argument too

abstract to be brought to the table. As Massumi describes, buildings become more than what they are because they modulate relational dimensions (2002, p. 207). In the case of a public building such as the EdA, they modulate the public life of the city as well, and not only of those whose private lives are unfolding within it. EdD was constructed as a symbol of a city to come, and of encounters to come, but since then it has become a highly bureaucratized space for the performance of city planning, configuring an ideology for the shared spaces that is not fairly attentive to the dimensions of the encounters that such design elicits.

Our first question was: how was the architectural relevance of the building being recalled? How could we engage and access the building's uses as well as the non-institutionalized practices and spontaneous encounters that it sheltered, such as the front façade becoming a waiting shelter for the commuters? General models for heritage preservation are dependent on official decisions but what was at our reach was to observe non-official practices, inquiry how they were latent in the building's ecology and activate such practices for the creation of the video document that would succeed the performances.

Our presence sought to infiltrate these practices, wondering if the building's history could be actively recalled. Beyond the aesthetic composition, we were curious to learn how the spreading of attentiveness toward modes of spatial creation (shared through the artist's investigation process) could accommodate and relate to the local circulation in a barely visible way, simply by inviting a slight shift of attention. The shelters for homeless people during the night, the decision innocently taken by the board of directors to replace all the

bathrooms with low-cost ceramics in a renovation that took place during the length of our stay, and the strike against the annual bonus for the employees (which also took place during our residency), became precious elements in our research. Such events signaled how spatial politics engage in dialogue (or not) with the rather bureaucratized performance of city planning that takes place in the building.

As we were approaching the building's history and uses, Menezes and I learned about a FUNARTE (National Fund for the Arts) fellowship entitled Rede Nacional (National Network), a grant targeting projects that privilege research-creation endeavors, fomenting reflection and debate that involves the "instrumentalization of artists, promoting circulation of creative procedures in the field of visual arts".[19] We applied with a proposal that was open ended, but which committed to a call for participation addressed not only to artists. The small grant would allow us to invite participants from other regions of the province, and have a minimal budget for the production and editing of the work.

The goal of *Andares* was not to teach the public about the legacy of modernist architecture, nor to call attention to the importance of that hidden building in the urban landscape. Rather, we aimed for a collaborative process where artists and other professionals concerned with a critique to the urban configuration, and with the variety of practices that think-feel the city, could exchange and investigate the overlapping facets of their research. The residency, in this iconic location, inferred a symbolic connotation, but also

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[19] Freely translated from the call for participation.

enabled us to have physical and palpable materials for discussion, such as all the planning archives to all public buildings constructed in the province that are kept in the SIE's library.

Architecture still occupies the place of a monument in social memory, remaining a symbol of the past and a perpetuation of shared history. The symbolic status of a building such as EdD has sunk between new configurations and the recent urban development of the downtown, and while it silently performs the role of an architectural mark, the building informs local cultural identity. The three-dimension document of history that is enacted in the architecture however needs to be recalled, performed and revisited, to move from stillness toward being an instrument for the discussion on the roles of official history and the actual care dedicated to today's shared spaces.

Indoors, Edifício das Diretorias draws large areas of flowing empty spaces, which are now divided between cubicles, and fragmented ministries. More than constituting an intricate architectural division, the seclusions leave no doubt of the complicated hierarchies of state power, manifested in the attributions of each of the secretaries and their domains divisions.

I first approached the director of the three ministries with caution. Her interest in our project derived, I suspect, from her understanding that we wanted to shoot scenes in the building, which would, in her opinion, have consisted of a less intrusive event. We committed to remain in the shared areas and enter offices only when allowed. We also had to restrict our working hours to daytime, for security reasons. As a central geography for action, we would have the stairs

and the hallways, a cartography that would extend from the second to the 11th floor.

The halls of EdD are the site for waiting for the elevators, and have become a central piazza in the building, with sets of unsigned agreements, such as the allowance for smoking, a practice that ignores the federal law that prohibits smoking in any public building.

Apart from the specificities of the architectural and political systems we were entering with the project, our proposal also reflected issues that are general concerns to site-specific performance, such as the nature of collaboration. Florianopolis municipal law, inspired by the American model of the Percentage for Arts, attributes to public art a decorative role. A system of commissions that designate an area for a painting or a sculpture to be installed at the new buildings' façades rarely allows the artist to engage in the process of spatial planning. The pedagogical aspect of the work addressed the possibility for participants to actively engage in their future endeavors with collaborative practices with architects and city planners.

To prepare for our arrival, the building's workers were alerted, a week earlier, through the distribution of flyers, of our presence. The text invited them to participate, ask, follow, engage or ignore us.

As for the selected workshop participants, they were invited to come without any preconceived project. We would be sharing readings, studio warm-ups and creative strategies to originate material for a final composition, to be unfolded as a video piece. Notably, we did not have a storyboard or a script for

the video but we had three concerns: the creation of a field for participants to develop their own projects of urban exploration (which varied according to their working interests from dance to graffiti); the engagement with uses, practices, history and the architecture of the EdD; the production of an audio-visual piece that would map the insertions, performances and encounters generated during our stay.

Gilles Deleuze writes that "without history experimentation would remain indeterminate and unconditioned, but experimentation is not historical. It is philosophical" (1994, p. 111). The remark points to the complexities involved in the development of works that aim to question the established sense of historicity. In the case of *Andares*, it also addresses the problematic of looking at an architectural setting from exclusively spatial references. Henri Lefebvre argued that space is not a physical constraint but historically produced, a production made transparent by how daily activities attribute meaning to site. The natural physical phenomenon of the building is traversed by the abstract space, referenced in sensation and indivisible from the present experience. Whitehead names *thought-objects* spatial layers.

He writes:

Sill from video, Andares, 2010.

The concept of that chair is simply the concept of all the interrelated experiences connected with that chair, namely, of the experience of the folk who made it, of the folk who sold it, of the folk who have seen it or used it, of the man who is now experiencing a comfortable sense of support, combined with our expectations of an analogous future, terminated finally by a different set of experiences when the chair collapses and becomes firewood (Whitehead, 1960, p.107).

Similarly, when we perceive architecture, there is an immediacy that creates space-relations through the sense-objects of sight and touch (Whitehead, 1960, p. 130), but what Whitehead names as *thought-space* occurs in the feeling for the forces of presence, in the perception of the event (1960, p. 147). Feeling here does not refer to an imaginary space, but to affects that are activated in attentiveness. Brian Massumi describes it as "the feeling of having a feeling" (2002, p. 14). The feeling feeds the field with attentiveness, invoking forces of attention that situate thought in the world. This notion of a feeling creating attentiveness doesn't feed a distinction between abstract space and the space generated by materialities presented. On the contrary, it undoes such a dichotomy. The idea of the abstract space, which one could mistake for whatever emerges from the field and overlaps with an individual imagination or memory, would again reinforce the perceptual and sensory separations that were previously described as being a phenomenological misleading of perception. The abstract space, as described by Lefebvre, marks the tendency that is latent in the

field, which has no form: it traverses form. Its form is indeterminate because it relies on the event to gain dimension. According to Whitehead our understanding of what is space and time is distorted by the most concrete elements of nature, its events. He is referring to a scientific deterministic procedure of seeing in order to know. As extensively discussed in the work of Bruno Latour, even the most concrete of the material traces need specific conditions to be observed.

When Lefebvre addresses a *space to come* in his theory he is to a certain extent referring to the unpredictable relationalities that might situate an environment. The environment is only graspable in the properties of the "shifting, changeable appearances which we call things in space" (Whitehead, 1960, p. 156).

The image of an art practice that generates fissures derives from a conception of space that is stable. The fissures, I suggest, are already there as tensions of spatial relationalities, fractures between the building historicity, actual official uses and other daily spatial practices. Lefebvre, while delimiting an abstract space and a space to come, carefully alerts to the existence of such fissures. This idea, raised in his early writings, is taken further in the work of Michael de Certeau with his emphasis on the political dimension of the everyday movements in the constitution of the shared urban spaces. How space is practiced, according to de Certeau, is unpredictable. Habits are an expression of the creative abilities to resist material conditions. This idea is also described by

Curtis "as part of the rediscovery of 'place' in the late twentieth century, (when) space has been conceptualized as practice and event" (Curtis in Borden, 2001, p. 59)

As much as we tend to oscillate between material determinism and the power to establish new meanings of site by spatial practices, what is often ignored by planners and artists working in public spaces are the tensions and sensibilities that are latent in the shared spaces. Constituted powers are visible in the architectural traces, but it is in the invisible agreements of practices that spatial politics become a truncated and granular terrain for the improvisational work. As it was the case in *Andares*, often the smaller intervention is the cause for intense and unpredictable responses. They act upon invisible castles that situate and ground those who build from that particular site the references for their daily activities.

In its micro-political ambition, Andares was an endeavor of incompossibilities[20], as it meant to juxtapose worlds that have something in common, but that hold up to parallel zones of action: the bureaucrats, the building, the city, the planning, etc. The challenge to me, as the director, was to create leakages, passageways between attentiveness, and to find nodes of poetics that marked the participants' interests in engaging with urban thought, nodes that would be soft enough to invite engagement of attention by others who were simply absorbed by their daily tasks. Being there comprised daily negotiations of spatial politics and an incommensurable exercise of relationality.

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[20] The term is inherited from Leibniz and recovered by Deleuze and refers to divergences that can be composed together (Shaviro 2009, p. 117).

It required a force of resistance against bureaucratizing the creative process before our arrival. Following a recurrent working structure, each day was assigned a conceptual layer that would suggest possible realms for action. Our conceptual framework was:

Day one - Bodies: Limits, Scales, Suspensions

Day two - Flows: transferences, Rhythms, Vectors

Day Three - Potentials: Silences, Waits, Voids

Day Four - Traces: Shadows, Reflections, Invisibilities

Each day the group was provided with propositions for movement. Within the propositions participants would find range for singular articulation and experimentation. The propositions were established to facilitate cohesion and the development of improvised scores, and used to facilitate the collective composition we envisioned for the video documentation. Each proposition

Still from video, Andares, 2010.

suggested relations to be negotiated in compossibility and incompossibility, between participants, performers, workers and site.

Mornings started in a studio about a 15 minute walk from the building, and the trajectory from the studio to the EdD was also scored with movement

challenges, such as seeking empty spaces, or shade, etc. Our walks through the city, and the movement variations, detached the group from the collective performances of the quotidian, making the strangeness of our patterns an unavoidable resonance with the preexisting flow. The distinctiveness of our actions in that peculiar urban setting was evident because walkers diverge very little from each other. The crowd was mostly made up of workers, middle aged and middle class. This lack of visibility of difference and singularities is enough of a pattern to be observed in the video. The qualitative difference of our presence was evident even when our movements were subtle; still, they it provoked small groups of people to assume a spectatorship posture. At some moments people would dare to engage with our plays, guessing the rules on their own. The walk reinforced our understanding of the urban as a potential for flows and encounters, a rather fragile organism that has very little resemblance with a pre-existing input for perception. It is in the event of the walk that spatial meaning is produced. It is movement that forms site.

We left the studio's building forming a single file line, knowing that we should arrive in a predetermined time frame at the Edifício das Diretorias. The person who stood in the front had to lead the group, searching for spaces to be filled in by the collective mass. We entered gaps, inserted hands in small apertures between walls, crossed the street stepping exclusively at the non-painted areas of pedestrian marks. We hid ourselves in the lack of reflections, finding gaps where the body ceases to exist between one mirror and the next. We squatted and transformed tables at a coffee shop into tunnels, where a body

wouldn't otherwise belong. Where legs belonged, we placed torsos. Out of the urban furniture we created emergent evolutions, where their material qualities (and not functions) came into presence (Manning, 2009, p. 79).

It is in the force of the collective that the openness for the encounters between such bodies - the table, the shade, the walker - found ways of expression. Latent and not recurrently performed relationalities became feasible.

The walking distance that separated the group, the studio and the EdD was a stretch that cut through downtown. Walking was taken as a "reaching toward." A technique for sited awareness, a series of landing sites connected the experience of the studio to the forthcoming events at the building. Landing sites refer in this context to modes of attentiveness. They are the expression of attention that involves the present passing and the activation of other relations that appear (Manning, 2009, p. 80). Arakawa and Gins write that "anything perceived can count as both a landing site in and of itself and as part of a larger landing site" (2002, p. 9). They describe the example of the corner of a desk. The corner is in itself a landing site, or, it might be. Once attentiveness lands with it, the body becomes a body that has to deviate in order to not become a hurt body, or a body that has to rest a glass, or an arm. A landing site is a mode of landing attentiveness, not a specific location. Landing sites are not always "sorted out", but they always constitute occasions that situate the body. Complementarily, Arakawa and Gins write that "with every move she makes, a person disperses her perceptual landing sites differently" (2002, p. 10). The body does not land on

sites, or places, but it produces landing-sites when the series of occasions arrive at it.

The techniques we use to create attentiveness to the landings were more or less visible to the other people in the street; in creating a field of attention the techniques preaccelerate movement qualities before they take form. Preacceleration is the suspension that changes a body's intensity qualitatively. It is the force of suspension before movement has taken form (Manning, 2009, p. 6).

When we went over the cross walk drawing spiral trajectories, we underlined the straightness and also a certain rhythm for the crossing that is suggested from the floor drawings, thus rendering possible other kinds of responsiveness to such lines, apart from their symbolic functionality. The example illustrates the research of movement we engaged with: not about installing sequences at an urban location, but investigating qualities of penetrability, or climbability of certain structures. Such qualities remain virtual as long as they are not attended to. In this sense, the pedestrian doesn't need to 'perform' the spiral onto the striped lines, because the attentiveness has already become contagious. The stripe has already been actualized as more than a surface for crossing the street; under the spiral walk the stripe has moved (with) the walker's dance.

In the everyday urban movement, the intuition to climb, or cut, or squat is silenced before the feeling for it takes form (in thought or action), in favor of the pact of collective movement that generates a city's unique rhythmic composition.

The agreement established within the work enabled us to explore tendencies toward unfamiliar landing sites at previously known urban trajectories.

Arakawa and Gins employ the term *organism-that-persons* to emphasize the constitution of the body as forces of attraction, tendencies in motion in relation to that which surrounds it in its immediate vicinity (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. 28). They affirm: "the organism that persons is nothing but a collection of landing sites" (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. 16). According to them, landing sites do not refer to a 'where' the body is sited, but to a constitution of the organism that persons from tentative contractions of holding in space (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. 19). They state that:

> …any site at which a person finds an X to exit should be considered a contributing segment of her awareness … This supposition urges, that awareness sites itself all over the place at once; or better, that a person positions herself within her surroundings by taking her surroundings up as her sited awareness. Sites of sited awareness are, of course, landing sites of the moment" (Arakawa and Gins, 2002, p. 50).

The moment of a landing site is the dislocation – more the activation - of a sited awareness, when the body and the fielding that surrounds are at the same time intertwined and autonomously relating to each other. *Andares* was a constant play with the instability of such relationships, momentarily re-organizing

them, and then abandoning them once again. Although we used simple materials to trigger the propositions, such as balloons, cotton thread and water bottles, the bodies of the performers became the 'relational objects' that would allow "forces to organize themselves in relation to movement toward the world" (Manning, 2009, p. 218). Although I understand the danger in categorizing a performative body with such a designation, the attribution of an objective quality to a moving body is possible once it is actually engaging in its abilities to generate relationalities in motion, and not acting within symbolic gestures or strictly based on precomposed meaning.

Some unpredicted factors were crucial to our work at the building. Although we knew that there would be an exchange of all the machinery for the three elevators that serve the building, we couldn't have known that, during the works, one of the elevators was mistakenly damaged, leaving the 300 hundred people who circulate daily through the building with only one machine to transport them up and down. This circumstance made the hallways crowded at times and so the elevator became a central piece to *Andares*.

Our initial plan to work toward a composition to be performed to an outside public, a collective that would come to attend the performances at nighttime, was aborted at an early stage. Similar to what had happened in Zagreb, we realized that this idea would not have been an effective mode of action. The insertion of a passive public would in itself disrupt the conditions for actions that were established and negotiated silently between our group and the workers. Not only did the composition not constitute a spectacle, but the question of the role of the

public and how their presence would re-inform the creation of the building were key in sustaining our decision to continue playing with and for the bodies that already belonged to that site.

The workers demonstrated an expectation that a 'theater piece' would be presented during our research-creation process. The lack of a representational piece was frustrating because they lacked a formal mechanism of engagement with our work. They knew how to be passive spectators but this is not what our performance required as engagement from them. When expectations vanished we found that gaps and possible relations began to emerge. Because we were there for a whole week, the 'audience' had to seek ways to engage with our presence continuously. Whatever we were doing, it was not private, nor spectacular. Not knowing which position to assume in relation to our practice and sharing the same spatial constraint was, for some, quietly discomforting. The format of our performances didn't allow the gaze to rest in voyeurism, it required a reflective awareness on one's own positions in the building. As for our collective, we could not pretend we were simply engaged in a *flaneurie*, invisibly observing and taking notes of incidents in the building and the workers. There were no borders limiting our actions from theirs, there was no possible comfort to be taken from an observational perspective.

Someone who worked on the first floor of the 53 year old building was particularly disturbed by our presence. We invaded her intimate space and she

Stills from video, Andares, 2010.

was not content with the uninvited destabilization of territory she was put through. Before 'the incident', I had an interesting conversation with her, where she confessed that she arrived early to work, so that she could take a ride and avoid public transportation. The divisions of the cubicles, the inserted fragments of the

meant-to-be open spaces had infiltrated her body- they could be sensed in her presence. When no work is sitting at her table she knitted something. Her current job at that point was to oversee all the cars the government lends to municipalities. She confessed that she did not agree with the process of political and administrative decentralization, which resulted in her not knowing where the cars under her jurisdiction were. She could not control the purposes they were being used for. Escaping control is dangerous. Not knowing is not seeing. Not seeing is not right.

She worked on the first floor and she decided she didn't want us there. After we had been working in the building for two hours only, she announced she would dedicate the rest of the week to keep us away from her body, from her surroundings and from the first floor. That was her contribution: taking away the first floor from our project. She followed us carefully to make sure nothing under her domain was being touched by us. We had to skip from ground to (holding our breath) the second floor. Her fear of destabilization became our void: a vacuum

where we were allowed no experience and no experiment. We pretended to act in the margins of visibility but her persecution made us obsessed with the ownership she maintained around that territory and therefore more present than we wished to have been perceived.

She wanted to avoid being affected by our presence in the building, but our bodies and the ways they were seeking to disorganize the orders of space demanded constant reactions from her. And she did engage - every hour - with incredible dedication to our work. Her listening became accurate and attuned to our movement and she would always be waiting as we approached her reign. Others were less obsessive, choosing not to look at what we were doing, but even to avoid us they had to move through their environment differently. Their responses took form in subtle landings, not necessarily conceptual discussions.

I could argue that the woman of the first floor was the most actively engaged with our practice. Menezes joked that she wanted to become the protagonist of the film, because of the intensity of her territorializing strategies (screaming, ripping out whatever colorful things we had temporarily installed). Responsively, and inspired by the rules she imposed, suspension became one of the main concepts of our research. We had to suspend the engagement with the first floor, which meant we had to suspend our actions as long as we were crossing that field. Suspension arrives at the lack of support and decision, an occasion when the body is held by another structure, when direction, stability and permanence are out of its control. Suspension is not a floating (Manning, 2009, p. 96), but a standing without ground. Our goals to be active in the environment

with no distinctive sequence to the unfolding of our actions could have been closer to the qualities of a floating. Floating describes a body without a center, a body that is loose enough in the environment, but also absolutely contained in itself. It *reaches toward* in its ability to *be with*. Suspension, however, describes a concentration of all vectors for movement toward one point. It divides and pushes the body somewhere else. To be suspended means to be in an imminent absence from the field. Such a quality of presence raises back the relations between determination and decision of movement, which remain crucial to all collaborative practices. To move together demands to be suspended by, but it also requires a sustained indetermination. To move together

Sill from video, Andares, 2010.

doesn't allow watching the other move prior to taking the decision of moving with. It is a movement that is not responsive — it moves the movement of the other before it takes form. It is a togetherness that, without wait, becomes a suspension of one's own movement at the same time as it engages with directionality.

How to move with another while the other doesn't realize themselves as being in movement (because she would not compromise to move with, otherwise)? One of participants developed a strategy around this question: Silmar decided to approach workers asking them to bring teddy bears, which would be used in a series of installations and performances in and outside of the building. His invitation for a sharing of an element from one's private spheres into

the building opened up to a series of very rich conversations with the workers. The mass of fluffiness, and him, walking up and down the stairs holding sometimes dozens of bears, changed how the building's temperature was felt. It made every square of the windows evident and every fragmentation and inserted walls, boxes between tables more intense. The accumulation of the stuffed animals, by contrast, made the austerity of site feasible. Other interventions worked from a similar strategy, contrasting with what was felt by participants. They included the installations of paper cut-out birds underneath the stairs, the distribution of coffee at the corridors, sleeping on the couches at the waiting rooms.

Even without a formal audience, we insisted in composing sequences in the format of routes, which would be performed throughout the building every evening. In practical terms this was an attempt to grasp the integrity of the work among ourselves, and it was as close as we would get to a choreographic composition. Choreography is understood as a remembering, which can never reproduce the sets of conditions involving the performers bodies, but which translates feeling while it activates the "relation by bringing into appearance feltness in the present passing" (Manning, 2009, p. 80).

The specificity of how the public was constituted and blurred within the performance fed as well how we chose to edit the video piece, and ultimately the object that would reconstitute a traditional public at a screening session. My fear was that the camera mediation would implicate that all bodies at the audience would access the performing bodies from the same prospective, a simplification

of action and movement that would be against the whole experiment's attempt to generate unstable and unset relations. As a solution, the video was conceived as an autonomous document, not as a chronological or narrative composition of the actions, with the hope that the format could preserve the nature of openness that the event fostered. Once the event was finished, we watched the documentation from both video cameras and constructed sequences following repetitive use of objects made throughout the days. The video became an archeological exploration of the building where architecture could not be otherwise, or where bodies could not be otherwise, because its appearance derived from both tangible and invisible conditions that constituted the field for the encounter; the created archeology was a result of our positioning and of our responsiveness. We worked from experience to expression to composition of an archive of spatial practices to come, as if our presence there could have contaminated the planning toward a planning that would breath inventiveness and create spaces for eventful encounters.

The improvisational nature of the practices we installed and the modes of engagement with in the building required a dissociation of the concept of improvisation from the visual arts tradition that associates it with the artist's enlightening in the creative process. Such an ideal is not applicable to situations of relational and collaborative site-specific practices because the potential for responsiveness should not

Participants at the studio, Andares, 2010.

be external to the situation itself. It is easy to notice, in an improvised sequence of movements, that as soon as something that doesn't belong to the latent relational forces is brought into the relational field, a break happens – either in the coherence of the response, or literally something falls, someone gets hurt, etc. The ability to find coherent responsiveness is discerned in rhythm, the reason why the bodywork has been included in this project as an entrance to the daily practices. Because of the group's heterogeneous background the role of the body, or of embodiment, in activating responsiveness and creating landing sites as it circulated was precious.

The studio work, once again, did not constitute a transmission of gestures and positions for an intended choreography. They were based on sequences that would remind participants of modes of intervention and the apparatus of spatial inscription we hold as we move with space. If we were to actualize relations in a bureaucratized and prescribed space (a space that becomes the ultimate realm for prescriptions in the city) we would need first to attune for qualities and potentials within our reach. What could we do with presence? We know that intuitively, as when we are talking to someone and all of a sudden we remember we are late. We shift the weight and before anything needs to be said our interlocutor will grasp the urgency to finalize the conversation, simply because we changed the quality of our standing, of our listening. This happens intuitively in social relations, but can we learn, and teach to use such patterns of bodily composition to generate site and to switch relational intensities in performance? I

believe so, and the studio propositions are a compilation of exercises that attune to such abilities.

While a dancer's body is continuously trained to recreate a specific logic implicit in the ability to make space throughout an affect investment of the body, that is not necessarily the case with training that constituted other fields of art that we were dealing with in this project. For this reason we included simple sequences of folding and unfolding of articulation, coming up and down, falling from spirals. They included drawing up seismographic maps of the trajectories participants crossed on their ways to the studio, playing on the enunciation of the memory of site.

I risk to compare the sequences proposed at the studio to the machines used by photographer Étienne Marey, described by Erin Manning as structures to "invent techniques of relation for the creation of becoming-bodies of movement" (2009, p. 86). Differently from Marey's assemblages, the techniques for movement we used were aiming to awaken possible configurations for the body to actualize itself according to potential events at the building's site. Since the group was not previously 'trained' with dance techniques, we chose for the studio, coincidently to Marey's interest, to suggest series that focused on the pelvic region, investigating how trajectories and rhythms would set this body section in motion, and how its structures would set tendencies for moving.

Our movements derived not from subjective insights, but from propositions. In Whitehead's vocabulary propositions are occasions that can be shared; they perish and subsists only as datum: a raw material, which any

subsequent occasion may take up in its own turn. For Rancière, propositions are understood as an offer, a statement that simultaneously suggests and asks (2009, p. 51). Neither fictive nor actual, it is a proposition that prepares the world to advance into novelty. The curved movement of the performer who was walking only over the black *petit-pave* lines on the sidewalk floor, for instance, didn't directly invite the pedestrians for a reaction. Nevertheless it incited them to move from the displaying of intention, from generating a tendency that required the commuters to respond by opening up space, or by decisively ignoring her. It became a shared proposition, solved differently in the unfolding of the walk, according to the singularities of each positioning.

As a thought experiment *Andares* became a work on the relations between movement and spatial/relational politics. Both movement and the political emerge as a force before it takes form. The insertion of movement, or alteration of movement is above all an alteration of time and not a displaying of forms, as describes Shaviro (2009, p. 76).

During our stay at the EdD we were at times invisible, at others excessive, lost trying to hold onto gaps of the mechanical functions and uses of the building, grasping the bureaucratic planning-machine, which is moved by and moves three hundred workers daily. Nothing moves. We learned that the same sketches for school, for instance, are used repeatedly in cities at the coast or at the mountains. A school is a school. It doesn't need to be situated, they think. Nothing moves.

With the conclusion of the event we tried to continue composing from the ruptures and opened gaps, bringing forth the immanent capacity to undergo permutations and transformations of our own event. *Andares* entered that body of architecture thinking the body not as an appearance, but seeking for the vastness of unrealized potential that resides in the intensities of relations and tendencies that precede the body as taking form. What we moved was a retrospective of the relations we could trace. Such relations hardly are completely expressed in the 'taking form' of bodies, a problem that is feasible in the accounts of *Andares* (the video and this writing), as early as from the project's title. *Andares,* is a word (a taking form) that describes *walks* -a plural for any and every mode of walking, a generalization of movement that exists independent from the performing body. It also describes the floors and the vertical planes of a building.

Movement with the city is not linear. It is transversal as much as it is vertical, in every step. Walking is a means to access and create the planes for landing that constitute the surroundings, as relationality in motion. *Andares* refers to the plans of attention we attend in the trajectory. In each step, it never ceases to take form, but that which is formed is carried through the walk and not left behind.

In order to bring together the final threads of this project I want to share a story that came to be the seed of the first piece in this collection of works.

Having recently moved to Montreal I registered at a center for landed immigrants, where donations of furniture were redistributed to the community. Soon (and only a few days after my arrival) I received a call saying that an old couple had recently passed away and their son was giving away most of their furniture and appliances. I scheduled a time that same afternoon to pick up things I'd be interested in carrying. The man on the end of the line gave me the street name and I took note of the house number. He instructed me to arrive on time, as things would be donated on a first come, first served basis.

In my home town, streets change name after a few blocks. The same street might change names four or five times and I never thought it could have been otherwise. A street there is not simply a straight line. Rather, it names a region, a zone, and thus it almost implies that it should honor different people according to the neighborhood. The house numbers are also given in an uneven way, depending when the houses were built. They are not always continuous or sequential. Côte-Saint-Luc Road was the street I was living on in Montreal and it was also the address of the old couple's apartment. Fifteen minutes before my appointment I started walking with no attentiveness or any concern with distance or time. Shockingly I soon came to realize that each house was followed by the next street number, and eventually an apartment building that occupied an entire

block meant I was walking only one "number" closer to my destination. Needless to say that when I arrived at my destination there were only hangers and a broken vacuum cleaner left by others, who were more aware of the Montreal urban structure than I. In front of the elevator, there was also a thirty year old Victorian-style couch that was supposed to have been sold for three thousand dollars, but which had to be cut in two pieces because there had since been a renovation in the building that had made it impossible to carry the piece downstairs. There I was, tired, counting a thousand house numbers in my head, looking at that velvet piece of antique furniture, thinking about Godon Matta Clark and the beginning of my research project.

I spent a few months working on that very first impression on the extensiveness of Montreal's streets: *The stretch*. The video is based on a repetition of movements between the two performers, holding hands, stretching and binding the arms over three blocks of the street I was currently living at, rue Brébeuf, in the east and French side of Montreal. It was based on a walk in which the two performers were connected by holding hands, stretching their arms in order to alternate who was leading the movement through the extensiveness of the road.

Stills from video, The Stretch, 2009.

This work is grounded on what I have called a *feeling for site* and illustrates my attempt for a practice of the site-specific that could be instead referred to as time-specific. It exemplifies how complex relations such as architectural context, the history of urbanism and relationalities overlap when a body moves *with* the surroundings. As Miwon Kwon has observed, a practice of site-specific is always contingent to knowledge and practices that condition the artistic composition (2002, p. 2).

Instead of taking place, or occupying, to move *with* the city refers to a re-qualification of spatial orders, and to attempts to play with spatial politics in very brief time spams.

At the other end of this project is *In 8 Tempos*. This piece complements the video works that had been edited, privileging the occurrences at the outdoor spaces and the direct engagement with the architecture or pedestrians. *In 8 Tempos* aimed at producing a calligraphy of the studio sequences, where the focus was on preparing the body for the engagement *with*. The result of this attempt is a video that maps possibilities of relatedness and improvises within arrhythmic encounters. Nine screens compose the installation, each with different tracks of the sound composition. They are entitled:

Time to go back

Time of surrender

Time of permanence

Time of support

Stills from video, In 8 Tempos, 2011.

Suspended Time

Time for the rest

Time of the slowness

Time of transition

Time for repetition

Stills from video In 8 Tempos,

I conclude the research with a practice of movement, presented as video compositions; a practice that reverts site in the moment of improvisation. My claim is for a poetics of the urban that foregrounds possibilities for gathering, which can embrace the overload of information and contingencies that surround the practice of site-specific (historical, contextual, social, etc.), but that don't surrender to becoming illustrative of other disciplines' discourses.

In such a poetics, I argue, the pedagogical component, the conceptual articulations on the body in site-specific performance, site's contextualization and the aesthetic decisions taken in regards to producing a lasting document from the live/improvisation, should not be thought separately. I understand the texts, together with the video pieces to be short lapses of memories of the relations between participants and site. Furthermore, the videos become in themselves processes of siting.

Marcel Proust, when asked to describe his work, responded that this would only be a possible task if he were to focus on people, but they would then have a monstrous appearance for they occupy in time a much larger place then that which was attributed to them in space (in Brett, 1995, p 11. Free translation). This research is as much about distortions of time, made through the body in its constant prehensions with space.

Movement, as I explore here, is about a time that refuses to fall into habit. It is about how movement can time distances and be folded back, as a cartography of *site*. Through the performative (durational pieces) practices I come closer to the details of architecture, closer to the others with whom I share the rhythm of a

walk. Movement emerges from a desire for attentiveness to impersonal relations (with architecture and with other walkers for instance). Such an attentiveness is the core of a site-specific practice that engages with a location's history as much as it maintains a quality of curiosity and novelty towards the experienced city. This is a practice that dares the body to become bodies, so that it can look closer at the urban surface and actively participate in its weaving.

I argue that collaboration should remain an unstable concept for the arts. Collaboration should be noisy, so that the body can be felt in strangeness. Collaboration should be enabled through methods of incongruity, not normativeness. It is my belief that this is not an easy task, but that it can be accomplished by fostering gestures that are anachronistic to the location with which they engage. The techniques I present in this work suggest that collaboration allows performers to operate transgressively- crossing, for instance, the fundamental roles of performer and audience. Rarely, I believe, does such transgressiveness take place once the event is spectacularized with a formally established audience. While I privilege the space for improvisation and experimentation during the performances, it is in the videos that I invite a spectatorship to commit to *site* exclusively from the point of view of the event.

The videos compose an anachronistic layer of the interactive context with the urban. More than a documentation of the event, they are an archeology of the architectural settings and evoke spatial relationalities, a recollection of locations.

In the suggestion for a pedagogical and composition approach to site-specific performance, I have developed an ambiguous relation to form. While

questioning what is latent in the architecture, how to give shape to memories (singular or historical), I seek to create forms that emerge from intensity, a redistribution of meaning and presence to shapes that are already present.

After a century of experimentation with movement and bodies in public spaces, I wonder how much has shifted of what is possible, relevant and allowed to be performed with public spaces. Urban spaces have often become more regimented and I conclude this research with an open question on the role of the discipline of the site-specific in the development of abilities to outstretch what a body can do with the urban fabric.

My hope, as an artist and pedagogue, is for a practice that is less discursive, but aware of the genealogies it perpetuates in the making (of forms), hence responsible and responsive to expressionism and didacticism and how they inscribe movement in urban spaces. Site-specific performance should engage with location, environment, history and the body, but it should also reflect on itself as a cross-disciplinary field. The need for contextualization has overloaded the creative practices with the responsibility to activate history, an incumbency that has also distracted from how public space and the collective body are being perpetuated in their basic ontological relations. As Brian Massumi writes, "there is no such a thing as site-specific. The very word conjures up the notion of 'simple-location' that Whitehead identifies as the basic error of modernity" (2011, p. 50).

The appeal of form occurs in various layers of a collaborative practice of the site-specific. Initially with the prevalence of what can be recovered from the

architectural traditions over the event (of collective spacing); later with the reification of the originated object -in this case, the video pieces. The recurring tension of subordination between the event and the object is not solvable in this practice, but the videos are an attempt to remain as sensorial as possible, so that they continue to foster a play between imaginative and factual realms.

They take upon the task of displacing the urban or site as a given and present locations from the perspective of a feeling for gathering.

Pedagogies of Movement with the City presents an effort to dive into the tensions of performance and video, architecture and movement, actors and spectators, experimentation and representation. It is my belief that poetic structures can foster inquiries around such tensions in the urban realm, and furthermore, that the more collaborative practices are pushed to be institutionalized, the more we need to invest in practices of movement across such tensions.

Video Pieces available at:

http://www.inflexions.org/movementwiththecity/movements.html

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