

Tropicália: movements in society

Brazil Week at Harvard
March 23-24, 2018

(Lamont Library, Forum
Room, 3rd floor)



March 23

10 am – Panel: re.act: resistance: performing archives

A Living Theater in Times of Suppression

Fernanda Dusse (Harvard University)

Trajetórias temporais e espaciais: Cabra Mercado para Morrer, Peões e No Intenso Agora

Ana Paula Kojima Hirano (Harvard University)

Counterarchive: Art and Resistance in the 1960s and 1970s and in the 21st Century

Marina Bedran (Princeton University)

12:30 pm – Workshop with Angélica Freitas

2 pm – Keynote Speaker: Professor Suely Rolnik (PUC-SP):

Para além do inconsciente colonial-capitalístico

Sugestões para resistir em ambientes sinistros

March 24

10 am – Panel: bodiescapes: spaces of convergence

A TROPICÁLIA E A POESIA CONCRETA: UMA HISTÓRIA A SER ESCRITA

Gustavo Reis Louro (Yale University)

“Tropicália – Acousmatic Soundscapes”

Marcelo Noah (Duke University)

Vivências in transit: The experimental space of Kurt Schwitters and Hélio Oiticica

Miriam Minak (Freie Universität Berlin)

Teresinha Soares, Lygia Clark, Priscila Rezende. O Feminismo Canibal

como prática dissidente diante da espetacularização da censura

Cristina Morales Saro (Universidad de las Artes del Ecuador) e Ana Abril

(Utrecht University)

1pm – Workshop with Suely Rolnik and Josy Panão

2:30 pm – Keynote Speaker: Angélica Freitas

um útero é do tamanho de um punho: percursos



ABSTRACTS

MARCH 23

Panel: re.act: resistance: performing archives

A LIVING THEATER IN TIMES OF SUPPRESSION
Fernanda Dusse (Harvard University)

Shortly after actively participating in the French demonstrations of May/68, the group The Living Theatre traveled to Brazil, aiming to bring theater to “the new world”. Following their successful presentations of *Paradise Now* in Italy, they arrived in a country afflicted by misery, unhealthy working conditions, and the violent practices of a military dictatorship. At the same time, contact with local people presented them with new meanings of collectiveness and sharing, which no doubt changed the group’s vision for a street theater. Throughout the years of 1970-1971, the group organized activities in a favela in São Paulo and in the city of Ouro Preto, where they were arrested while working on the play *The Legacy of Cain*. During her 40-day stay at the Dops, The Living Theatre’s founder Judith Malina wrote a diary that was published weekly in the local newspaper *Estado de Minas* and presents an unexpected counter-hegemonic narrative in a moment of censorship and civil rights suppression. In 2008, UFMG Press launched this diary as part of the series “Dops Archive”, with contemporary commentaries aiming to fill in the gaps of a romanticized text that is still able to suggest the political views of an activist who was against all totalitarian regimes. By this diary in conjunction with Malina’s writings on the theory of theater, I attempt to analyze how the Living Theatre experience in Brazil changed the group’s concept of street theater and revealed a link between the Parisian demonstrations and the fights for democracy in Brazil.

Key words: Living Theater; Military Dictatorship; Resistance.

Como acessar a história, a memória, o passado, o futuro, o presente e o intenso agora? Como nos distanciar e nos aproximar do tempo passado sem cristalizar uma História única, mas nos permitindo adentrar realidades multifacetadas? *Cabra Marcado para Morrer*, *Peões* e *No Intenso Agora* convidam o espectador a embarcar numa viagem temporal e espacial que explora diferentes historicidades. Através de seus documentários, Eduardo Coutinho e João Moreira Salles oferecem a possibilidade de nos transportar para diferentes tempos e espaços; nos permitindo revisitar o passado e descobrir narrativas e histórias que quiçá estivessem solapadas. *Cabra Marcado para Morrer* (1984) revisita 1964, *Peões* (2004) revisita 1979 e *No Intenso Agora* (2017) revisita 1968. Nestes três filmes, somos convidados a embarcar literalmente e metaforicamente no tempo e no espaço, inferindo, transformando e ressignificando as trajetórias das pessoas envolvidas nos filmes: dos participantes (atores) filmados, à equipe detrás da câmera e à audiência, somos todos sujeitos da história. Nos deparamos com os personagens que se consagraram famosos, mas também com as pessoas que permaneceram anônimas. Os documentários nos deslocam; nos fazendo adentrar o ‘metaforai’ para nos transportar no tempo, espaço e significado. Como bem coloca Michel de Certeau, “toda história é uma história de viagem, uma prática espacial”, e elas podem assumir diferentes formas, incluindo memórias e histórias que são narradas e contadas. Os filmes de Coutinho e João Salles são “sintaxes espaciais”, viajamos no tempo e no espaço recolhendo novas possibilidades de interpretar e ver a história. Os nossos coletores acessam através de fotografias, filmes perdidos, memórias e entrevistas (no caso de Coutinho) um passado fragmentado. Recolhemos com eles as pistas perdidas, arquivos esquecidos e recordações desmemoriadas para tentarmos reconstruir um sentido que nem sempre parece ter sentido. Saímos desta experiência nos perguntando, o que fixamos e o guardamos da história? Valeu a pena?

Palavras chaves:



COUNTERARCHIVE: ART AND RESISTANCE IN THE 1960S AND 1970S AND IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Marina Bedran (Princeton University)

Circulation—of images, works of art, ideas, bodies—was extremely important for the conceptual practices of the 1960s and 1970s in Brazil. From Arte Correio, as Paulo Bruscky called the artistic movement which he helped found, to Cildo Meireles' *Inserções em circuitos ideológicos*, the possibility of circulation was the work. On the other hand, the archiving and handling of files was central to the political project of the military dictatorship (1964-1985), which already in 1967 made the military secret service the core of repression. As Mariana Joffily has pointed out, the transition to democracy in Brazil was marked by claims to access the secret archives. Yet, although the country has the largest set of files on political repression in Latin America, the archives of the main centers of political repression—the only ones which could lead to important information about the crimes perpetrated by the regime—have never been made accessible in its entirety. In addition, Brazil was the last Latin American country to establish its Truth Commission. In this paper, I will read the conceptual practices of the 1960s and 1970s as a possible escape route from the repressive politics of the period, but one that acquires new meanings in the context of the democratic experience of the 21st century. Taking Rosângela Rennó's recent series of books about photographs stolen from public collections, I will show how they illuminate the still unresolved issue of the opening of the secret files of the dictatorship, which ultimately leads to a rethinking of the aesthetic and political potentialities of the archive. Scholar and curator Okwui Enwezor has explored the various ways in which archival material informs contemporary art, and many scholars in the past decades have taken the archive as an interpretive tool. Here, the Brazilian case will be considered as part of this broader trend and at the same time the embodiment of a specific historical trajectory. I will argue that the work of art not only shed light on a political situation, but it can open up conceptual possibilities, and point towards different practices.

Key Words

Archive; Censorship; Repression; Resistance; Circulation; Military Dictatorship; Democracy.

March 24

Panel: bodiescapes: spaces of convergence

A TROPICÁLIA E A POESIA CONCRETA: UMA HISTÓRIA A SER ESCRITA
Gustavo Reis Louro (Yale University)

A poesia concreta e a Tropicália foram, provavelmente, os dois movimentos estéticos mais importantes do Brasil dos anos 60, cujos desdobramentos se fazem sentir na cultura brasileira até hoje. A relação entre as duas é bem conhecida e está bem documentada pelos representantes de ambas, notoriamente por Caetano Veloso, que em seu livro de memórias, *Verdade tropical*, dedica um capítulo inteiro ao papel dos poetas concretos em sua formação. Contudo, quando se trata do assunto, muitas vezes não se passa de uma noção primária de "influência" de uma sobre a outra, quando é muito mais acertado se pensar numa convergência. Esta apresentação pretende fazer um pequeno excursão sobre a história comum do tropicalismo e do concretismo, o que os aproxima e o que os distancia, sua recepção mútua, as realizações conjuntas e as apropriações de uma pela outra. Também nos voltaremos para as interpretações críticas que já foram feitas sobre a relação Tropicália-poesia concreta, entre as quais se destaca o livro de Lúcia Santaella, *Convergências*. Esperamos assim contribuir para o avaliação de um dos períodos mais fecundos da cultura brasileira.

“Tropicália – Acousmatic Soundscapes”
Marcelo Noah (Duke University)

This paper examines the use of sonic elements and artificial soundscapes in key artworks of the Tropicália movement from Hélio Oiticica's earlyish installation through Caetano Veloso's coeval studio recordings. By examining Brazilian national tropes and colonial depictions of natural wilderness, I clarify the process by which the tropicalistas reinscribed the mental projection of physical spaces by powerful suggestion of acousmatic sonic ambiances (from tropical rainforests to urban spaces, and bourgeoisie dwellings and dining rooms). Directly inspired by Oswald de Andrade's concept of antropofagia, this late 1960s generation of artists was able to provide a robust reflection on constitutive idiosyncrasies of Brazilian society through cultural and artistic productions. Following R. Murray Schafer's soundscape proposition, and Pierre Schaeffer notion of acousmatic, I investigate the tropicalistas immersive sonic experiences aimed at cognitive processes and bodily senses. In creative response to Oiticica, Caetano Veloso's composition likewise titled Tropicália (1967) responds with mimicry of tropical rainforest sounds recorded in studio which I intend to approximate to the mythical imaginary of the Antropofagus Terra vignettes inscribed in the old portolano maps from 16th century. Yet, in other examples, the recreation of urban environments addresses a fiercely attack on traditional institutions, values, and political order.

Key-words: sound studies; Acoustic Ecology; Psycho-acoustics/Acoustic Representation; Soundscape; Sound/Music – Nature/Culture; Tropicália; Hélio Oiticica; Caetano Veloso.

Vivências in transit: The experimental space of Kurt Schwitters and Hélio Oiticica
Miriam Minak (Freie Universität Berlin)

In 1971, Hélio Oiticica moved to New York City, where, funded by the Guggenheim Foundation, he transformed his apartment into the spacious artwork Babylonest. This act dissociated him from Kurt Schwitters and his Merzbau, a dadaistic, constructivist artwork made of different objets trouvés that Schwitters had built in Hannover, Germany, in the early 1930s. While Schwitters had conceptualized Merzbau as a composed piece of art, Oiticica desired the spectator to rethink the artwork and to capture it. In this paper, I examine the influence that Kurt Schwitters had on the spatial and experimental oeuvre of Hélio Oiticica beginning in the early 1960s, focusing on both artists' confrontation with the body in space, and the hence resulting vivência (life experience). Although Oiticica referred consistently to Schwitters and their methodical commonality (as they both challenged two-dimensional borders), the influence of Schwitters on Oiticica has been significantly underappreciated by scholars of 20th century Brazilian art. I argue that both artists constructed a labyrinthine experimental situation in their respective vivências – in Babylonest as well as in Merzbau – where they aspired to an activation of the body that is nevertheless confronted by its own corporality and boundaries of movement. Is Babylonest therefore – despite differing from Merzbau in its aesthetics and construction – merely an arousing variety of the latter? Or does it show a clear discrepancy among the two artists in their dealing with space and object? And in what ways did Oiticica reimagine Tropicália's revitalized Antropofagia? I use this case to reflect on the cultural formation of Brazil as distinct from an artistic conversion of European or North American art. Instead, I argue, it is a matter of artistic exchange between the Northern and Southern hemisphere that enables the art experience: while Schwitters still imagined the casa obra, Oiticica realized a casa total.

Keywords: Oiticica, Schwitters, Babylonest, Merzbau, vivência, body, space.

Teresinha Soares, Lygia Clark, Priscila Rezende. O Feminismo Canibal como prática dissidente diante da espetacularização da censura

Cristina Morales Saro (Universidad de las Artes del Ecuador) e Ana Abril (Utrecht University)

A prática e a noção de “feminismo canibal” deriva do marco teórico do Manifesto Antropófago (Andrade, 1998), a subjetividade antropofágica de Suely Rolnik (1998) e a antropofagia queer (Nemi Neto, 2015). O conceito de feminismo canibal, proposto por este trabalho, é primeiramente um exercício de dissidência acadêmica (José Esteban Muñoz, 1999) intrinsecamente relacionado com a problematização dos limites entre teoria, arte e política. Dessa forma, o feminismo canibal é uma contribuição ao trabalho desconstrutivista da teoria crítica, pois revela a porosidade das fronteiras e a plasticidade da subjetividade, da alteridade e da produção de dualismos que caracterizam a matriz global de dominação/poder. Nesta pesquisa, usamos o feminismo canibal como um conceito operativo que dialoga com algumas práticas artísticas das artistas brasileiras Teresinha Soares, Lygia Clark e Priscila Rezende. Em primeiro lugar, são examinados os contextos e os agentes envolvidos nos processos de exibição e de recepção dos trabalhos de arte. Conseqüentemente, produz-se uma cartografia da invisibilização (Teresinha Soares and Priscila Rezende) e da espetacularização (Lygia Clark) das práticas artísticas feministas, o que configura diferentes tipos de censura contemporânea global. Considerando as análises de Andrade sobre a espetacularização do canibal no contexto colonial, a censura global contemporânea é apontada como um exercício de baixa antropofagia que guarda relação com a lógica histórica do colonialismo e do patriarcado. Conclui-se, assim, que a espetacularização da censura é uma forma contemporânea de baixa antropofagia global que age contra as práticas artísticas do feminismo canibal para prevenir e neutralizar sua potencia política e crítica. Palavras-chave: antropofagia; canibalismo; espetacularização; teoria queer; decolonialidade; censura.



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