



Editorial : Contemplation, Performing Arts and Co-existence

In this world in which we live, where sufferings like war, famine, disease, and so on are an ongoing issue throughout our perceived reality, to have the leisure and the amazing opportunity to reflect on ways of performance, on the powerful effect of being present, and also on how to coexist in a harmonious and enriching way, is like having a magical key in our hands and being able to open up layers and layers of meaningful knowledge and wisdom. In the age of the so-called 'strongman' (as Gideon Rachman puts it) ruling our governments, environment, culture, and even our minds; in this so-called post-truth era, where misinformation abounds, and it is crucial to be able to differentiate valid and invalid ways of knowing something, virtual spaces like this Journal are like a little shelter, where people can actually open themselves up and offer their discoveries, enhancing our limited perspectives and creating a fruitful environment for sharing. Given all this, the invitation to edit this issue came as a precious opportunity to be in contact with a fresh and bright universe of various perspectives and curious minds, as the reader will be able to notice while reading each one of the articles.

The invitation to be the editors of this issue came after the 2nd International Seminar on Performance Arts and Contemplative Practices: Contemplation, Performing Arts and Coexistence (May 2021). That event was part of the activities of the project Meditation and Contemplative Practices: New Perspectives on Performing Arts Creation and Learning in

Higher Education, funded by the Brazilian Committee for Scientific and Technology development (CNPq). It was planned to be an in-person event, but the SARS-COVID 19 pandemic changed our plans, and the event ended up being online. To our amazement, the online meeting allowed us to expand the impact of the event, which was attended by more than 600 participants, 40 panelists, and performers from 12 different countries. This seminar offered us a perspective on how many people are interested in these themes, especially in Brazil.

This is the second Special Issue of the *Journal of Performance and Mindfulness* to be focused on initiatives in Brazil (see Volume 2, Issue 1, 2017) - a reflection of the dynamism within the community of Brazilian scholars and artists pursuing activity at the intersection of creative and contemplative practices.

Considering that we decided to make this issue bilingual, accepting articles written both in Portuguese and English, very early on we understood that it would be challenging. Funding constraints imposed by the government led by Bolsonaro meant that we could not undertake to translate English papers into Portuguese. Working closely with our authors, however, we have been able to publish some papers in English translation alongside their original Portuguese. Further, the barriers linked to language meant the number of submissions was significantly decreased, and the translation process encompassed a series of problems associated with style and cultural adaptation. Despite this, the efforts made to create, through this issue, a partially bilingual space where we can coexist as researchers and writers have been very fruitful, and we have learned a lot about ourselves and the ways different cultures build their academic traditions. As a result of this process, in this issue, we have only a few peer reviewed articles, and many more non-peer-reviewed essays addressing more personal approaches to different practices. We consider the latter to be a

rich aspect of this volume as we give voice to more subjective discourses and texts that do not fit within hegemonic ways of sharing knowledge.

The papers presented here represent a range of views, arising from work in different performative media and in diverse contexts. The authors bring their individual artistic and pedagogical reflections and questions to the Issue's core theme, but the papers also echo and reflect each other in a web of interconnected insights and intuitions.

In 'A Huge Silence: And the Way of Words', Deborah Middleton reflects upon poetry in performance as a contemplative practice for audiences. Addressing Kabat-Zinn's suggestion that poetry is perhaps the best way to understand mindfulness, and discussing the role of words (and silence) in some Buddhist traditions, she explores how writing can offer a contemplative experience to both performers and listeners.

In 'The Sky and the Storm' Heather Huggins and Tania Alice explore two socially-engaged arts projects in Universities in New York and Rio de Janeiro respectively. Using the imagery of sky and storm, they examine their artistic-pedagogical practices in academia as practices of compassion and as a poetics of care, used as resources for the establishment of peaceful resistance.

'The Action of Attention: Intersections of Contemplative Dance Performance and Sufi Remembrance' brings us a deep reflection from Candice Salyers about how contemplative dance can be a way of action in the world. The article is based on the experience of creating a contemplative dance-film during the Seminar.

In 'Songs of the Desert Wind', Rebecca Sabine Ramsey presents a mindfulness-based experience performed with improvisational music. In this process, participants are invited into deep environmental awareness and integration with the natural environment.

In the bilingual category we will find Claudia Mele's article: 'Intuition, Creativity and

Visualisation in the Work of the Performing Artist in Training'. The author explores how contemplative practices within performance processes can stimulate creativity, intuition and visualization, facilitating the emergence of unconscious material.

Maria Luiza Tavares Cavalcanti's article, 'Trajectories of a Research on Mindfulness and its Crossings in the Actor's Work' describes how she used the eight week mindfulness program with undergraduate students in order to help them to be more comfortable with their artistic-pedagogical practices. Through the text, she addresses Buddhist concepts such as impermanence and non-self, suggesting how mindful acting affects the artists beyond the boundaries of professional practice.

Some invisible bridges can be glimpsed in this issue. These bridges do not aim at strengthening oppositions or producing tensions. Instead, these bridges try to allow us to perceive, above all, echoes between ways of thinking, writing, saying and doing as modes of manifestation. Far from proposing models and rigid notions associated with performance and mindfulness, this is a space where it is possible to coexist. And so, silent storms can become here an attentive music that crosses windy deserts.

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