



## Listening to Paths

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### **Introduction: Labyrinth Walking, Sonic Met-hodology, Atlantichaos.**

A labyrinth is built with many paths. One of the essential movements in my artistic practice is walking. Walking on one's feet is the primary means of locomotion of our species. On a planet being consumed by the increased burning of fossil fuels, walking is an act of resistance, it is deviation and diaspora, an earthly movement the size of our own footsteps on the sublunary scale, in the vague time of our own footsteps. In these walks, I let myself be guided by ambient sounds, an exercise that causes me to get into a state of sensory, cognitive and imaginative drift. This action of *deep listening* is another essential movement. By bringing these two movements together, the relation between the body and the environment is felt to be altered and intensified. Walking in a state of deep listening results in no longer being *in* the environment, but being *the* environment. Walking turns into *wandering*: there is no point of arrival, no defined route. I experience layers of space-time that overlap and contaminate one another, senses that mingle.

Wandering can turn any place into a labyrinth. A labyrinth that has no end, as it opens in networks that expand and generate other labyrinthine courses. In this process, a third essential gesture emerges: *to fable*. To trace a route is also to draft a drawing, a narrative, and a cartography. Listening is also the possibility of building senses from what has been listened to, retelling what has been heard – it is the potentiality of speaking. To discuss the gesture of fabling, I begin to fable. Experience and fiction go together. The gestures shape the labyrinths and the writing method, a thread that extends into a web and within us, crossroads; the knots of insoluble problems that still need to be addressed; the knots on the rope that leads the way through a labyrinth or forest; the knots that tie the sails of a boat in the ocean, allowing it to land on some shores and not be forever adrift.

This article is based on excerpts from the doctor of Arts dissertation defended before PPGArtes-UERJ, entitled *Caminhos Atlânticos, Cartas de Terras Insondáveis: vagar, escutar, fabular* (Atlantic Routes, Letters from Unfathomable Lands: to wander, to listen, to fable). The knots in the dissertation are defined by the elements of the title itself: the act of taking routes, which is to be Atlantic in some of its multiple dimensions, the letters in their triple meaning in Portuguese (missives, maps, and game cards), the unfathomable lands as the territory one never fully knows, full of absences, tracks, traces, and phantasmagoria. Starting from these knots, the labyrinth unfolds: Ariadne's thread leads the way and the labyrinth itself expands. Once expanded, it touches what embraces us all as a species, as a culture, and as living beings, our common home, our place to be and to live: the Earth, frail Gaia, which no longer allows us to ignore the violence to which it has been submitted. The Earth is also about the seas and depths: I can name it Terraocéana (Earthocean), in another fabulation.

My research-process in arts emerged and expanded mainly from experiences with the *Atlântica* (Atlantic) series, which is set up as an endless atlas and articulates artistic practices in three spaces, three scales: Avenida Atlântica (Atlantic Avenue), in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro; the Atlantic Forest, a threatened ecosystem located in areas near the sub-equatorial Brazilian coast; and the Atlantic Ocean, whose history is linked to colonization and its intense current traffic – by air, by sea, of capital, of information. *Atlântica* woke up between the sea and the engines, continued by rivers and forests, and has been unfolding and proliferating in several (sub)series. In these Atlantic movements, attention is also given to the relationship between the body and the means by which the path is followed, i.e. streets, forests, boats, floating, diving, shipwreck: when the feet carry the body in a tough geometrically (dis) ordered space, when they are in the living ground of the woods, when they balance in the unstable and vulnerable state of a boat, when they experience the lightness of waters, when there is no more ground.

This process gave rise to other series of works, such as *Letters from Unfathomable Lands*. From that point on, a "sonic met-hodology" (which could also be referred to as "atlantichaotic met-hodology") was developed and has been applied to other environments, always considering the history and peculiarities of each location. With field recordings, notes and photographs, this practice is later condensed into various media, in sound, visual and textual compositions.

The concepts of hodology and hodological space, proposed by the psychologist Kurt Lewin and philosophers such as Kant, Heidegger, Sartre, Deleuze and Michel de Certeau, have been used by Gilles Tiberghien (2012) in the study of certain aspects of contemporary art. Hodology addresses the personal construction of pathways or walks. The word derives from the Greek *hodos*, meaning route, journey or road (Jackson apud Tiberghien, 2012). John Brinckeroff Jackson notes that the root *hodos* is also found in *methods*: “a way of regular and systematic action” (apud Tiberghien 2012, p. 163). In the case of my hodological practice, the method opens up to chance, to interferences and irregularities, the system overrides strict rules, and discipline seeks, as proposed by Rimbaud in the 19th century, in his “letter of the seer,” the “derangement of all the senses.”

A hodological method is consistent with this open, unfinished approach. Tiberghien observes the dialectical opposition between two kinds of routes: the pre-existing routes, streets, roads, and surfaces built to facilitate and accelerate access refer to habit; the routes practiced and invented anew each time, the procedural time-consuming routes that do imply a “waste of time,” that touch the dangers of wandering, drifting. According to this perspective, hodology favors the second kind of route, the route that is chosen there and then; “the hodological space is something that relates to action” (Uexküll apud Tiberghien 2012, p.169). It is possible to travel anywhere and use disorientation and wandering as a met-hodology. Bill Viola (1988) applied this practice to his video *Hatsu Yume*, when he was in Japan, a country where he felt lost. Walking on a road, or following a route is not enough: it is necessary to have a detour, the uncertain, the wandering; one must walk the inaccurate, one must get lost. Yoko Ono, in one of her instructions, summarized: “Draw a map to get lost.” According to Tiberghien, the hodological space and the situationist drift keep this relationship:

The space that a walker traverses is a space crossed by affections... It is also the psychogeographic drift, a concept theorized by Guy Debord. [...] Drifting is introduced as the means to psychogeography: a methodical and random way of discovering an unprecedented side of the cities thus explored. [...]

Drifting [...] is therefore sensory and emotional and requires, in Debord's words, “the affirmation of a playful-constructive behavior.” It takes place on a “passionate-objective ground...” (Tiberghien 2012, p. 170).

In my met-hodology, I wander in a state of increasing derangement of the sense, following sounds and conversations, fragmented messages written on the walls, traces, and rough edges left on the surfaces. To wander in listening, in poetic openness to the subtleties and violence of each environment, perceiving the voice as a body that extends in space, seeking the territory that escapes and resists colonization, the hemisphere that opposes clear conscience, and reveals shadows that are always incomplete, ghosts, astonishment, the unspeakable that still needs to be said. However, this task of saying and narrating cannot be caught in the identification trap: we do not really know what it is to be the other, his/her suffering; the place of the other is an inscrutable *terra incognita* (unknown land). We can only fathom it from a distance. There is, however, a connection, a commonality, there is always the possibility of recognizing, of co-feeling, of witnessing, of responsibility. Although this connection takes place in the present, it is built with the co-inhabitants of our time, of the past and of the future. One might ask, "Who cares?", and we should always answer that *we do*. This is how "the listeners who stay until the end"<sup>1</sup> find ways to pass on what they have heard, to turn what they have heard into words, gestures and images; this is how one can listen to paths and possibilities.

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<sup>1</sup>Reference to the dream narrated by Primo Levi, in which the author tries to tell the horrors of the holocaust, but finds difficulties in speaking and being heard. This dream is analyzed by Jeanne Marie Gagnebin and helps to reflect upon the listening and the witness: "A witness would also be *someone who does not leave, who can hear the unbearable narration of the other* and who accepts that his/her words carry on, as in a relay, the story of the other: not because of guilt or compassion, but because only the symbolic transmission, taken over in spite of and because of the unspeakable suffering, *only this reflexive resumption of the past can help us not repeat it over and over but dare to outline another story, to invent the present.* (Gagnebin 2009, p 57 - emphasis added)

## **Listening Beyond the Waves, Traces and Trails along the Pathways**

In my works, listening comprises the processes and questionings from the beginning; listening produces works. This does not mean that the listening and the works cannot lead to touching, tasting, smelling, seeing, moving, and remembering. Thus, the approach that supports the series *Atlânticas*, *Cartas de Terras Insondáveis*, and other series and projects, such as *Cut-up Tragedy*, must include some aspects concerning aurality and perception, sound territories and itineraries, auditory memory and sonic imagination. The imagination is especially required before the insondável (unfathomable): unfathomable is what cannot be fathomed – depths of impossible access. The word *fathom* refers to go beneath and to measure the depth of waters – but through an instrument, a reference, not directly but rather through signs, marks.

In addition to fathomable or unfathomable water depths, the sound itself is made up of waves, and moves in waves. Waves, whether sound or sea waves, are defined by physics as disturbances that propagate in some medium, in space and time. We are always immersed in these disturbances, in some sound waves, flooded by them – and unable to measure the depth in which we are immersed, to calculate all the derivations, memories and images that these waves generate. Access here is always incomplete, glimpsed and overheard: on the edge.

Abyss listening occurs on the edge of the unfathomable: like the effect of mirrors “in an abyss,” listening develops in countless images, times, places, virtualities, tending to infinity. They are folds and more folds, waves, reverberations and resonances. The folds of the ears, the shell-shaped ears, the depth of the auditory channels, the labyrinths in our bodies are capable of this reception, which is also action, construction, elaboration and creation far beyond the ears: it is imagination and auditory memory, relationship between listening and tracks, traces and even “ghosts” or sound hallucinations. Sound propagates in waves, but also beyond them; it penetrates and also builds meanders.

Listening to tracks, rather than seeing them: why listen instead of see, why not touch traces, try to taste them or be guided by smell, like so many animals? Listening refers to what has not yet been seen, to what is at a distance or hidden, to what may come nearer and be seen – perhaps. Listening may fall into emptiness and a silent mystery without answers, but it also produces images and fictions,

generates images and fictions rapidly changeable in time, from the most prosaic inquiries: "What makes that sound, is it a thing, man, woman or animal?" and every possible thing, man or woman or animal triggers a number of virtual images and beginnings of stories, fragments of fictions; *listening is imagining*. The sound has a touch of Proteus: it changes, it does not let itself be caught and it generates images and shapes. Mermaids, naiads, nymphs, Loreleis and water elves: they seduce with their voices, their song drags one to the bottom, to the unknown.

In *Sinister Resonances*, musician, composer and researcher David Toop investigates the phantasmal nature of sound and its relation with tracks and memories, as well as with hallucinatory states. It begins by reporting an experience and the reflections it awakens:

Out of deep dreamless sleep I was woken, startled by a hollow resonance, a sudden impact of wood on wood. Was the sound an isolated auditory event within my consciousness – a moment of dream without narrative or duration – or was it a real sound from the physical world? The reverberation time was too long for the sound to have emanated from the bedroom. This would imply a sound coming from somewhere else in the house, an echoing space, mysterious and distant. If that was the case, then I could only assume the presence of an intruder, unlikely as a possibility. The sound came from nowhere, belonged nowhere, so had no place in the world except through my description.

Words fly away; the written letter remains. Sound is absence, beguiling; out of sight, out of reach. What made the sound? Who is there? Sound is void, fear and wonder. Listening, as if to the dead, like a medium who deals only in history and what is lost, the ear attunes itself to distant signals, eavesdropping on ghosts and their chatter. Unable to write a solid history, the listener accedes to the slippage of time. [...] Sound is a present absence; silence is an absent present. Or perhaps the reverse is better: sound is an absent presence; silence is a present absence? In this sense, sound is a sinister resonance. (Loc 28-39).

In this dynamic of existence and disappearance, absent presence and present absence, one may identify the sound with the characteristic of a trace, a fugitive trace, a matter that escapes, a reality that escapes – which could even suggest a possible hallucination or a ghost. Resonance, the word used by David Toop, comes from the Latin *resonare*, "to sound again," which could already establish an analogy with memory. The word has a more colloquial usage, which alludes to a full, deep and reverberant sound; and it is also a term used in science, wave physics and music. Resonance is one of the basic effects of sound and only occurs in a *relationship*: there are frequencies where solid elements vibrate; when they are excited

at these frequencies by an external stimulus, some source of energy, matter vibrates in increasing amplitude, "responding" to that stimulus, in an amplifying cycle. The description get to be somewhat erotic, like an orgasm of matter excited by an intense energy. The effect is achieved at a distance, by waves, and it is powerful: it is a "sounding anew" and *sounding with the other and in the other*, sounding louder and stronger. When we say that we are "tuned in at the same frequency" as someone else, maybe we really are. The effect is also the principle of making acoustic musical instruments that have resonance boxes; and is one of the principles of singing, where the mouth represents a resonance box. Our body as a whole is subject to several resonance phenomena, especially in the low frequencies; it can be stimulated by it, or become seriously ill. Our ears are also subject to complex resonance systems.

Listening to a sound *in crescendo* can create the image of a climb, a bass resonates in the shallows; a high frequency can make you raise your head, looking up; a uniform sound seems to slide; and, a grainy tone *is a texture* and almost tickles: the image carried by the sound is felt in the body, it resonates in the flesh and bones. The Chladni effect makes sound visible: using very fine dust on surfaces that resonate, we see the images of sound vibrations, waves, labyrinths and mandalas that soon change. Sound, as a physical and psychic phenomenon, affects all beings, even the hearing impaired - because it is also tactile, vibrates skins, surfaces and depths, it generates heat. It propagates through the air, water and bodies in different ways. It may be used as a weapon. It may calm beasts, as Orpheus knew. It may tell of love, spark rebellions, or stir up hatreds.

We may also listen to sounds that we perceive as organized or indistinct, noises; it may be inarticulate voices or a speech; speech creates the word, the word generates writing, and writing gives rise to lists, letters, books and encyclopedias, whether resulting from the work of a few minutes or centuries. In every written text, there are voices and countless sonorities; in every image, an acoustic environment is suggested; in matter, there is the possible impact, the virtuality of being played as an instrument, a frequency waiting to be awakened by resonance. Silences may be broken without any stimulus, no external disturbance, without any sound wave being emitted in space and time: remembered sound, imagined sound, a thought emerging as an inner voice, music that "sticks in the head," the sound in the dream, a sound hallucination, "hearing voices."

All these issues have been following me and developing since I stepped out of the musical world per se in 2009-2010, ending activities that involved projects and bands to work with sounds in other forms, more experimental, sounding in space-time or just mentally, in the memory-imagination of each one. My earliest artistic works in addition to music and performance in their strictest sense were accomplished in that context: the sound suggested in an apparently "silent" situation, the sound remembered and imagined from questions, instructions, stories. This was one of the axes in my master's thesis, "Ouvir na Pele o Terceiro Som" (Listening to the Third Sound on the Skin). Seth Kim-Cohen (2010) argues that some elements of sonic art do not depend on physiological hearing: it is a conceptual sound art that relies on attentive listening in its broadest and inter-sensorial sense. Just as the concept of a "non-retinal art" was established based on Duchamp, one can also think of a "non-cochlear sonic art."<sup>2</sup>

Parallel to these processes, my relationship with music changed. The album "Antes da Terra Incógnita" (Before Terra Incognita) compiles some of these moments, between 2009 and 2012, in partnerships with Alex Mandarin. In 2013 came our duo, *Terra Incognita*, currently being recorded. In "Antes da Terra Incógnita," the compositions emerge from the relationship with elements other than music, such as editing and organizing traces of sound performances, and the use of texts and images as sound generators, interpreted as audible frequencies. It is a territory that blends into that of sound art and multimedia, and can also take the form of installations and propositions that are not strictly musical, but composed of visual elements, textual elements, objects, etc.

The album starts with the song "Cortina de Ruínas" (Curtain of Ruins), followed by two series of three compositions, one in honor of Ada Lovelace and another based on fictional texts by Mandarin describing three dream towers. "Cortina de Ruínas" was conceived by editing sound elements from performances I held at a temporary site-specific installation in Rio de Janeiro, *Cortina de Ruínas Leves* (Curtain of Light Ruins), at Parque das Ruínas (Rio de Janeiro, 2010-2011). The curtain, hung in a large doorway, was made of lost and found objects, memories of

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<sup>2</sup> The cochlea (or snail in Greek, due to its shape) is the hearing part of the inner ear. It is a spiral-shaped cavity in the bony labyrinth. A core component of the cochlea is the organ of Corti, the sensory organ of hearing.

small abandonments that sounded differently when touched by the body, the wind, the rain. During the performances, I played the curtain as an instrument, adding improvised voice, live processing and amplification.<sup>3</sup> The three sound pieces that pay tribute to Ada Lovelace are part of the work *ADA jpg > ADA wav*, in which images of Ada and elements related to her universe (Babbage engine, excerpts from the Ada programming language, a portrait of her mother, letters and diagrams) are converted into sounds using a specific software. Only the audio files resulting from this conversion were used to build the songs. Images associated with the world's first computer programmer are transformed, through algorithms, into abstract soundscapes. Oils on canvas turn into frequency waves; mathematical equations generate robotic sounds that strangely resemble human speech; family portraits are transmuted into rhythmic figures.<sup>4</sup>

The album ends with a series of the oldest songs, from 2009. "As Três Torres" (The Three Towers) emerged from Mandarino's desire to interrelate literary fiction, music and the creation of imaginary scenarios. Three short texts by Mandarino describe the visit to these fantastic towers, creating a cadence for each space. I improvised synthesizers and vocals, trying to generate these environments and to tell these stories in a non-verbal way. Mandarino edited, sequenced and added elements, finalizing the compositions. In an exhibition, three acrylic books arranged on the wall introduce the songs and texts.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The song won first place in the experimental category at the III Gustavo Becerra-Schmidt Latin American Competition of Electro-Acoustic Composition in 2012, in Chile. It was launched at the Ai-Maako Festival (Valparaíso, Chile) in 2013, performed in concert at Evans Hall (New London, US, 2014) and released in a 2015 album with the 2012 and 2013 winners of the contest, by Pueblo Nuevo Netlabel. In 2017, it was selected for the Brazilian radio playlist of Documenta in Kassel, with Janete El Haouli and José Augusto Mannis as local curators.

<sup>4</sup> The pieces were part of the virtual exhibition "BR.ADA: Celebrando Ada" (Celebrating ADA), organized by the blanktape.com.br website in partnership with the collective exhibition BR.Ada, as a tribute to Ada Lovelace aimed at sharing texts and works that focus on the importance of women in artistic and/or technological productions. The piece Analytical Engine was also included in the virtual album "América Latina, entre Ruídos y Ruínas" (Latin America, Between Noises and Ruins) (Dissonance from Hell).

<sup>5</sup> The work was shown as it is at Hap 01 (Parque Lage, RJ, 2009) and at Ocupação Arte Sonora (CC Oduvaldo Vianna Filho, RJ, 2015).

In 2015-2016, another three musical projects emerged, two solo projects and one duo project: *Cut-up Tragedy*, which also represents a textual and visual work and will be addressed at the end of this article; *Strana Lektiri*, with Isabel Nogueira; and *Lori*, the latest solo project. All of *Strana Lektiri* ("page reading" in Greek) is based on women's voices and texts, exploring the thresholds of intelligibility through effects and overlapping layers, as well as fragments of inarticulate, bodily, and visceral songs and sounds.



Fig. 1 – *Strana Lektiri* presented at the *Dissonantes* project, Ibrasotope, São Paulo, 2016. Photo by Luciene Lamano.

In *Lori*, which is also an alter ego, I work on the ideas of phantasmal sound, trace sound, absence-presence, sounds that can produce astonishment. *Lori* is made up of improvisations and experiments with the voice, songs in ruins, fragments of languages, lay-pagan glossolalia and some noises. The compositions begin with free singing without concern for language. The result may resemble known languages and give rise to later lyrics from sonority. Other layers are added: field recordings, drones, effects and voices acting as instruments and ambiences. In all these works there is always the intention to create space and time, a specific ambience, a path.

In the relationship between listening and place, the idea of movement, itinerary must be highlighted: even if you are stopped, the sound reaches and affects the body and can generate images and fictions. All this is also a place, and a *place in movement*. In the case of a sound walk, *in the case of a sonic met-hodology*,<sup>6</sup> these spaces add up, interact and interchange. A *sonic-plastic palimpsest* is created: every sound walk is a complex cartography of frequencies, times, movements, spaces, contacts and senses. Brandon LaBelle considers that acoustic territories are not exactly places, but rather *itineraries*: "Sound creates a relational geography that is most often emotional, contentious, fluid, and which stimulates a form of knowledge that moves in and out of the body." (LaBelle, 2010b).

Contrary to a certain common sense that sees the act of hearing as "passive," listening has an active force: "In listening, one is engaged in a synergy with the world and the senses, a hearing/touch that is the essence of what we mean by gut reaction – a response that is simultaneously physiological and psychological, body and mind." (Dyson, 2009, p.4). The perceptual focus on sound makes all the other senses more porous, unfocused, mixed and open to the multiplicities of outer space and the presence of others with their voices and noises. Sight is a sense that makes everything more objective, separates "me and you," "subject and object," a straight line. When hearing commands, there is neither a direct command nor a separation between inside and outside – there is an "outside" that mingles with the "inside," which strikes, invites, brings near – and also generates distances, escape routes and distances, poetics of deviation; circles, waves, spacing: "What is mine is primarily my distance, I have but distances." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1997a, p. 127).

In no circumstances does vision work separately, as we are always immersed in mixtures, as Brian Massumi (2002) describes. The same can be said of hearing, or of any other sense. Not even in dreams does vision act by itself: the body remains focused on other sensations and interferes in the visual images of dreams with these *residues*, creating sight from non-visual information. Some dream with all the senses in place: smells, textures, tastes and sounds are experienced at the same level of intensity. Accordingly, there is no "pure field of view": the visual

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<sup>6</sup> For further information on sonic met-hodology, please refer to Experienced Sonic Fictions, an article by author published in the magazine Interference: A Journal of Audio Culture in 2014.

experience is always intermodal, inter-sensorial. Vision "... always feed the other senses – and is fed by them." (Massumi, 2002, p.154). In fact, the senses are not naturally "active and dominant" or "passive and dominated": such perceptions are culturally constructed and can be deconditioned in practices such as the exercise of careful listening, deep listening, abyss listening. Hearing and smell often bring back vivid images of the past, even if they are not visual images. There are images in which the visual has faded and other senses make up images.

Valuing and performing the acts of walking, drifting, and listening have specific ethical and aesthetic implications, which may unfold in different ways. Gilles Tiberghien points out that "the artistic approach is very important in how it perceives the world from the paths that cross it, insofar as it enhances the dimension of the sensitive and affective experience of the walk" (Tiberghien, 2012, 164).

Thus, art, attentive listening, and intersessional walks and practices acquire the value of possible activators, generators, and transformers of sensibilities, capacities, and socially shared forms. However, this is not a guarantee and does not occur in a flat and superficial time, in a continuous and luminous present. Such possibilities take place in another type of time: time-whirlwind, time-abyss, time of folds and traces.

The gesture of wandering, the gesture of moving through the uncertain horizontality of the aimless walks, the gesture of bending down to pick things up along the way: when performed, these gestures deconstruct utilitarianism, the automation of the preformed gestures that serve a specific, productive or athletic purpose.

The figure of the scrapper walker, scavenger or rag-picker of Baudelaire and Benjamin also appears in this context. The traces, left to oblivion and hideouts, are similar to the remains to be picked by the scrapper, who collects what has been relinquished along the way, left to the chances of his wandering. As Baudelaire describes in "*Artificial Paradises*": "Here is a man entrusted to gather up the remains of a day in the life of the capital. All that the metropolis has rejected, all that it has got rid of, all that it has scorned, all that it has broken, he catalogues, he collects." (Baudelaire, 1995, p. 354). Such a collection of traces and remains, according to Benjamin, is also a characteristic of the authentic poet and artist, of the historian and narrator:

Rag-picker or poet - refuse concerns both; and both go about their business in solitude at times when the citizens indulge in sleeping; even the gesture is the same in both. Nadar speaks of Baudelaire's "jerky gait" (*pas saccadé*). This is the gait of the poet who roams the city in search of rhyme-booty, it must also be the gait of the rag-picker who stops on his path every few moments to pick up the refuse he encounters. (Benjamin, *The Paris of the Second Empire*, p.79).

This uncertain, irregular step is the step of wandering. "Pick up" may poetically describe, in its own vague and transitive unclearness, other verbs and operations: it may be said that in this process of wandering, to listen is to pick sounds, to fable is to pick stories, and to imagine is to pick images; to remember is to pick tracks. Chance leads to "stumbling" on things, situations, impressions, and events; but one must be careful, that peculiar kind of attention in flux. This may also involve picking more concrete things on which one stumbles – like the Portuguese pavement of Copacabana in my works *A Rua por Dentro* (The Street from Within), and *Um Fardo de Palavras* (A Bundle of Words). *A Rua por Dentro* emerges from "blind" photographs taken with a Lomo fish-eye lens at ground level where a pavement stone is missing; and of loose Portuguese pavement stones collected on Atlântica Avenue. The photos are turned into drawings, in increasing degrees of differentiation. In the act of drawing, I redo a path in another manner. I perceive other aspects and poetics of the image I photographed and, on the way, I outline fictions, fragments written on the drawings, on the stones. I begin with a photograph and its punctum; then I make a drawing from this photo. After that, I complete a triptych that joins the two previous works – the photo and the drawing of the photo – to one of the stones collected and changed with inscriptions. Other stones and written objects are returned to the Avenue: there is a part of the work that returns to the street and remains there, stray, perhaps invisible. The process of "returning" is eventually registered, and generates new photographs, new drawings and texts, in successive developments, in feedback cycles. The texts that are part of these drawings generally refer to falls and absences, to tough situations and losses. *Um Fardo de Palavras* is a collection of more than one hundred Portuguese pavement stones picked up, carried around the streets, and written upon, making up a poem adrift on the ground. Another work that arises from these stones is *Deslocamento de Pedras Atlânticas* (Displacement of Atlantic Stones): Portuguese pavement stones found on Atlântica Avenue are written upon with sentences-poems and placed amidst stones on rural roads, trails and rivers in areas of Atlantic Forest; stones and gravels usually

found in this region go through the same process and are placed on the avenue, on the beach and in the sea. In my processes, wandering, listening, and collecting are poetic activities that are part of fabling.

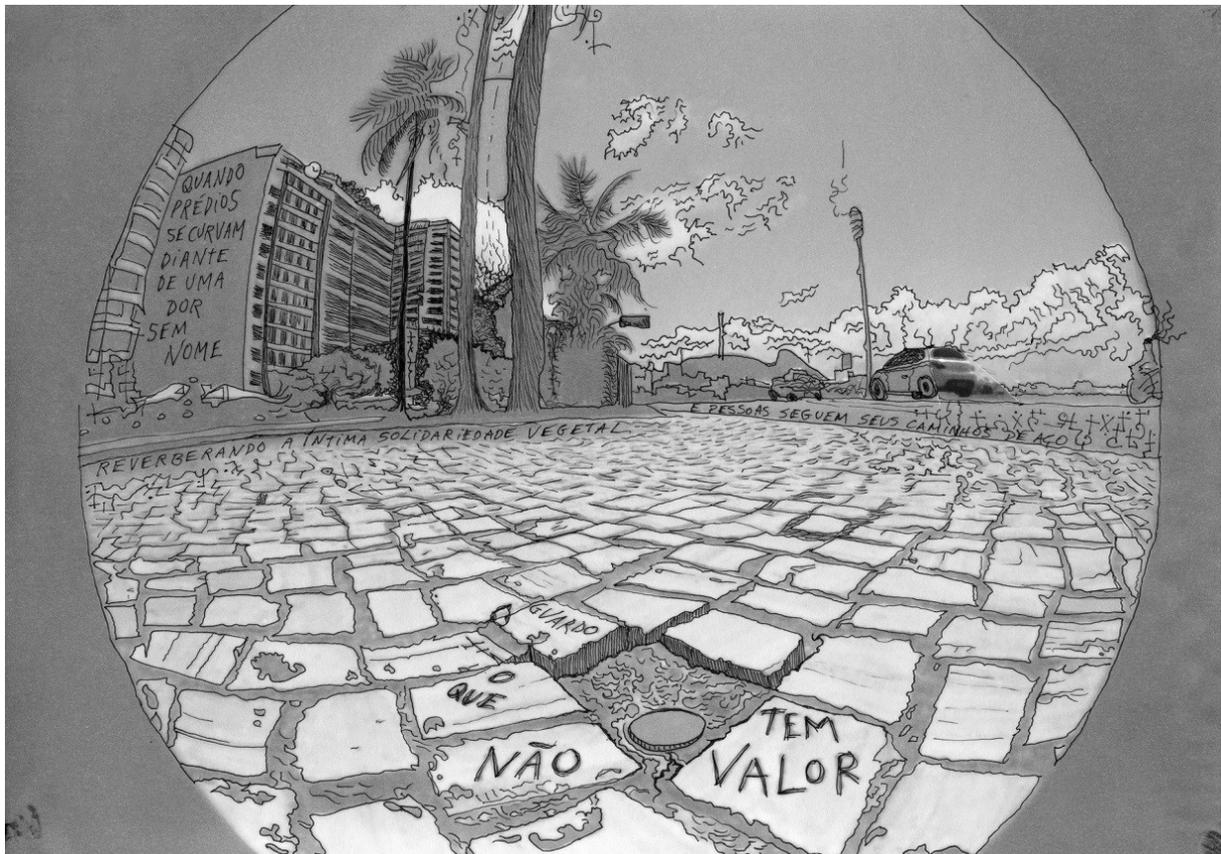


Fig. 2 – Detail of *The Street from Within – I keep what has no value*. 2013.

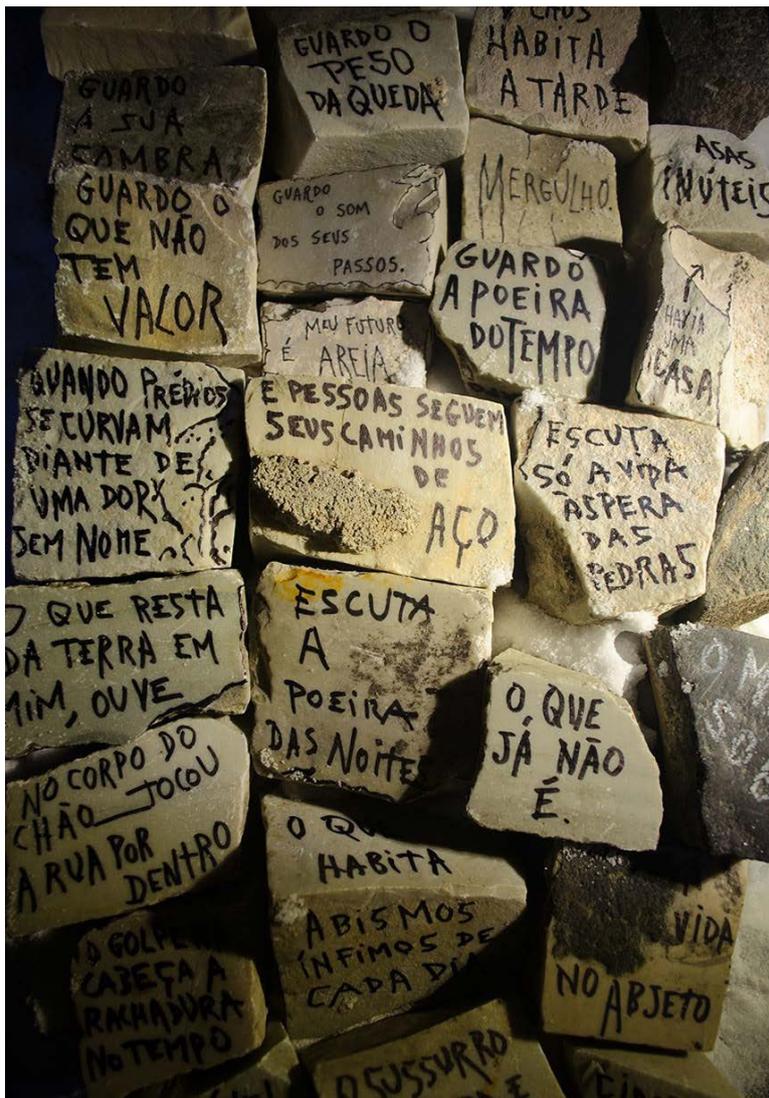


Fig. 3 – Detail of a version of *A Bundle of Words*, 2016.

Richard Long, in his wanderings, picks up some material items from the paths he traces – such as Alpine stones – and later shows them in exhibitions as silent and solid witnesses to his experience. In addition to any maps and photographs, with titles and captions providing brief data and descriptions of the walk, such as "*Dartmoor Riverbeds – A Four Day Walk Along all Riverbeds Within a Circle in Dartmoor, Devon, England, 1978,*" these "pieces of the pathway" help restore some of the experience. According to Gilles Tiberghien, these collected traces "represent a subtle system of equivalence itself that moves us mentally in a path; the lines and circles arranged in museums and galleries also attract us to walk, physically, recapitulating something of these gestures that formed them." (in Davila et al 2000, p.246). In *Walking Stones*, Long shifts stones from one point to another in

his walk, considering them “agents of change.” To complete *A Line of 33 Stones A Walk of 33 days*, Richard Long keeps one small stone for each day of a 1,030-mile walk. About these displacements, the artist states:

The world is continually in geological movement. Continental drift happens at the same rate that our fingernails grow, and parts of Great Britain have risen from the South Atlantic. Nothing in the landscape is fixed; nothing has its “eternal” place. Stones are always moving along rivers and glaciers, being thrown out of volcanoes or clattering down mountains. Those works in which I move stones around are just another part of this continuum. (Long, 2007, p.46).

Hamish Fulton, who summarizes his practice with the statement “No walk, no work,” does not move or remove anything from the pathways he goes along. A photo, some phrases that add other layers to the image (such as “Seven days without talking”), a brief roadmap of the key points of his journey, and perhaps altitude and temperature are all we get from his long itineraries through lonely places. He is not interested in any objects, but in gestures, in attitudes. The artist states that what he does is not *land art*, that he does not intend to rearrange the world and that his art is one thing and nature is something else – and it must be respected. He believes that *land art* does not respect this and tries to transform nature – and that his work seeks to transform itself. (Fulton, 2014, p. 53). He states that one may walk through a landscape without even taking a photograph or writing a word – and still be an artist. (Fulton apud Tiberghien, in Davila et al, 2000, p. 246).

The images that record Fulton’s journeys are somewhat neutral, sober, devoid of exuberance, evoking subtle events, the passage of time, references to sounds, textures, breezes, events and minor sensations; while Helio Oiticica, in his “ambulatory delusions,” sought the exaltations of the “super-sensorial,” Fulton seems to desire the experience and provocation of something “infra-sensorial.” The artist intends to show nature as he believes it should be: intact, without effects artificially obtained from the sublime; nature knows no emotions or morality, there is no desire to impose any interpretations, hence the neutrality of its images. Moreover, Fulton says that “walking creates a receptiveness to the landscape” (Fulton, 2014, p.54). Gilles Tiberghien observes that everything is about a “deeply ethical” attitude toward the “arts of existence” and to the “techniques of the self” conceptualized by Foucault, transforming one’s own life into a work of art according to certain ethical, aesthetic and stylistic values (Tiberghien, in Davila et al, 2000, p. 248).

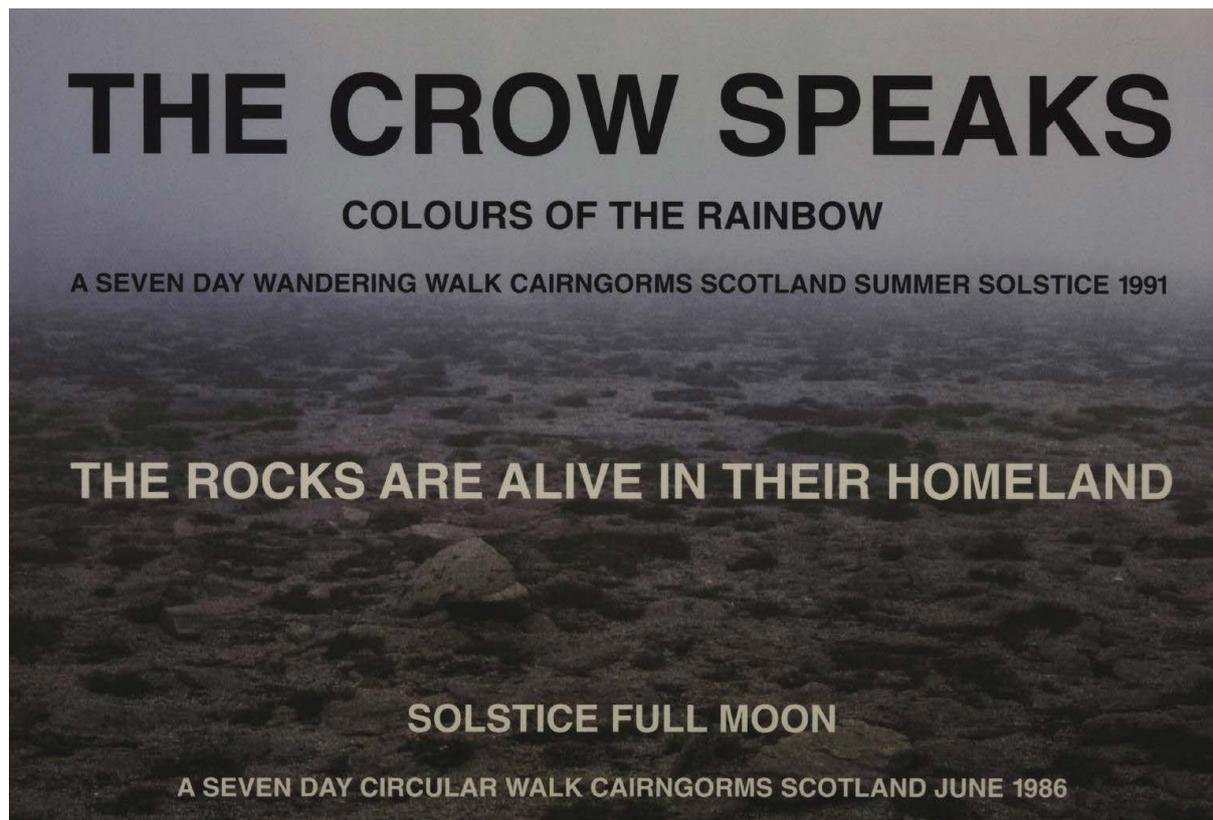


Fig. 4 – Hamish Fulton, *The Crow Speaks*, 1991.

### **Borders, Nomadisms, Migrations (and Confinements)**

Francis Alÿs, a Belgian living in Mexico, is a wandering artist, an expert collector who exercises poetic nomadism under various forms and pretexts, approaching the most diverse issues. In *Tourist* (1994), he was a professional among workers who offer their services in the streets of Mexico City; he walked in *Magnetic Shoes* (1994) that served as a collector of garbage and metal shavings to incorporate parts of the city; and, walking with a leaking can of paint, he painted a line of green spatter to visually draw *The Green Line* (2004) in Jerusalem. Alÿs thus moves from the humor with which he can face his work as a nomadic artist to the political seriousness of issues such as borders in the Middle East (Godfrey et al, 2010). The artist believes that "poetic acts, in extreme contexts and political situations, can lead to a distanced reading of an extremely present situation, generating a type of mediation" (Alÿs apud Speer, in Buffet, 2012, p. 157).

In *The Loop* (1997), Alÿs proposed to make the journey from Tijuana, Mexico, to neighboring San Diego, in the United States, without going through the troublesome immigration border. He established a circular route via the Pacific Ocean, stopping in 15 cities in a 29-day journey passing through Central America, South America, Oceania, Asia, Alaska. Leaving from Mexico, he went through Panama, Santiago, Auckland, Sydney, Singapore, Bangkok, Rangoon, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Seoul, Anchorage, Vancouver and Los Angeles, and finally arrived in San Diego (Davila, 2002, p. 19). After completing this absurd itinerary, the artist questioned the inequality that lives at the borders and, consequently, the supposed "nomadic freedom": who has this freedom? Is freedom of movement widespread? Is the "right to come and go" the same for everyone? Obviously not. To cross the same imaginary line, a border often established by war, by a violent imposition, and by economic dominance, it is enough to be on opposite sides to have radically different situations. Nationality, skin color, ethnicity, gender, social class: each of these markers will weigh as one more difference when crossing a border. A white American and an indigenous Mexican will face absolutely unequal situations before the same border line instituted by the power.

Thus, when one praises nomadism, when one speaks of how mobility has become a planetary social rule, and the "nomadic artist" is a virtually iconic figure in today's art, one must always ask, 'Who is entitled to all these various relatively

*free* transits and movements? Which people and which artists can actually be part of all this emancipating nomadism?’ In fact, this type of libertarian mobility can only be exercised by very few, based on the aforementioned markers. And the ones with the greatest freedom of movement are the typical European or American white men in a comfortable economic situation. Those are the individuals with easy access to the most diverse means and borders, who hardly arouse suspicion at customs, who are rarely stopped by the police, who are less subject to violence; who travel rather than take refuge. What kinds of transits do other people experience, what obstacles, risks, and vicissitudes do they find in their ways?

When addressing mobility and nomadism issues, one must think about how this works for people from different origins in diverse regions of the world, not just for the “white European man,” which in a “universal assumption” is the “human” considered by traditional “humanism.” An Afghan woman does not have the same possibilities of moving around as an Afghan man or a white French woman, who in turn can move more easily than another Arab-French woman, just as a blond American man and a black American man are not seen in a similar way in their transits – or incarcerations.

Based on the work conducted by artist and storyteller Juliana Franklin with children and teenagers in Favela da Maré and Complexo do Alemão (ghetto neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro), I learned that many of them had never left the ghetto, had never seen anything different from that environment, and that the farthest and most beautiful place some of the kids had visited was Avenida Atlântica, in Copacabana, only a few kilometers away in the same city. It was difficult for these children and teenagers to dream and imagine something different for their lives because they had never experienced anything different, there was no reference beyond what they saw on TV as an unattainable fiction.

In fact, when we consider the majority of the population, we live on a planet with violent borders, obstacles, closures, stagnant lives trapped in ghettos, suburbs and slums, forced transits, castaways and refugees who find less and less shelter. Mathieu Pernot addresses many of these issues in his work: nomadism, incarceration, migration, precarious shelters. In *Les Migrants* (2010), he photographs migrants and refugees sleeping in the streets and parks of France, wrapped in blankets and rags on the floor or park benches, faceless and vulnerable, almost like corpses, ghosts or

things. Pernot makes visible something in these “invisible ones.” In *Promenades and Panoptique* (2001 – 2002), Pernot photographs, in greyish black and white, spaces designed for walks and sunbathing inside prisons.

Georges Didi-Huberman notes, in the letter-like text that opens the catalog of Pernot’s exhibition in Jeu de Paume: “Our gaze, confronted by this image, seems to have no way out. The ‘exercise yard’ is no more than a slightly bigger cell or cage.” Nonetheless, as the author notes, some elements suggest escape routes, the possibility to “get out of the gray,” out of this dead color that prevails in these environments: the footballs on a fence seem to “scoff at all of this imposed immobility;” and the word “revolution” is engraved on the wall, “challenging the subservience to the prison rules.” Finally, there is something alive in a photograph, something that sprouts and grows through the breaches of the property. In the picture, these infiltrating plants are as gray as everything else: “but we know that they come out of the gray of the ground as a possibility of natural life, of obstinate life breathing in the sunlight.” (Didi-Huberman in Pernot, 2014, pp. 6-7). The authorities at the criminal facilities did not allow Pernot to photograph the prisoners: what we see of their existence, their humanity and their bodies are the traces they leave, the traces engraved on the walls. According to the artist himself:

What counts in the photos is what we do not see, what remains on the outside of the image... But if the images do not show us detainees directly, they record the visible signs, the clues left by those we do not see. The walls of the exercise yards are thus dotted with graffiti, drawings and messages written by the detainees. They are genuine sensitive surfaces, spaces of inscription allowing them to lay down their presence here, to record the fact that one day they passed through. To cut a few words into the stone or the concrete is an act that is very close to photographic recording: it is a way of leaving a trace, of saying that ‘this happened’ or ‘I was there’. Often, moreover, the detainees inscribe a name, a date or a place as though they wished to write the caption for a photograph that would never be created.” (Pernot, 2014, pp. 11-12).

As he could not photograph the prisoners, Pernot created *Les Hurlleurs* (The Shouters, 2001-2004), another series in which he photographed detainees’ relatives outside the prisons, in the act of a cry, a call: the sound crosses borders, invades forbidden spaces, establishes contact in the distance. Shouting is also a way of “resisting the violence of the confinement to which they are also subjected” (Didi-Huberman in Pernot 2014, p.16). One of those shouters, Jonathan, was a child who also appears in other series by Pernot, in which he follows groups of gypsies, in works that generate

intricate questionings and problematizations, such as *Un Camp Pour Les Bohémiens* (1998-2006). In addition to making photographic records and route maps, Pernot uses controversial photographic government files put together for the purpose of classifying, identifying and controlling these people. This shows that, as opposed to the intellectual praise of liberating nomadism, the reality faced by the gypsies was and is quite different: always marginalized, studied as objects by the racist science of the 19th century, relegated to concentration camps, persecuted, expelled, imprisoned, murdered. It is the people who leave no tracks, as in Brecht's poem <sup>7</sup>; "where the sedentary peoples file, preserve and display their story, gypsies bury, burn, and make the traces of their passage disappear. The silence of the gypsies is one of the figures of this non-inscription." (Pernot 2014, p.27). This characteristic of invisibility and silence that the gypsy people seek turns the work with files, by itself, something paradoxical; but Pernot works with this paradox as if everyone were "shouters", as if he joins that cry, building a "resonance box" to take him further, to where the praise of nomadism so often forgets the real migrants. Jonathan, a nomadic child in 1995 and a shouter calling a relative in a prison in 2001, became a prisoner in 2013, arrested for committing a robbery. As Didi-Huberman says:

Gypsies cross borders on foot and on the way they steal a few pounds of copper from a European railroad, while businessmen cross borders as well, but by plane, for the purpose of buying, somewhere in Africa, one or two copper mines. Migrants drown in the sea in Lampedusa, disguised as tourists going to Malta, Djerba or the Ionian Islands... Migrants migrate to something better – to escape a country at war, to get a job and to eat properly – or something worse – wandering endlessly through Europe, which, while seeking vigilance and a benevolent discourse, rejects them everywhere or confines them to camps, preventing them from having any chance of obtaining the minimum conditions for a decent life. (In Pernot, p. 28).

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<sup>7</sup> The final part of "Cover Your Tracks," by Berthold Brecht, in "Reader for City dwellers": "...Eat the meat that's there. Don't stint yourself / Go into any house when it rains, sit on any chair that is in it / But don't sit long. And don't forget your hat / I tell you: / Cover your tracks! / Whatever you say, don't say it twice/ If you find your ideas in anyone else, disown them / The man who hasn't signed anything, who has left no Picture/ Who was not there, who said nothing / How can they catch him? / Cover your tracks! / See when you come to think of dying / That no gravestone stands and betrays where you lie / With a clear inscription to denounce you/ And the year of your death to give you away / Once again: / Cover your tracks! / (That is what they taught me.)"

What matters most in this issue is that these people who are not the “white man” increasingly experience the freedom of movement and of flows, that they be able to emancipate themselves through aesthetic, nomadic and sensitized experiences, and that they can recognize themselves and be recognized by others at the same level of humanity as the “white man.”



Fig. 5 – Mathieu Pernot’s photographs from the *Un Camp Pour Les Bohémiens* series, 1998-2006.

### **Cut-up Tragedy: Occupying Spaces in a Nomadic Project-Process**

In my own experience of city walks following sounds and conversations, broken messages written on the walls, traces and rough edges left on surfaces, time and again I experienced prohibitions, dangerous places and forbidden areas; often ignoring and trespassing boundaries, *Cut-up Tragedy*, a new series, emerged.<sup>8</sup>

The streets of each city speak not only through the voices of its people and the noises of its transits and movements, but also through the writings on its walls, signs and sidewalks, the lived and watched scenes, the history marked on or erased from its architecture and urbanism, the subtext underlying its habits and codes of coexistence. Since I was a child, I have imagined finding answers to the things I wonder about when I happen to see some writings in the city, on the way to some place, until this also became a method to make up texts, songs, images. By exploring the richness of each place – and the differences, similarities and dissonances between places – every corner, wall, building, empty lot and every part of town offers a multitude of poetic (and political) possibilities.

Based on my observations and experience from walking through different neighborhoods and cities, in 2015, I developed the “cut-up tragedy” as a process and a project applicable to several urban contexts. The work began with strolls through New York in 2014 – when I was performing *NYC Ghosts and Voices*<sup>9</sup> – especially in southeastern Manhattan and across parts of Brooklyn, especially in areas of Latin American immigration. The project has a connection with this environment from which it emerged, with street art in the metropolis, with punk and hip-hop, with the ghettos. Beatnik, Dadaist and surrealist references are shown in the term “cut-up” itself as it originates from Tristan Tzara’s “How to Make a Dadaist Poem” created with random excerpts by “pulling words out of a hat,” a method that was later revisited by Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs. Gysin rediscovered the method, as might be expected, by chance. Using newspaper layers to protect a table when he was cutting

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<sup>8</sup> The final part of this article, on the Cut-up Tragedy project, had a preliminary short version published in *Linda NME*, an independent, non-indexed online magazine about sound and music research.

<sup>9</sup> A 31-minute composition made from sound excerpts relating to the memory of New York City, focusing especially on Lenni Lenape, a native Indian tribe that spoke Munsee, an endangered language; the composition serves as a sound guide to walk the listener through the southeast of the island. The first collective walk took place in the context of “Convergence 2014,” an event held by the Hemispheric Institute with the support of Columbia University and NYU.

paper, he ended up “cutting up” random poems. Gysin and Burroughs used variations of this technique, also on audio, to edit tape recordings. Burroughs also considered cut-ups some sort of divination: “When you cut into the present the future leaks out.” The writer also investigated the viral effects of languages, images and sounds, especially infrasounds, “to cause riots” (Goodman 2010, 24). The influence of these processes extends into music to this day, from the experimental and industrial fields of the late 1970s, with Laurie Anderson, Cabaret Voltaire and Throbbing Gristle, to more popular artists, such as Bob Dylan and David Bowie.



Fig. 6 – William Burroughs, ‘Danger Series’ (Naked Lunch series), photographed by Brion Gysin outside Théâtre Odeon, Paris, 1959.

*Cut-up Tragedy* is a multiple nomad process-project that experiments, transforms, and generates sound materials, images, words, and fragment amalgamations. It depends on these free walks already described, in a state of increasing “unruling of the senses,” the urban text as an extension and trace of hands that tattoo the cities, the vestiges of bodies that pass by, cuts in space-time, the experience of a tragic time. It is about paths between worlds, spaces expanded by temporal and phantasmal layers of memory and forgetfulness, places between the past, the moment and future possibilities, passages between history and fiction, psychogeographic dives and micro-geo-political wrecks.

In *Atlântica*, similar processes are strongly linked to origins, to identity, to history, to a bond with specific places; in *Cartas de Terras Insondáveis*, these processes do not depend on my own bonds with and my questions about origins: they relate to experience, to listening to and researching the place, any place; but it takes a long time for the processes to deepen and mature. *Cut-up Tragedy* is the most nomadic,

fluid, urban, and deterritorialized process among the three processes-series: the pace here is fast and incisive, the depth is that of the skin of the cities, a fast and cinematographic cut of those who pass by, and yet seek to glimpse this destabilizing sparkle in the spaces and reap some traces left by other bodies.

The cut-up concept applies not only to the montage technique that delivers the language to new orders and disorders of chance; the cut-up also applies to the cuts that unforeseen synchronicities and chaotic discontinuities cause in the perception of what is real, concrete. A path is never the same path, a path is made up of many paths. The present is changed by the presence of other times.

This process involving strolls and cut-ups resulted in series of works with photographs, texts, contaminations between art in public places and art in galleries, books, musical compositions-performances. A microphone recorder, a photo camera, and a notebook are the initial tools, the means to amplify the experiments, collect some impressions, and collect the fragments that will make up the final works. Subsequently, I applied variations of the cut-up technique, collages and overlapping layers to different materials: field recordings, textual fragments read or heard on the streets and scenes witnessed in the strolls. The text found in one city is also moved to another: in sounds, in written and spoken words, in images, in noises. Posters made from photos and texts from one city are pasted into another. The music of one place is mixed with the music of another place, two environments create a third sound space, the fiction of a city made up of elements from other cities. Sound, visual and textual materials can be delivered in different ways at the end of each stage: videos, posters, a book, a musical album, a performance/concert, a mixture of all of this.

The musical composition-performance was accomplished on the basis of field recordings made in these walks and strolls. The recordings were edited, processed, and reprocessed to the point of generating drones and a wall of noise. The voice was improvised and processed live, by reading or singing in several languages and in secular glossolalia – often using automatic translations that generated curious errors and were then added to the original text. I gave voice to the mixture of textual fragments found in the streets, composing my own text with a few “borrowed” passages, and multiple and untraceable authorships. I also interfered with and tattooed surfaces with my text and with my voice. The voices blended with field

recordings of different cities. These recordings were altered and other layers were added live: voice improvisations through loopers and effects that can multiply a female voice into many voices – or make it a masculine, or even indefinable, voice. The text was composed, in part, using the cut-up technique applied to urban surfaces, put together with words found on walls, signs, newspapers, sidewalks. All the equipment was always portable, also to deliver a live musical performance: it fit into a backpack, in tune with the nomadic concept of the project. The texts were also often composed as poetic fables around a watched/heard/recorded/photographed brief scene, also referring to walkers of other times, as well as travelers and city designers: Baudelaire, the flâneur; Nietzsche; the wanderer and seer Rimbaud of *Illuminations*; Nerval; Benjamin and his *Passages*; Borges and Cortazar; João do Rio; Debord; Calvin's *Invisible Cities*; Kerouac; Burroughs and his *Interzones* and *Cities of the Red Night*.

Questions arise about the implications of these processes and why – among so many historical references to city walkers, poets and chroniclers – only men's names emerge initially. The exception applies precisely in relation to more recent practices involving soundwalks, recording technologies, and contemporary or underground art practices from the 1960s and 1970s onwards. When thinking about these exceptions, in addition to writer Rebecca Solnit, some very different examples may be mentioned: Hildegard Westerkemp, Yoko Ono, Janet Cardiff and names associated with the experimental, punk and no-wave New York scene, such as Laurie Anderson, Patti Smith and Lydia Lunch – among the most important references.

Before the rise of feminism and counterculture, women who took the city streets as one of their privileged spaces for experience and art making were not exactly a possibility. The beatnik movement of the 40s, 50s and 60s can be an interesting environment to observe, as it represents the outbreak of behaviors outside the traditionally imposed "feminine" standard desiring to take the streets, the roads, and freedom. There were exceptions among Beatnik women, such as Diane Di Prima, Anne Waldman and LuAnne Henderson, who managed to lead relatively free lives, though they never had the same opportunities and the same prestige as their male counterparts. It is also important to note that, even in this environment, the impositions of a structurally misogynist society could prevail. Women were even

committed to institutions for the mentally ill, such as Elise Cowen. As mentioned by Gregory Corso, quoted by Cláudio Willer in *Geração Beat*:

There were women, they were there, I knew them, their families put them in institutions, they were given electric shock. In the '50s if you were male you could be a rebel, but if you were female your families had you locked up. There were cases, I knew them, someday someone will write about them. (Corso apud Willer, 2009)

For a woman to make the streets a theme and a suitable territory for intense experiences and for artistic and writing practices was closely related to madness. Even today, a woman is often blamed when assaulted or raped in the streets, "What was she doing in that place, at that time, in those clothes?" She could be coming back from her children's school at noon, covered from head to toe, and yet her mere walking in the streets could trigger some morbid, misogynist suspicion. The veiled message, the subtext of the patriarchal structure is: "the streets were not made for women, the public space does not belong to them, women's bodies and voices should neither appear nor have meaning regardless of their roles in relation to men, women belong at home, their place is the private, domestic, controlled, restricted space." This domestic space is considered lesser: designed and organized to be depoliticized, placed outside the scope of social-related decisions and of cultural engagement. If we consider other contemporary cultures, such as those in Muslim countries, the respectful space reserved for women is still almost exclusively the household.

I WANT TO DRESS AND GO OUT

I want to dress and go out and board a bus pick up a check and file an unemployment claim.

Body, why that funny feeling – dread

Of what –

Death? Death so often desired?

"Death of mind" – peace – not the dissolution into top soil." (Cowen, in revistacontemporartes.com.br, 2014)

The desire to "dress and go out and board a bus" is much less prosaically accomplished without undesirable consequences by a woman than by a man. The experience of freely wandering in the cities and writing their impressions about it is usually enjoyed mostly by men because the circulation of women has historically been regulated, at different levels limited to "safe" and "domestic" spaces. In fact, it could be dangerous to walk alone in the cities, especially at night, just as it could

be dangerous to live with a family aggressor. Where is the threat, in the space or in the aggressor? Why is the space regulated and not the aggressor?

What is meant to be regulated, controlled, and subjected is, once again, the female body and the breadth of women's experience and their expression in the context of public space and society. The question of gender-related mobility is also a political issue. The work of Shirin Neshat and the analysis of Ferzaneh Milani were critical for me to think about what is happening in the East or the West, in a big city or in the countryside, or in the open sea:

Gendered allocation of space, however, has a sweeping relevance and the desire to limit women's space is not peculiar to one culture or another. Sanctified by notions of beauty, desirability, safety, morality, or religion, many cultures have restricted women's mobility." (Milani in Neshat, 2001, p.9).

The transit of female bodies has been historically controlled, regulated, forced, restrained and subjected to male desires, wills, delusions of possession, and fears. Being a woman and daily exercising the experience of freely moving through public spaces may seem simple and prosaic, but it is indeed an achievement to be preserved and reaffirmed. To walk freely through the city is also to challenge the notions of the danger being in certain places, of prohibited zones, of spaces being regulated for the sake of "security" – it is to trespass boundaries, to challenge the spatial allocation defined by gender, it is to generate ideas and materials from the experience of this challenge. The city also allows loopholes, escape routes, detours, escapes and hideouts.

The name *Cut-up Tragedy* was initially conceived to include a double meaning, i.e., to focus on a tragic-Dionysiac-Nietzschean life experience including the influence/use of cut-up techniques, and a second movement of an acidic paradoxical mockery, as opposed to the often forced and exhibitionist lightness that I notice in the vulgarization of so-called stand-up comedy, which may well reflect a desperate desire for euphoric happiness and total well-being, the inability to actually face the ill-being our society faces. *Cut-up Tragedy* says: "All this joy staged under the spotlights does not amuse me. The compulsive medication for ill-being does not amuse me. The fact that men still have so many more liberties than women in practice do not does not amuse me. So I look for other amusements, other diverting joys." However, this process-project-name, in the course of the experiments, was given a different weight, less cerebral and ironic, more visceral: in the concrete, bodily,

physical relationship, with the possibility of the cut and the tragic; and establishing a connection with the critical moment of women in the beatnik movement, between the desire-experience of an “outside” and the limitation of movements, between the accomplishment of transgression and the erasing of their identities; in the vital need to exist, in freedom, at every moment.

The text that follows, interspersed with some of the images that generated it, is one of those passages based on graffiti, signs, posters, sounds, free associations, dreams and scenes in different cities – in the centers and suburbs of Rio de Janeiro, New York, Paris, Barcelona and São Paulo.

I keep what has no value  
But we’ve always been here  
Clinging to the bowels of mutual sidewalks  
Opaque, hearing every day the noise that escapes  
Over there  
In this forgotten void, pores on the wall, traces of paint, roughness  
and smoke  
Our skin rock paper and scissors – smile, you are being  
Breathing is not that easy  
Hanging teddy bear in gray  
They scream out there, “More Peace!” in beautiful colors  
Happiness we’re AssKed  
But I was shot by Billy Kidd  
So many times I can’t even remember  
The sooner you learn to shoot  
and die, the better



Fig. 7 – Photograph of the *Cut-up Tragedy* series-project, 2014.

Bang Bang  
Shot by security video surveillance  
XX Ray eyes  
To the moon



Fig. 8 and 9 – Photographs of the *Cut-up Tragedy* series-project, 2014.

www.go.org.on    Gorgona  
there is a thread that ties me to the night  
To the moon



Fig. 10 and 11 – Photographs of the *Cut-up Tragedy* series-project, 2014.

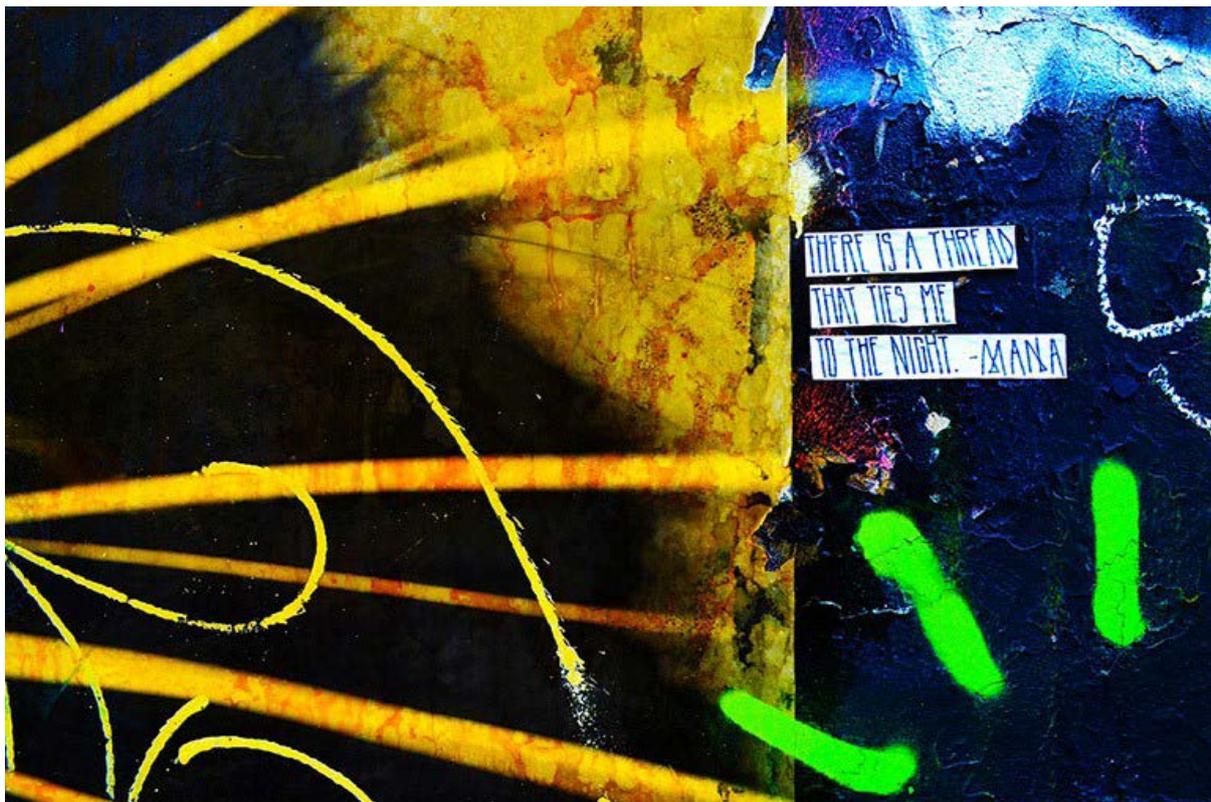


Fig. 12 – Photograph of the *Cut-up Tragedy* series-project, 2014.

Texts and images like these are part of the book *Cut-up Tragedy – 1*, initially an e-book-zine, but also designed to be printed. From the first *Cut-up Tragedy* experiences published along with some of the early recordings of *Atlantica* emerged the first sound-musical composition of the project: *Occe Anna Tlant X-Cities*, lasting about 19 minutes, was also part of the sound attachments.

Some of these photographs and texts were at *Déambulations Poétiques*, a collaborative exhibition with Isabel da Cunha and Ana Procopiak at the Curry-Vavart collective's CP5 gallery in Paris in 2015. In the show, we tried to create an ambulation from our own walks, mixing up spaces, times, places, authorships. Isabel was born in Brazil's countryside but has lived in different places of the planet, such as Russia and the Middle East, having experienced severe limitations in the public space; Ana photographed in Curitiba, her own city; and I photographed in these wanders and trips, from my hometown Rio de Janeiro to places I got to know for the first time then. On that occasion I also delivered the first sound performance of the project, when the stage was darkened, and I was hiding behind the audience, in the backstage, behind the sound deck. The sound itself (loud and noisy, corporeal), the animosities it had with the audience, and the spaces and images it could generate

were performance per se – it was my voice as the body, the body of sound and the bodies of the listeners.

Shortly thereafter some of these images and texts were in *Braises d’Aujourd’hui*, another exhibition at Confluences in Paris. There were six photographs reproduced several times and printed as stickers in different size and color versions: color, black and white in high contrast, black and red. They were placed all around the gallery, including normally “unusable” places – over portals, in the bar, dialoguing with the architectural space in a manner similar to the writings of the streets. They also related aesthetically to the work of another artist, Brice Maré, who makes illustrations with adhesive tape that interact with the architecture and transform the perspective of spaces. The purpose of the exhibition was to outline dialogues subject to improvisations between artists from Brazil and Europe.



Fig. 13 – Documentation of the *Cut-up Tragedy* performance at the opening of the exhibition *Déambulations Poétiques* held at CP5/Le Shakirail/Curry-Vavart. Photo by Isabel da Cunha, Paris, 2015.

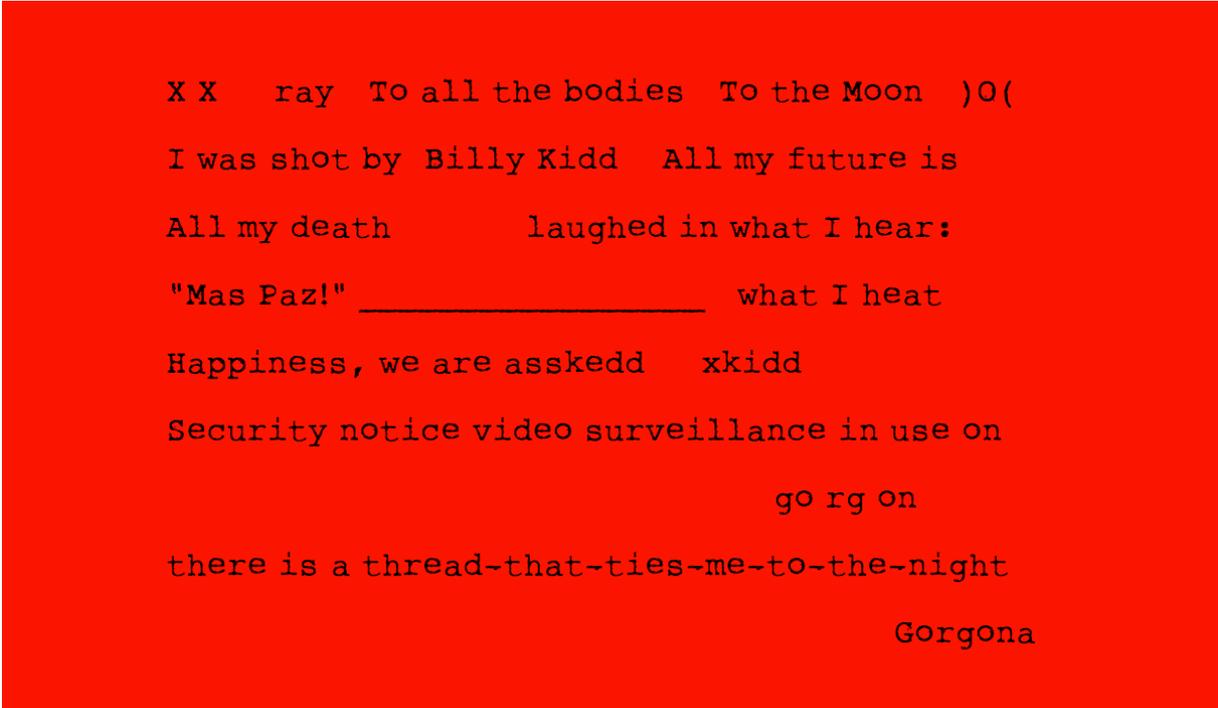


Fig. 14 – Documentation of the exhibition *Braises d’Aujourd’hui* held at Confluences, Paris, 2015.

Based on these images, texts and sounds, what is proposed is to make a series of books/albums, as well as developments in public and private spaces. One of these planned developments is to produce wheatpaste posters and to move images and texts seen on the walls of one city to several other cities. This tactic of moving through different spaces using posters can also be applied to images from other works, such as *Um Fardo de Palavras*, in which poetic passages written on the tiled Portuguese pavement of Copacabana may perhaps illustrate walls, rooftops and sidewalks of Lisbon.

*Cut-up Tragedy* addresses displacements in public spaces and the idea of a language that might *disturb*, as sound waves are a disturbance. It seeks language as a cut, an opening, a virus, a weapon – to transform what destroys us into something that enlivens us. At a more abstract level, as Didier Girard says of Burroughs’s work, “Writing is the random juxtaposition of words to use, abuse and exhaust the manipulating power of language, when it becomes civilized and ‘operational’ ” (Girard in Ferraz and Baron, 2012, p. 160). Or, as put in a more corporeal fashion by Bell Hooks in her “Yearning”:

Dare I speak to you in a language that will move beyond the boundaries of domination – a language, that will not bind you, fence you in, or hold you? [...] Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance. Language is also a place of struggle. [...] For me this space of radical openness is a margin – a profound edge. Locating oneself there is difficult. It is not a safe place. One is always at risk. One needs a community of resistance. (Loc. 2643)



X X ray To all the bodies To the Moon )O(  
 I was shot by Billy Kidd All my future is  
 All my death laughed in what I hear:  
 "Mas Paz!" \_\_\_\_\_ what I heat  
 Happiness, we are asskedd xkidd  
 Security notice video surveillance in use on  
 go rg on  
 there is a thread-that-ties-me-to-the-night  
 Gorgona

Fig. 15 – Sticker of the *Cut-up Tragedy* series-project, 2015.

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