State of readiness: performative research and collaboration in the interartistic creative processes in *Converse*

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Abstract
This article focuses on the processes of collaborative interartistic creation of the work *Converse*, for a performer, piano and electronics/video in real time, with two video projections. There is a scarcity of works addressing collaborative artistic creative processes that extend beyond personal and/or autoethnographic reports. We seek to unveil a methodological path that considers the overlap between theories and practices – according to Lima's formulation. This collaborative approach to performative research – according to Haseman, Fernandes, Bacon and Midgelow – is mediated by a concept from a cultural context: Capoeira Regional.

Keywords: Performative Research. Collaboration. Creative Processes. State of Readiness. Capoeira Regional.

1 Introduction

This article focuses on collaborative interartistic creation, taking performative research as a methodological horizon. The creative process took as its starting point the concept of the State of Readiness, in the context of Capoeira Regional at *Fundação Mestre Bimba*. The context itself, as a game environment, presents several collaborative modes for the participants to explore. We intend, then, to develop a collaborative approach to performative research, mediated by a concept from a cultural context.

This is an effort that seeks, beyond the dimension of the joint performative artistic work, to provoke and question issues of hierarchy and subordination of art and culture, showing capoeira as a dynamic context, capable of transcending the role of mere inspiration (SFOGGIA, 2019). This is a position that brings cultural studies – in this case, through capoeira – to the forefront of academic research that delves into the process of experiencing the

manifestation. It does not discuss the history or appropriate materials, instead, it seeks to demonstrate its ability to open up maintenance strategies over time, considering that these remain continuously relevant over the years. Talking about culture is very relevant, especially if we consider that it is a fundamental strategy for the permanence and perpetuation of the manifestations of popular culture: oral transmission. We understand that this is an aspect that has already been explored and promoted by cultural researchers. What we propose here is to bring Capoeira Regional as a primary context for interartistic creation, based on its cosmology.

As we have already mentioned in previous texts (CARDASSI; BERTISSOLO, 2020, p. 8), recent works on collaboration have focused on personal and/or autoethnographic reports. We believe that, given the unique character of each artistic process, especially in the context of interartistic collaboration, this type of testimony is beneficial. However, it is necessary that we also seek methodological paths, in the search for an overlap between theories and practices in creative processes, in order to formulate questions and concepts that support and allow a common horizon of research. This perspective is contemplated in the performative research path, discussed here, and in the context of the compositionality formulated by Paulo Costa Lima (2012, 2020).

This article has as its context the PhD research of Sfoggia (2019), carried out in the Graduate Program of Multidisciplinary Studies in Culture and Society at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA). This research focused on creative processes in dance from field experience within the complex network of knowledge of Capoeira Regional, especially with regard to dimension of movement, leading to the identification of concepts that emerged from the multidimensionality of the experience itself. It included observation and analysis – as well as the interweaving of this with a dive into different fields of literature, capable of establishing a dialogue with the questions built there, aiming at the invention of paths and possibilities (theoretical and practical) for the creation and performance of new artistic experiences.

We seek to discuss the methodological path that culminated in the creation of an interartistic work. The creative process in question was developed by three artists from different backgrounds. A performer, who also works in the arts of photography and video (dance); a composer who also works in the development of strategies for processing electronics and video in real time; and a pianist with extensive experience in collaborative and multimedia processes. The work developed was *Converse*, for a performer, piano and electronics/video in real time, with two video projections.

The article is divided into three parts, in addition to this introduction and the final considerations. First, we discuss the perspective of performative research and collaboration in creative processes. Then, we discuss the concept of the State of Readiness, which provided the foundational concept for the work *Converse*. Finally, we approach creative processes in light of the notion of collaboration in performative research.

2 Performative research and collaboration

In general terms, performative research is a methodological trend that proposes a dissolution of boundaries between research, creation and realization, as has been pointed out by authors such as Haseman (2006, 2015), Bacon and Midgelow (2014, 2015), and Fernandes (2006, 2013, 2014, 2015b, 2018, 2015a). Hence, the creative act – in our case, in arts – is itself the research. Collaboration is associated with this idea, as a dissolution of borders, and in the case of collaborative composition, between the instances of the composer(s) and performer(s). Thus, creation in art can be research and is carried out collaboratively by everyone involved in the action.

For Haseman (2015, p. 41), the idea of performative research is realized when we consider that we are facing a crucial moment in the development of research, where the established methodologies of qualitative and quantitative research fit what is legitimate and acceptable, but are not able to satisfy the needs of an increasing number of researchers guided by practice. There is a need for new ways of understanding the research process that approaches complexity not as part of a research, but as a central part of the process. In this case, (traditional) writing about research is the way to operate. This demand has been addressed by artists/researchers in the creative community under different guises, however, what emerges unanimously in the discourses is the fact that research-guided-by-practice is intrinsically empirical, becoming concrete while it is carried out.

Performative research also goes beyond artistic research, with regard to the role of the work of art (or the approached practice) in the process. It is a very delicate frontier to perceive – however, fundamental – because it changes the impact of the practice's existence through the act of researching. Fernandes (2013, p. 25) clarifies that, in the artistic field, all research related to practice is artistic, but not all artistic practice is research. This is because it is not a matter of using/reading/studying/etc already existing practice(s) as if it were research. It is neither a research project based on reflection on practice, nor a research process that necessarily seeks to generate choreography as a result. In performative research there is such a close association between research, creation and realization that they all become one: there is no creation and realization without research. In fact, it is in practice that the proposed knowledge takes place.

This perspective of understanding is related to the theory and practice of composing proposed by Paulo Lima (2012, 2020) who deals with compositionality as something inseparable between theory and practice, stating that "strictly speaking, there are no compositional practices. It does not make sense to represent composing as if the theory were outside" (LIMA, 2012, p. 15). In this sense, compositionality enables the invention of worlds from the interpenetration between theory and practice (LIMA, 2012, p. 15) placing composition

(in the musical case) as a critical interpretation of the world (LIMA, 2012, p. 25). From this perspective, composing (music) is researching.

The perception and understanding of this possibility can reveal a false impression of immobility interpreted as fragility, yet which precisely reveals the complexity built and healed by the process that becomes methodology while it is being done. The questions and hypotheses exist more as a creative impetus than determinants, and pervade endless exchanges and movements. This instability is precisely what makes performative research rich and necessary. These questions highlight the inevitable comparison with the research possibilities widely practiced in the capoeira circle as State of Readiness.

In quantitative and qualitative research, the project needs to flow from a central research question or problem statement, or (in substantiated theory) from the experiences and understandings of the population being researched. The importance of identifying "the problem" or "the question" is evident in different instances through which participants are invited to provide a clear statement of the problem, with goals, objectives and so many other research questions to be answered. These requirements constitute problem-guided research and can be met through both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

However, many practice-guided researchers do not start research projects with awareness of "a problem". In fact, they can be driven by what is best described as "an enthusiasm for practice": something that is exciting, something that can challenge rules, or, in fact, something that can only be made possible with what new technologies or networks may allow (but they can't be sure). Practice-guided researchers build empirical starting points from which practice follows. They tend to "dive in," to start practicing to see what emerges. They recognize that what emerges is individualistic and idiosyncratic. This does not mean that these researchers work without major agendas or emancipatory aspirations, but they avoid the limitations of correcting small problems and rigid methodological requirements in the first moment of a project (HASEMAN, 2015, p. 44).

It is precisely from this initial enthusiasm, possible in this performance proposal, that collaboration is strengthened. This is because, proposing to balance the wishes of several artists in a single research project (or work) is to be open to the complexity of the process from different perspectives. To work collaboratively is to organize the empirical processes of those involved in a way that is coherent and unified.

Collaborative processes such as these – in which artists share in development of a creative path, seeking, together, to equalize their individualities in search of cohesion and coherence – reinforce the distributed character of creativity. A concept proposed by Clark and Doffman (2017), distributed creativity refers to the fact that every artistic process brings in its essence a creative complex, distributed among the participants in a horizontal way. Although the concept was proposed in the area of Music, in order to question the notorious distinction

that existed between composers and performers in the music of European tradition of the 19th and 20th centuries, distributed creativity goes far beyond a quarrel between so-called theoretical and practical musicians, and can evidently extend to other interartistic contexts. However, when, in interartistic processes such as what we discuss in this text, we set out together to research guided by practice, it seems to us that talking about distributed creativity no longer makes any sense. After all, another type of creativity, which is not distributed, seems difficult, if not impossible to conceive. This is probably due to issues related to authorship and control of creative decisions, which in Music, unlike other artistic sub-areas, historically have been placed, exclusively, in the hands of composers. When we deal with creative processes in Dance, for example, the simple idea that an individual can be the sole holder of creativity, while the others reproduce it for the public, refraining from any creative impulse – although we recognize that this practice still frequently occurs – it seems obsolete, if not incongruous.

Perhaps a more democratic, horizontal and distributed understanding of creativity will find, in interartistic collaborations of performative research, its ideal substrate. After all, this is where individuals from different artistic experiences, when seeking to dialogue, propose, negotiate, question, experiment, and make choices together, define, step by step, and in a shared way, the path of each collaboration. While in Music the concept of distributed creativity may still sound reactionary, it comes as an alternative to the "backdrop of assumptions that continue to give priority to the text over performance, [and] that celebrate the self-effacement of the performer in interpreting those texts" (DOFFMAN; CALVIN, 2017, p. 4).

In this collaborative context, in which individuals from different areas of artistic experience share a project, building together the path of a creative process, they end up further deepening their knowledge and experience in their own areas. In fact, this technical deepening (vertical), simultaneous to the sharing of knowledge (horizontal) – a concept proposed by John-Steiner (2000) as a collaboration paradox – seems to be at the heart of collaborative performative research.

We understand this model as a more dynamic approach to making it collaborative, as we have already discussed in another recent text (CARDASSI; BERTISSOLO, 2020, p. 7). This perspective considers the need to accept the flexible nature of the collaborative creative process in the context of performative research.

It is important to clarify that we adopted the definition of Hayden and Windsor (2007, p. 33) for the interaction between composers and performers (extended here to interartistic creation processes), as directives, interactive or collaborative. According to the authors, the directive processes are those in which a musician commissions a musical work, or a dance group commissions a song, for example, without any level of interaction between those involved. In interactive processes, the composer (or the choreographer) gets more directly involved in the negotiations, sometimes carrying out what we have already mentioned in other

texts as consultant work or, as Fitch and Heyde (2007, p. 93) define, the performers open their "trick boxes". Finally, *de facto* collaborative processes are those in which decision-making instances are shared among the actors involved in the creation, so that everyone involved feels effectively included in the process.

Composer Luke Styles describes his relationship with performers from different areas of expertise (music, theater and dance) as follows:

> During the early stages of creating a work an interactive and collaborative relationship with performers (particularly musicians) takes place, where ideas are being suggested and I am making decisions about these ideas in a creative, often experimental environment. There are also occasions when I leave initial decisions about how to develop aspects of the music (such as dynamics, repetitions ortempi) up to the performers and then together with them (and other collaborators) we decide what should be set in the score. A score may therefore include the multiple musical decisions that have been reached as a process of collaboration and composing alone, but not every aspect of a final performance involving multiple non-musical elements.
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> During rehearsals the relationship with performers moves towards a directive and interactive one. There will still be a dialogue with performers about how to interpret and perform the work, as interpretation needs to come from the performer, but as a collaborator who can view the work outside of performing it, I am in a position to see and hear aspects of a performance that may be missed by the performers in the act of performance. It is therefore important to take on a directive relationship with performers at this stage in order to continue to shape the work that has been made collaboratively, ensuring that overall cohesion of the work remains, whilst performers are occupied with the act of performing. (STYLES, 2016, p. 10).

Styles' statements reinforce the dynamic and flexible character of a collaborative creative process, especially those of an interartistic nature. It is true that decisions are taken jointly, but this does not mean an absolute continuity of shared decisions throughout the process, nor does it invalidate the existence – or even the need – of moments where the various areas of expertise are manifested, individually, through contributions of a directive, vertical nature. The collaborative character of projects such as the one discussed in this article resides in the fact that even the decisions taken seemingly in a vertical manner are discussed, analyzed, questioned, reformulated, and in the end, accepted and developed by the participants. Only then can a creative process be truly collaborative, in which the intuitive and empirical processes of the artists involved are interwoven in such a way as to constitute an organic and coherent whole, where everyone feels represented.

3 State of readiness

In the process of collaborative creation, there is a friction of multidirectional knowledge from which something is built. It was in the search for that "something" that we set out to face the concept of State of Readiness. This choice also occurred due to the temporal demand for the realization of the doctoral research process of one of the artists (Lia Sfoggia) but also due

to the conceptual assignment to which this understanding refers: the idea of unpredictability in relation to the future, the fact that we never know what may happen in the next instant, the possibility of suffering an attack at any time, and the associated distrust. All of this provides the need to remain in a constant bodily state of readiness to act, and all of these aspects emanate presuppositions that artistically interest the artists involved.

In the context of capoeira, when entering the *roda* (circle), there is always a moment of pause. Even if we know the opponent, we can never predict how this game will start and how the person will recreate their moves and responses in the dialog of bodies within the *roda*. In this sense, the State of Readiness refers to the need for capoeiristas to remain alert and available, and how this behavior influences the way of moving. A good capoeirista, in addition to a wide range of moves, needs to know how to access this state, because if they do not know how and when to apply any moves, all mastery and virtuosity will be weakened in view of the predictability of their motor response. In the process of teaching and learning capoeira, practice – especially in the experience of the game that takes place in the *roda* – enables the embodied appropriation of the perceptual knowledge of how to get into and out of the action, resume and propose moves, and always being ready to act. This state of readiness is very clear when observing, for example, the most experienced masters playing. Body skill often betrays them because they are no longer able to perform complex movements with aesthetic perfection, but the ability to see the game and respond promptly tends to overcome virtuosity and extend into everyday life.

In this sense, it is interesting to observe the dynamics of the *roda* and how the physical challenges are resolved. There is a very rich learning experience in this observation, but it would invariably take us to a place of non-definition, because it is impossible to trace cause and effect dynamics, given the complexity of this relationship. Because of this bias, the best capoeiristas are primarily those who dominate this State of Readiness, who solve challenges and remain open to the game. Training, the acquisition of more linked-moves and any investment in the expansion and effectiveness of moves is necessary and welcome. However, without the perception of the right moment for proposition, we will probably go against the concept of Economy of Means, which justly highlights the need to consider, in addition to when and how (State of Readiness), how much (Economy of Means) we should present[1]. Mestre Nenel[2] often states that capoeira is a way of life that goes beyond training and games. These two concepts feed this assertion when we perceive the prudence and agility of reasoning to

1 It is important to note that Lia Sfoggia's thesis, which proposes the concept of the State of Readiness, also presents two other concepts: the Economy of Means and Dynamic Balance. All three are independent perspectives, but they are built in a correlated way from the observation and analysis of Capoeira Regional.

2 Mestre Nenel (Manoel Nascimento Machado) is the son of Mestre Bimba (Manoel dos Reis Machado 1900-1974), the creator of Capoeira Regional. Currently, he develops his work with capoeira and facilitates the activities of the Filhos de Bimba Escola de Capoeira (FBEC) and the Mestre Bimba Foundation (FUMEB).

which they refer, not only in the context of capoeira, but also in the daily life of capoeirista. In this sense, the Economy of Means depends on the State of Readiness (and vice versa) to exercise itself. It is necessary to remain open and attentive to embody this concept as necessary.

In the process of Sfoggia's doctoral research, there were two observation and motion analysis laboratories[3] within the context of capoeira, through which we could highlight aspects that emerged as developments of the Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis System. In order to identify and develop the State of Readiness, some nuances were noticed in the image and movement laboratories. From this point of view, the photographs indicate the action resulting from the movement artifacts chosen by capoeiristas when solving their challenge when, for example, we perceive the alternation of the base of the feet/hands in the continuity of the action that was being performed. It is in this sense that we affirm that there is no single adequate solution, since the decision is mediated by a conjuncture of innumerable factors in dialogue, from the corporal possibilities of the capoeirista to all the variables of the context. The act of experiencing the moment guides this action in relation to the context. At every moment, bodies not only can, but should assume new attitudes of resolution and, precisely this capacity for variability, is what enriches the game.

When advancing from the image laboratory to analysis in the movement laboratory, through sessions of Authentic Movement[4], we highlight the observed points that led us to the concept of Dynamic Balance, which was treated and developed previously: advancing in the analysis of weight transfers and continuity we arrive at the understanding of the Dynamic Pause. Within the Laban/Bartenieff System, the Principle of Postural Dynamics (FERNANDES, 2006, p. 54) points to a postural balance in a state of continuity that enables us to change.

In this sense, an apparent pause (the body held in space) can sustain an immobility that keeps an internal organization alive and capable of leaving that apparent inertia, and move. In contrast to abandoning the movement, this state would be a Dynamic Pause; and it is a very evident and frequent body construction within the game of capoeira. The idea transits between the concept of Dynamic Balance (even by the idea of dynamics evident in its nomenclatures) and State of Readiness, in the sense that, while the first points out the dynamics of the internal movement of the body, the second depends on this dynamics to trigger the necessary

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3 The thesis presents laboratories of two natures: an image collection session and sessions of Authentic Movement. It was through these two possibilities that a recognition of Capoeira Regional through personal experience. These processes are described in detail in the thesis.

4 Authentic movement is a body operating method created by Mary Whitehouse to search for what Laban calls Antrieb or motion drive.

reactions. It is like a correlation that is based precisely on the body's ability to build this condition that, while it depends on continuity, provides readiness.

The *negaça* move, through which the capoeirista transits and builds their dialogue with the movement of the other, permeates this pause constantly, as well as the variability of expressive factors that alternate between free and controlled, strong and light, accelerated and decelerated, direct and indirect. The State of Readiness is unable to draw a correspondence with specific factors, as it depends precisely on the variability to materialize and multiply its capacity to surprise the opponent. When trying to identify analysis patterns for this concept, we arrive at the opposite side of this intentionality, since the ability to avoid any patterns is precisely what attributes the most effectiveness to this concept.

Thinking about these nuances of movement and the state of the body in capoeira, there is never this pause that refers to the abandonment of movement and the energy of being at stake. The moments that appear to interrupt movement, in fact, keep an internal drive in the body that is evident in the ability to resolve an immediate response, and this capacity is the basis of the concept of the State of Readiness. For the realization of this constant energy, we perceive the emphasis on two Bartenieff Principles of Movement, which are the Internal Muscular Support and the Spatial Intention (FERNANDES, 2006).

These two principles are ways in which the body makes itself available for the constant and desired resolution of challenges. Internal Muscle Support is based on the use of the deepest musculature for stabilization and support of motor actions and runs through all concepts. However, with regard to the State of Readiness, it is essential in the sense that, by delegating to the internal musculature the task of supporting the body, there is room for the more superficial musculature to complement the response to challenges. While the Internal Muscular Support keeps the body available and in movement, in the case of capoeira through the swing, for example, the more superficial musculature can bring into action what is necessary to account for the details of the situation that the specific space-time of your event demands.

> The use of internal muscles for stabilization and support allows the de-tensioning of the superficial muscles and facilitates movement and body expression. That is, freed from the support function, improperly assigned, the superficial muscles can be used in the various nuances of expression. (FERNANDES, 2006, p. 54).

It is through the movement made possible by the most superficial musculature that we highlight the Spatial Intention, because it is through this Principle that the particularities of the situation are solved and are projected in the game. This intention does not necessarily refer to the focus of the movement in relation to the expressive factor of space[5], but of its projection

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5 Space here refers to the Expressivity Category and its space factor. For more information, see Fernandes (2006).

from the body in Space (physical/contextual), relating primarily to the Space Category[6] and its occupation and mobility according to the practitioners' kinesphere.

> This principle implies the muscular tone of the parts that, when moving, project themselves into Space. It is not necessary that they go to this or that point in Space, but that they present in themselves, as a Body, an intention to extend themselves into Space, even if in apparent rest. (FERNANDES, 2006, p. 69).

For this conceptual construction, what is related to Bertissolo's research (2013) through *m'bolumbümba: between the body and berimbau*, it refers to the concept of Surpriseness. It is a neologism that refers to the ability to surprise. Perhaps this is one of the main elements of Capoeira Regional. Every capoeirista understands the importance of the ability to surprise. In Capoeira Regional, the effectiveness in surprising the opponent lies in the act of knocking him down, or at least, unbalancing him. Balance, the point of stability of capoeira, is on the ground. The surprise in Capoeira Regional is the breaking of a balance, and the capoeirista must always be ready to rebalance themselves. In this sense, there is an expectation to observe and generate movement, either in the understanding of surpriseness, or for the State of Readiness. This constant state of change and availability is the point of dialogue between these concepts.

The State of Readiness, by placing itself as a result of the relationship between space and time of each game in dialogue with the bodies (complex) that intermingle in bodily actions, assumes the impossibility of drawing concrete parameters of movement analysis, as it depends on its occurrence. In this sense, the understanding of this concept goes through modes of bodily organization (Body Category in the Laban/Bartenieff System), rather than through the analysis of Expressivity, Shape or Space. It is the possibilities of the bodies that are playing that feed this concept, in addition to the way we see the movement resulting from this organization.

State of Readiness

Elements of the concept	Developments of the movement analysis
• stay alert and available • unpredictability • ability to solve body challenges	• dynamic pause • changes in expressive elements • Internal Muscle Support • Spatial Intention • Space Category

Figure 1 – Summary table for the concept of State of Readiness

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6 The Laban/Bartenieff System is divided into four major Categories: Body, Expressivity, Form and Space. The association of these four categories refers to Corêutica. For more information, see Fernandes (2006).

4 The processes of *Converse*

Converse is a collaborative work that features two videos, dance performance, electronic music and live piano performance jointly, based on the axis/concept of the State of Readiness. The work was premiered on September 10th, 2018, in the Hall of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA)[7], on the occasion of the *Collaborative Creation Seminar*, an event organized by Guilherme Bertissolo and Luciane Cardassi within the UFBA Music Graduate Program. For the creative process, we highlight the non-hierarchical composition, the unpredictability of propositions and developments, the choice of videos that have real-time processing and live capture and projection, in addition to the interplay between sound and movement. These parameters were unfolded from the State of Readiness that, in the context of this work, reverberated in the sense of proposing a state of alertness and availability, unpredictability, and the ability to solve bodily challenges.

The initial idea of this work came from our desire to share the stage. Luciane was a Visiting Professor at the UFBA School of Music (2018-2020) and was, together with Guilherme, teaching the *Contemporary Composition and Performance Atelier*, where they study the teaching, creation, discussion, and analysis of collaborative works (CARDASSI; BERTISSOLO, 2020). In view of the momentum of collaborative creation, we took the opportunity to develop one of the concepts inferred in Lia Sfoggia's research, who proposed that we work with the State of Readiness. Thus, we were willing, collectively, to develop this work.

In the first meetings we held, at the UFBA School of Music, we talked about the concept and based on that idea, started thinking about possibilities for experimentation. We began with propositions of a very open and experimental character, where Luciane and Guilherme dialogued producing sounds and the first germinations to be developed into scores, while Lia observed and recorded them in images (photo and video). In the first contacts, the demand to bring more visual information to this work emerged. Thus, in the course of the meetings, Lia was tasked with exploring, through photography and videos, the piano work.

From these essays, the composition of the music was gradually consolidated and the visual research was carried out in a bank of 23 static images (figure 2) and several small excerpts of video that were edited into 3 small videos (figure 3)[8]. These images, both in photography and on video, were appreciated in the rehearsal process, where we observed the relationship of the touch of the body on the piano, through the hands and feet and its reflection

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7 A record of the work can be watched at *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j_kKpBmhCc*. The piece was recorded and released by Luciane Cardassi in her Album Going North, available in *https://redshiftmusicsociety.bandcamp.com/album/going-north*.

8 Available at *https://youtu.be/KTEE0HAiebc*, *https://youtu.be/W-JGMCgsZRg* and *https://youtu.be/1pyRgGdk8xk*.

in sound; the possibilities in relation to the hammers inside the piano, which when played or prepared with some material, produced new sounds; attempts to hit the exact key that was written on the score, as opposed to the parameters that would allow variations.
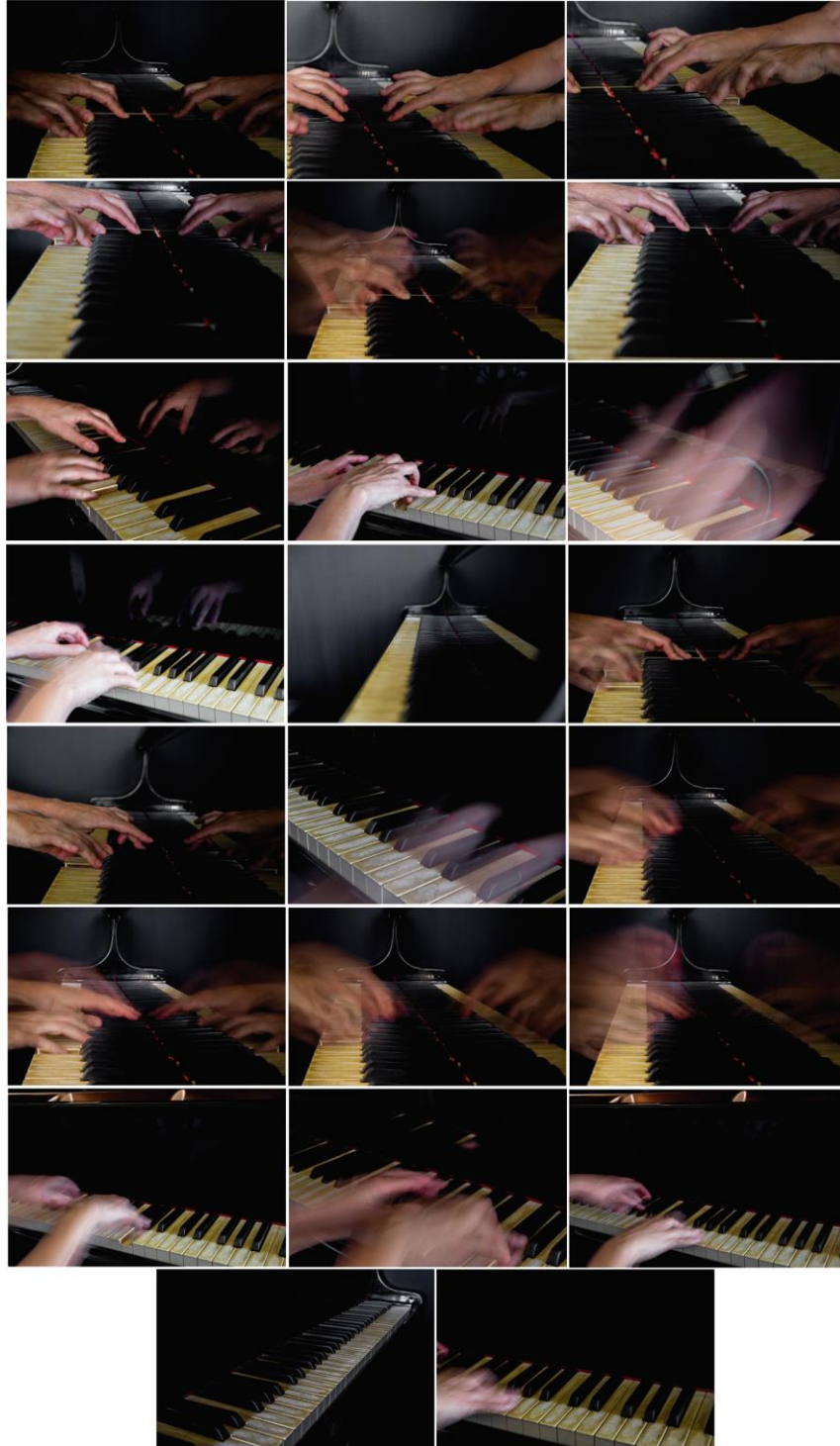

Figure 2 – Image bank for real-time processing in *Converse*

Figure 3 – Videos for real-time processing in *Converse*

The short videos are the result of an interweaving of images that are at times together, while at other times vary in their time and placement. There are many possibilities, which provided material for an image bank that, during the performance of the work, are drawn into the video produced live, with processing in real time through a PureData patch[9] programmed by Guilherme (figure 4). The patch performs real-time processing of sound (left part of the figure) and video (right part), simultaneously.
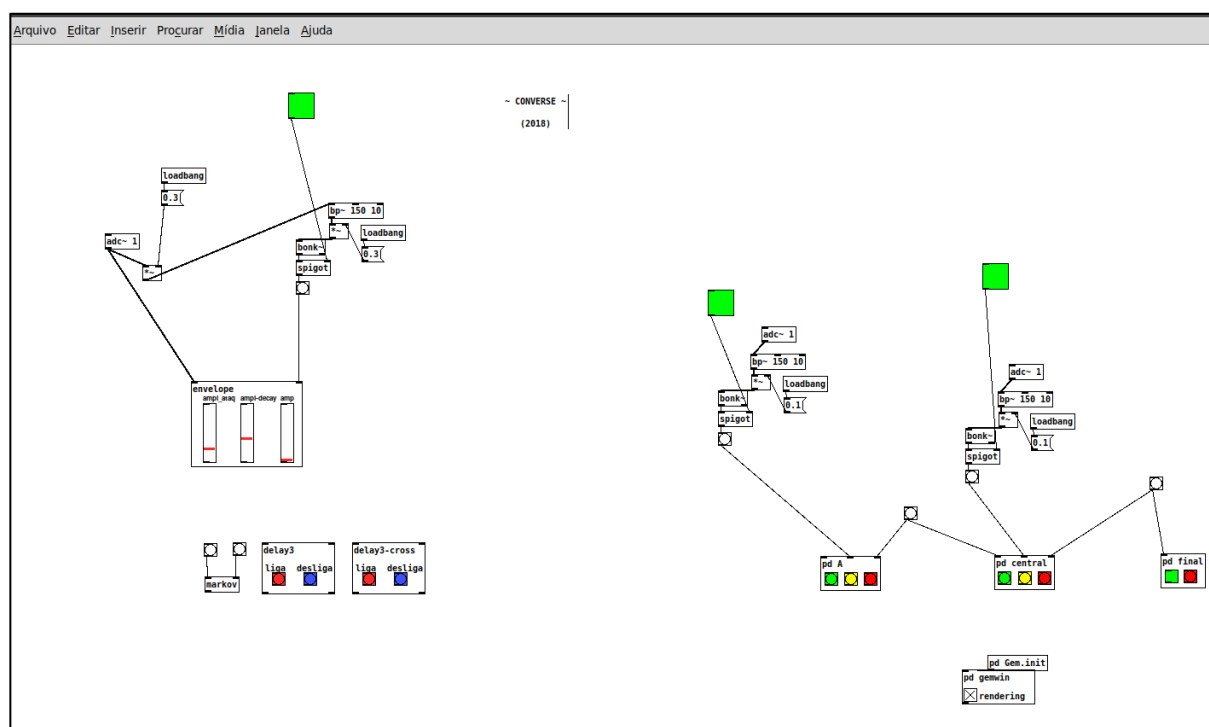

Figure 4 – *PureData* patch used in *Converse*

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9 PureData, or Pd, is an object-oriented visual programming language, developed by Miller Puckette in the 1990s, for the creation of electronic music, electroacoustic music, interactive music, and multimedia works. More information on the website *https://puredata.info*.

The sounds produced are captured by a condenser microphone positioned on the piano strings. In the case of this piece, the computer's responses to the processing are random and basically performed in four processes, successive or simultaneous: 1) a sudden amplification of the resonances of the chords played on the piano; 2) a delay that multiplies the attacks; 3) a process of spectral delay, which uses information from a database of durations based on a repertoire of music previously analyzed; and 4) a random resynthesis process, which transforms (based on defined probabilities) the sound of the piano and transposes it, changing the speed and texture in real time.

By that point, we had the live performance of the piano (which had been rehearsed and worked on at the meetings at the UFBA School of Music), as well as videos and images processed in real time to dialogue on the scene. During the process of rehearsing the music and editing the audiovisual materials, we began to understand the work as a whole, and agreed on a movement performance (Lia) live, in dialogue with the piano, in addition to the videos. It was from the editing of these videos that, through dialogues between the collaborators, we realized the desire to work with variations of time, which supported the interplay between the piano and the live movement performance.

The layout of the stage was determined for the space for the premiere, the UFBA Hall, considering its structure and the elements to be emphasized in the presentation. We were studying the space (figure 5) to optimize the play of projection, light and shadows between the performer and the pianist, in addition to the video produced in real time. We established a distribution format, tested the week before the premiere, finalized on the day of the set-up, with the tuning of the videos, piano and performance location (figure 6): Lia was center-stage with the projectors directed at her, casting a shadow on the oval walls of the hall; on the right, Luciane shared with Lia the shadows formed in the video being processed in real time and, projected on the left, we had another video, from the live capture of Lia's image, with a camera[10] arranged in front of her. This was a new unfolding of the State of Readiness, since the spatial definitions only became feasible when considering the space and everything that was present in it. Prior to that, it was not possible to test which image apertures of the projectors were available, where we could design and fine-tune the equipment. We foresaw some situations based on the daily training regimen of a capoeirista, but only in the dynamics on the day of the presentation were we able to coordinate the information according to the demands of that space-time. Finally, we were unable to make available a mode of disposition where Luciane and Lia could both see each other – only Lia could see Luciane – and their shadows were reflected on the wall.

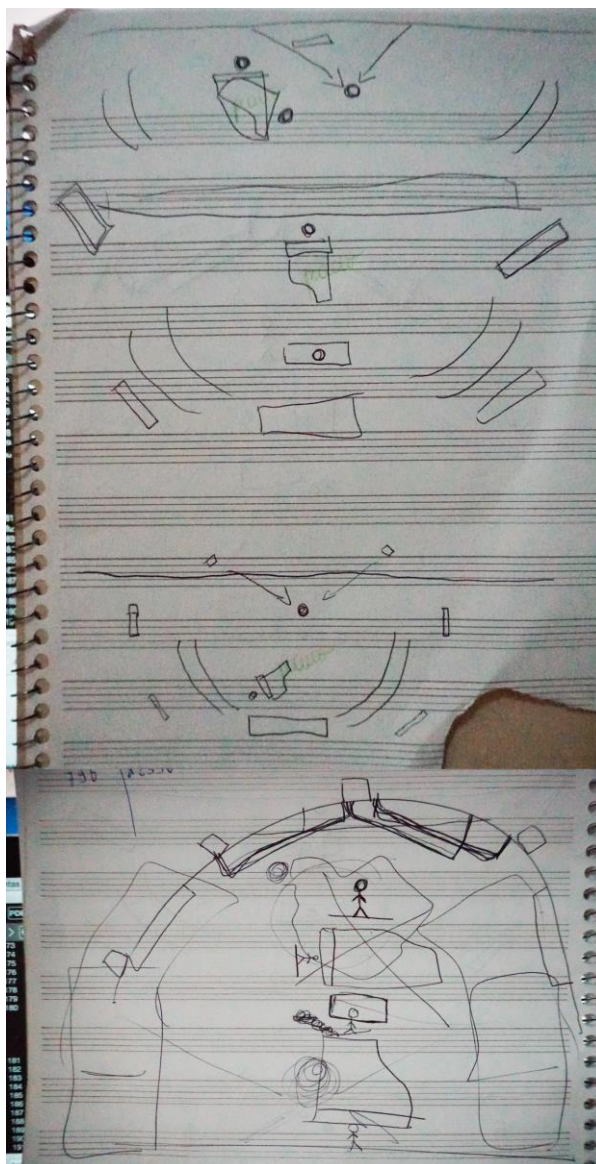
10 A camera GoPro Hero4 Silver.

Figure 5 – Drafts for deciding on the stage layout at the UFBA Hall for *Converse*

The processed video is divided into 3 parts, corresponding to each of the sections of the piece. The first one is a white sphere that grows little by little, which during the creative process, emerged from the need to illuminate the performance on stage. This sphere also undergoes a random change in its opacity in response to some of the piano's attacks. In this stage of the video, the interaction with movement was more subtle, with only the shadows intertwining as if the performer and the pianist presented themselves, in a game of appearing and fading together in the opacity of the lighting generated by the video. In the second section, this sphere multiplies and 6 circles start to rotate randomly, also growing little by little. In this step, the computer draws images (from the bank shown in figure 2) that are plotted as flashes in each of the circles, also at random. Slowly these flashes become more frequent, until they occupy

almost the entire screen. This is the moment where there is a most intense interplay between movements and their variations in speed and intensity. Finally, the third section presents the 3 videos produced during the process (figure 3). The computer directs the point at which each video will start, whether it will be shown in black and white or color, and how long it will last. Thus, there are multiple possible combinations. At that moment, in the movement performance, Lia withdraws from the front of the device that projects the image of the video being processed and, later in the piece, she creates an interference of shadows close to the projector lens, playing with the possibility of hiding and showing parts of the video, which at that point occupies a large part of the screen.


Figure 6 – Organization of the stage used for the Rectory of UFBA at the premiere of *Converse*

Exchanges about concepts permeated our decisions and whenever we needed to make decisions, we returned to the understanding of the State of Readiness. From the distribution of scenic actions on the stage (which vary according to the presentation space), to the experiments with music and the interplay between the performer and the pianist. For this stage of interaction between Lia and Luciane, with regard to dance performance, Lia was experimenting with how to dialogue with the nuances of the music that would vary, and promptly reported her perception that musical composition opened opportunities for variations in time in each performance. Considering the demands for delimiting the layout of the piece, we considered the need to design a performance that did not have large displacements and thus, we decided that Lia would work with upper body and arm movements while maintaining

a fixed base. Referring to the *m'bolumbümba: between the body and the berimbau*, there was a return to the study of movements of the Sequence of Bimba[11] made with arms in play with shadows (which seemed to relate strongly with what had previously been designed) and, re-starting from this experimentation, we tested the game of interpreting these movements in relation to the sound. From there, we had the idea of opening the possibility for Luciane and Lia during the work, in a dialogue of movement in which the time of the music (figure 7) influenced the movement in order to suggest weight variation (strong and light) and time (accelerated and decelerated).

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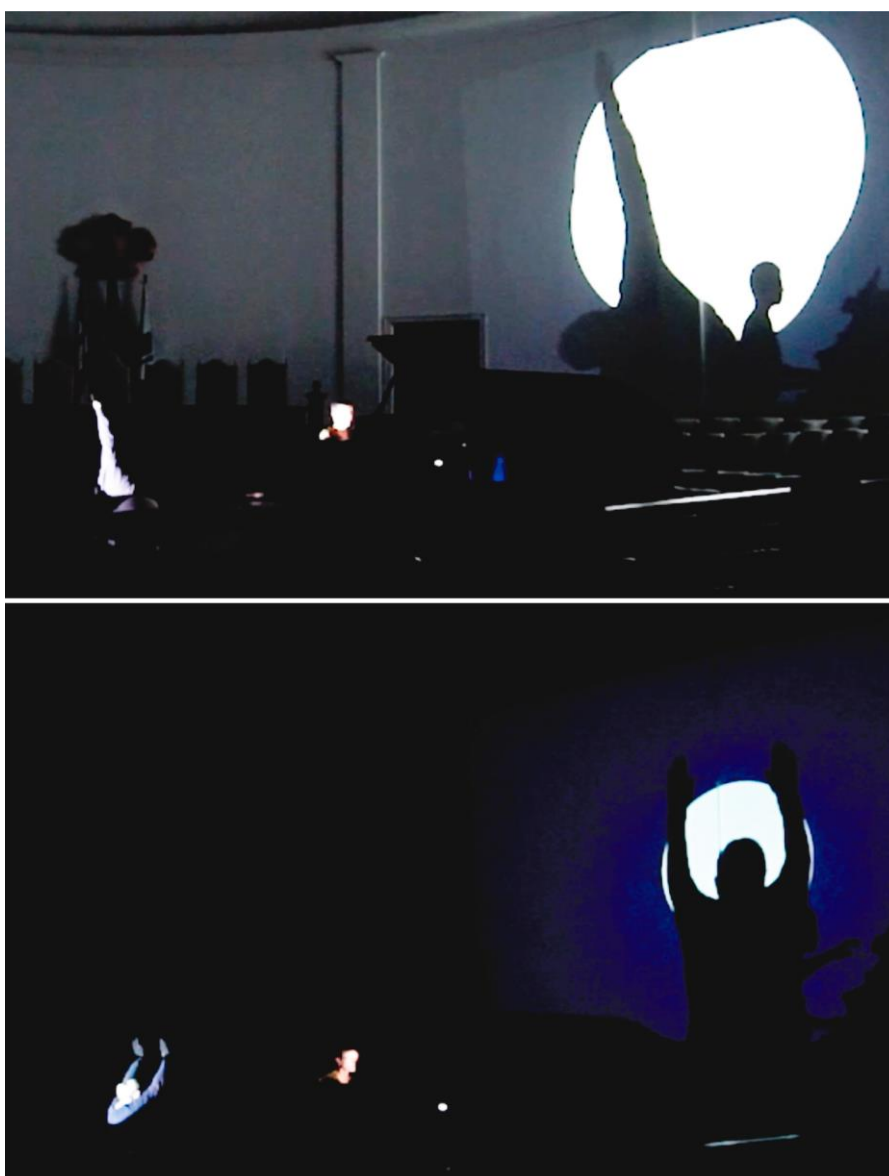
11 For more information on the Bimba Sequence, I suggest consulting the book Bimba: a century from the Regional (MESTRE NENEL, 2018, p. 49).

Figure 7 – Record of the playing between movement, light/ shadow and piano, during the performance of *Converse* at UFBA Hall

During the preparation of her thesis, shortly after the premiere of the work *Converse*, with the intent to capture the impressions of the collaborators, Lia requested written testimonies to support the discussion about the collaborative artistic process. The perceptions are evident in these reports, which, due to their freshness and confessional content, must appear in the original format [translated for this article]. While Guilherme drew an intense relationship with surpriseness – a concept proposed and discussed by him in his doctoral thesis (BERTISSOLO, 2013), discussed in section 3 –, Luciane discusses the sensation of mobility that permeated from the first workshops to the organization of the work on stage.

Guilherme, at the time, brought the concept to the musical composition (figure 8 presents some of the sketches produced in the collaborative process), going through the piano and electronics[12]. In a dynamic composition, based on a collaborative exchange, provoking reactions between the performer and the pianist, in a multidimensional conversation:

> In the work *Converse,* the concept was present from the first idea. I believe that unpredictability was one of the main elements, allowing a dialogue between the electronic processes of sound and video, the pianist, and the performer. I believe that the State of Readiness is a key factor in understanding the collaborative process of the work, considering the decisions that are made during the performance by the participants, including the processes carried out in real time by the computer, and how each one responds to the differing decisions of the others. The complexity of dialogues that result from these choices and developments during the performance experience are due to the perceptive capacity of the collaborators which allowed a creative process full of meanings (Guilherme Bertissolo - Written testimony, available in full in SFOGGIA, 2019).

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12 The complete score of *Converse* is available at https://guilhermebertissolo.com/2019/11/28/converse/.
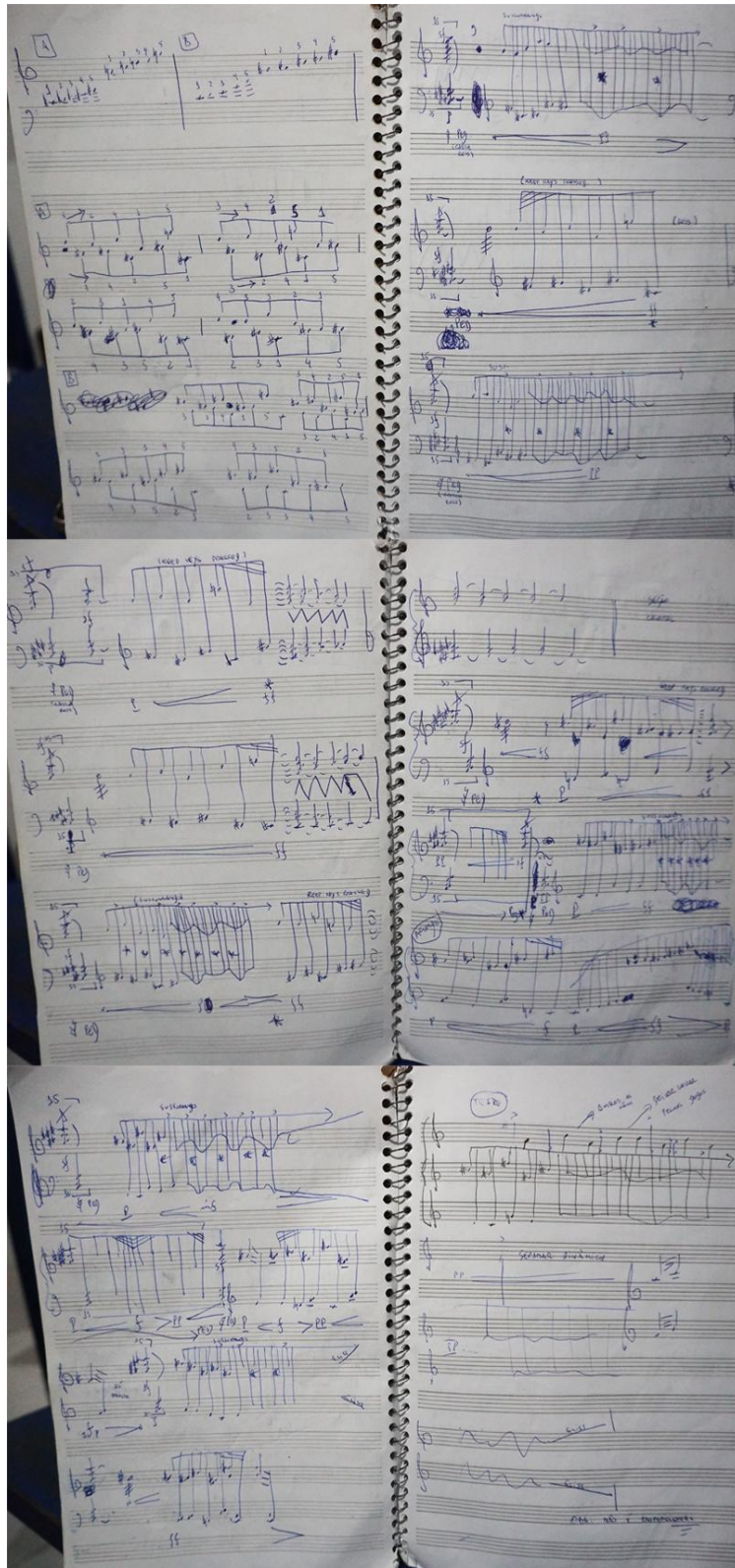
Figure 8 – Drafts: music composition process for *Converse*

Luciane, in addition to mentioning this collaborative process in relation to music, considered our interactions on stage more intensely. Our initial desire was an interplay

between sound and movement and, in the context of the premiere, it was perfectly possible with regard to listening to the music and observing the body response on stage. However, there is still the desire to intensify Luciane's possible responses to the movements so that the challenge is a two-way street. Even so, according to reports from people who attended the performance, the interaction of the shadows of Lia's movements generated an interesting dialogue with the shadows resulting from the pianist's body. From this experience, Luciane highlights the non-hierarchical nature of our creation process, which greatly reinforces the State of Readiness we sought:

> I would like to conclude by saying that the State of Readiness is also a metaphor for a type of collaboration that involves interaction among collaborators on a deeper, more visceral level, than usually happens (at least in contemporary concert music). *Converse,* in my opinion, is a great example of what Hayden and Windsor (2007) call truly collaborative creation, which is not just directive (prescribed by a score or script) or interactive (in which the contact between collaborators took place to discuss what was possible or not). In this third, deeper, level of "collaborative" collaboration, there is partnership in decision-making, with no hierarchy of roles, and in the authorship of the final work, which is not seen only as originating from one author, but, in this case, from three. (Luciane Cardassi - Written testimony, available in full at SFOGGIA, 2019).

In regards to the work itself, it is important to mention four main aspects that guided the processes resulting in *Converse*: the notion of gesture, the theme of containment/expansion, complementarity/contrasts and the ideas of expectation/surprise. From the point of view of gestures[13], the initial idea of the collaboration sessions was to explore gestures on the piano with random accents (see sketches in Figure 8), which ended up obeying the "intelligence of the fingers", since the notes to be accentuated depend on the proper act of the performance. This performative element became one of the ideas unfolded throughout the piece, since these gestures were repeated, alternating with the sudden attacks performed by the pianist at the extremes of the piano keyboard. This variability was one of the main themes explored in the performance, enhanced by the random processes of electronics and video. The interactions between lights and shadows, as well as the exploration patterns of the wider kinespheres, were directly influenced by this element, manifesting a strong relationship with the concept of state of readiness.

This notion of gesture was developed throughout the performance with the idea of containment/expansion. At the beginning of *Converse*, both the pianist's gestures and the performer's movements are contained, being gradually expanded over time. The pianist's gestures gain more and more accents and get longer and longer, influencing the gradual increase of the kinesphere of the performer. The idea of containment is extremely important in

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13 For a discussion of the notion of gesture in music, including a definition of its cognitive nature, see Bertissolo (2013, 2017) and Gritten and King (2006, 2011).

this process and is related to the metaphorical mapping of a basic scheme of body experience, as discussed by BROWER (2000). This expansion ends up being enhanced in the middle section of the music, when the contained gestures are extrapolated and the pianist starts to explore the entire length of the keyboard in arpeggios, which in turn influence the performer to expand her kinesphere until completely abandoning her original position, winning the stage and moving around on the scene.

The idea of complementarity/contrasts was also a determining factor in the creative processes, since several elements in the scene and in music made it possible to develop this strategy in relation to the concept explored in the work. First, there was a strong contrast between the small kinesphere movements and their gradual expansion in the scene, which was complemented by the live projection of the performer herself through a camera on stage (in the first version, in front of the performer, in the second, on the side the piano, capturing the performer in the background). This complementarity was enhanced by the contrasts in musical materials, which came from various sources: contrast between two transpositions of the pentatonic scale between the white and black keys of the piano (main material of Capoeira songs), contrasts in the topology of the keyboard (sometimes with attacks on the extreme, sometimes with gestures in the central region), contrasts in dynamics, sometimes with incisive attacks, sometimes whispering. In the third section of the piece, the gestures of the first section are resumed, but in a process of contraction, and with the inversion of the order of transpositions on the piano (the black keys in the left hand give way to the white ones, while the white keys in the right hand, black).

The state of readiness also proves to be a strong element of play in the field of expectation/surprise. This occurs in *Converse*, from the random accents and attacks, described previously, but also from a specific musical element. The two transpositions of the pentatonic collection resulted in 10 pitches, leaving the F and B pitches out of the initial gestures. During our collaboration sessions, we decided to prepare these two notes by inserting coins between the piano strings. The result was a change in the sounds of these two keys, which are included gradually throughout the piece. As electronics processes and enhances these sounds in real time, the listener can ask if these sounds come from the electronics or are produced by the pianist. Throughout the performance, these sounds become incorporated into the sound of the piece, always leaving a doubt in the audience. At times, when perceiving a relationship between the pianist's gestures and the sounds, the listener can revise their listening model, causing what HURON (2006, p. 270) defines as Conscious Surprise[14] related to the expectation of working memory.

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14 We can also mention electronic effects, such as glissandi of notes/chords on the piano, which are acoustically impossible to perform and which, when they occur, can lead the audience to review their listening models, asking

5 Concluding statements

In this article we present a collaborative process that took performative research as a methodological horizon. We strove to, through a collaborative interartistic process, developed from a concept inferred in a cultural context, problematize the research paths that start from the overlap between theories and practices.

We understand that *Converse* proved to be a collaborative process in a broad sense of the word, where all collaborators actively participated in all decision-making, in a horizontal process of distributed creativity. The State of Readiness became evident as a pre-condition for collaborative work to take place, in the sense that, if the artist composes his/her work (solo) assuming his/her lived experiences, a collaboration needs to be open to the world experienced by all involved. Thus, this concept presupposes a state of openness that makes a complex creative act viable. This is far from being a sum, but a dynamic intertwining.

This experience made the complexity that occurs in the capoeira game even more evident. It is, in fact, a condition. Just as being in the *roda* (capoeira circle) is being vulnerable to what may happen, in *Converse* we put ourselves to the test to propose an interaction that only occurs during the performance, whether in relation to videos, electronic music, or the dynamics between performance of the piano and movement. In figure 9 we present a synthesis of the work *Converse*, with the elements of the concept of State of Readiness, the configuration of the work, as well as its creative processes.

Synthesis chart

Work	Configuration	Concepts and their elements	Creative process
Converse	Presentation with live performance on stage, video projection with live processing and live piano	State of Readiness: • stay alert and available • unpredictability • ability to solve body challenges	• non-hierarchical composition • unpredictability of propositions and developments • real-time video processing • live capture and projection of images • interplay between music and movement

Figure 9 - Synthesis chart about *Converse*, the concept of state of readiness and the creation process

themselves: "was what I heard the piano or the electronics?". For an approach on the psychology of expectation, consult HURON (2006), and for surpriseness, consult BERTISSOLO (2013, 2017).

From a methodological point of view, we emphasize the importance of the sketches, as well as the documentation in images and videos, which, in addition to allowing the incorporation of traces of the process in the work *Converse*, produced a rich content for reflection afterwards. This text is enhanced by the images, sketches and links to audiovisual content that allow the reader to dive into the creative universe, without which it is not possible to recover the performative and collaborative methodological paths that gave rise to the creative process discussed here.

We propose that the performative methodology, updated by the vision of interartistic collaboration, represents an interesting path for research in contemporary creative processes. In this sense, we argue that the process and the discussions raised in this text are in line with what Reinaldo Ladagga (2012, p. 9) defines as the creation of cultural ecologies, where a growing number of artists have been interested in the development of works that require complex universes, involving different domains, instead of the exclusive creation of new works.

We also highlight that *Converse* was presented in October 2019 at the UFBA Congress and has been restructured from observation and analysis from our own reflections on the work, in a continuous process. We can note, for example, changes in the layout of the stage based on demands perceived in the premiere, in addition to new proposals for movement based on the development of Lia's research after her defense. In addition, the piece was recorded by Luciane Cardassi in May 2019 at the *Banff Center for Arts and Creativity,* in Canada, and we are working on a video version that will soon be widely available. *Converse* was also the subject of two research papers presented by the authors in 2019: at the XIV International Symposium on Cognition and Musical Arts (Campo Grande, MS) and at the XXIX Congress of the National Association for Research and Graduate Studies in Music (Pelotas, RS). On those occasions, for logistical reasons, the work was presented in video by Luciane and Guilherme only, without the stage performance.

In addition to seeking new opportunities for public presentation of *Converse*, and launching a version of the work on video, the preparation of this article encourages us to continue our reflections and research with regard to the creative processes, especially the notion of gesture, the theme of containment/expansion, complementarity/contrasts and the ideas of expectation/surprise. The processes of construction of meaning, whether in musical composition or in performance, can be understood from the perspective of embodied cognition. In this sense, one of the future developments involves the deepening of these processes in light of the literature on gesture (GRITTEN & KING, 2006, 2011) and the notion of musical forces (LARSON, 2012), performativity (NAGY, 2017), expectation and surprise (HURON, 2006) and musical schemes (BROWER, 2000).

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