

# Dance, Cry and Overcoming in Covid-19: Reflections on *Abbreviated Stories*

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## Abstract

The article aims to reflect on the creative processes involved in the conception and implementation of “Abbreviated Stories Action” developed in the scope of the Graduate Program in Creative Media of the School of Communication at the Federal University of Rio Janeiro (UFRJ). The “Abbreviated Stories Action” intends to create a network of affections that aims to honor the victims of Covid-19. The idea is centered on promoting artistic expression as a movement of care. Our goal is to focus on art as a place of listening and affection so that we can reframe the period of mourning we are going through. *Abbreviated Stories* is an engagement action within the ImaginAções Festival carried out through short video posts (Reels) on the Instagram app interconnected with texts that polyphonically support this imagery of art as a place of empathy and overcoming.

**Keywords:** dance; care; festivals; creative media; choreography.

How did the idea for *Abbreviated Stories* come about? It all started with an image. From the painting *The Dance* by Henri Matisse – its colorful plot suggests a delicate and vibrant fluidity of a circular dance that celebrates the cycles of life and a primordial union of people in community life. A ring-around-the-rosie game, a circle, a circle game with people holding hands, where one helps the other in an interdependent web of encounter and vibrant celebration.

The moving shapes fill the entire canvas, in an expressive rhythmic pattern where five unveiled figures join hands to create a circle in a vibrant dance.

Jung approached this theme of the circle as a metaphor of individuation to designate the archetypal representation of wholeness. It is worth remembering that this process goes in the opposite direction to the self-centered individualism so prevalent in social networks. *Abbreviated Stories* goes in another direction that leads us to an expansion of consciousness beyond the personal. This action aims to make us more receptive to the numinous or non-personal. “In the sphere of religious practices and in psychology it denotes circular images, which are drawn, painted, modelled, or danced” (JUNG, 2002, p. 385-387 [sic] apud DIBO, 2006, p. 110).

The circular dance brings this unity, of placing us at the center of cosmic and tonic experiences where communion with others is lived. An experience where we participate in the absence of distinction or division and its possible effects that reverberate in experiencing an affective feeling of reconnection that opens the doors of universal fraternity among human beings.

This idea has correlations with Bachelard’s words when he says in the *Phenomenology of Roundness*:

We must even be careful lest the too vivid colors of the illustration make the being of the image lose its original light [...] the images of full roundness help us to collect ourselves, permit us to confer an initial constitution on ourselves and to confirm our being intimately inside. For when it is experienced from the inside, devoid of all exterior features, being cannot be otherwise than round. (1998, p. 349 and 352).

This circular path led us first to think, feel and want to develop the project as a dance in circularity through small choreographic solos in a network of affections that would lead everyone who engaged in the action to enter this “online circle game” and thus generate an action of positivity as a result of an original and essential art-making as care.

From a vibrating interior, from an originating pulse, we realize that we are always immersed in a vortex of movement. If there is a name to call the nameless that dance always evokes, we could say that it is pure energy.

And it is in this leading of living the dynamogeny of moving possibilities that I think is where the strength and truth of dance reside. Here we meet the original conception according to Martin Heidegger as quoted by Michelazzo (1999), where truth is linked to a game of veiling and unveiling of being, when he says:

The first conception of the essence of truth for the Greeks was expressed in the very root of the word *alétheia*: unconcealment. This depriving ‘a’ (*a-létheia*) made the Greek, when uttering this word, always look at ‘this (there) that was torn out of a concealment’. (p.34).

Thus understood, our corporeality opens to or waits for the emergence of its potentialities in the destiny of our free relationship of being. Then we rescue more subtle aspects, which,

although integrated to it, exceed materiality or a way of seeing matter and the body in the biopositivist perspective. In this sense, social transformations and the relational flow between people (eminently collective), as well as the oscillations of the mind and spirit are also important, to be considered within the set of movements in the world. It is in this framework that the artistic movement in dance is inserted: dealing with a much broader principle of reality – ecological, social and subjective –, contextualized in it, the human body integrates itself into the flow of things, and it is from there that it creates, originates, expresses. The framework in which the dance is formed, then, is one of connection with this broader principle, this dynamism present in everything. Integration with this flow provides the dancer with a platform for full expression. This point is crucial. And it is in this context that the dance actions present in *Abbreviated Stories* point to the need for spiritual integration, for an expression that takes life in all its potency. The integration of consciousness into this flow enables intuition to acquire a more significant importance in the dance. Integrated with this principle of nature, the dancing being can, whatever the content in question, express it fully: fullness in terms of attention, concentration, immersion and poetics.

But when our habits go in the other direction, of closure and conditioning, we live partially, in the sense of loss and forgetfulness of our creative capacities.

The advent of the Internet has transformed the way we relate to the world, shortening distances and reducing the planet to the proportions of what McLuhan called “global village”. The notion of time has been drastically modified, putting us in an era of instantaneity, of the simultaneous and consequently of the ephemeral. (ARAÚJO, 2013, p.11).

In this sense, *Abbreviated Stories* stands as a cry of hope against the loss of an essential ethos, which marked the management of the pandemic in our country in every way. In this scenario, the project went through several phases until it matured into its final format within the ImaginAções Festival which was conceived from among the three axes of action: “Galeria Heterotopias”, “Labirinto Uirapuru” and “Histórias Abreviadas/ Abbreviated Stories”. In this sense, through dynamic actions that connect, participants are encouraged to interact in new perspectives of time and space.

The construction of *Abbreviated Stories* integrated several references such as the Mindfulness practice proposed in Thich Naht Hanh’s “Breathing Room”, choreographic improvisations carried out in the Fundamentals of Choreography I and II discipline of the Undergraduate Dance Courses at UFRJ, for the assimilation of the experience of the “Meu Bebê” Festival<sup>1</sup>, which was fundamental to our perception of the potential of creating an engagement festival through Instagram. By analyzing the durational performances of “Each

number is someone's loved one" by Tania Alice<sup>1</sup> we visualized a strong and sensitive work made from the stories of people who passed away from Covid-19. From then on, we started researching an online database about Covid-19 on the *Inumeráveis* website<sup>2</sup> and on the Linha de Frente blog of the *Folha de S. Paulo* newspaper.<sup>3</sup> All this was combined with studies of videography and visual programming that together led this proposal reaching its final version called *Abbreviated Stories*.

*Abbreviated Stories* is an engagement action on Instagram<sup>4</sup> that joins photography, painting, dance, music, theater, poetry and drawing in a weave that connects us to everything and everyone. With this vibration, the Reels<sup>5</sup> seek to evoke a dimension of care, precisely at this moment of a pandemic, where we are called to make changes. It is in this perspective that *Abbreviated Stories* integrates several dimensions of the poetic, in an affective and aesthetic mosaic of tribute to the victims of Covid-19.

We made use of research and production protocols that were generated from multiple paths that mirror the interdisciplinary vocation of the creative team and the very matrix of the discipline. As such, *Abbreviated Stories* is the result of a process that combines the expertise and professional experiences of the creative team that brought together professionals from journalism, dance, design, video art, creative programming of online environments, interconnected with reflections and references from the Theory of Principles and Open Connections in Dance by Helenita Sá Earp (2019), notions arising from Mindfulness, which together have been the focus of our work and polyphonically composed our creative paths.

However, before describing the paths we followed to develop the concept of the project, the methodologies used and the results achieved, we will reflect a little on what care is and how we can guide our artistic practices from this dimension. This path points to the meaning of our artistic pursuits that made possible the construction of *Abbreviated Stories*.

## Art as Cry and Overcoming

In several of his writings, Brazilian theologian, writer, philosopher and university professor Leonardo Boff reflects on the ontological-existential dimension of care as the

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<sup>1</sup> "Each number is someone's loved one" is a performative experience that tests how far we can emotionally sustain the loss of so many lives caused by the pandemic and the negligence of the current government." Text available at: <https://www.performerssemfronteiras.com/cada-n%C3%BAmero-%C3%A9-o-amor-de-algu%C3%A9m>. Accessed on: 05/16/2022.

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://inumeraveis.com.br/>. Accessed on: 08/29/2021.

<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://linhadefrente.blogfolha.uol.com.br/>. Accessed on: 08/29/2021.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to <https://www.instagram.com/historias.abreviadas/>.

<sup>5</sup> Reels is an Instagram feature for recording short videos. With this, the social network increased its range of possibilities, going beyond Stories and IGTV. Reels is a direct competitor of TikTok, the famous Chinese app.

essential condition of Being of the human being. Currently, we are faced with borderline situations that put life on the planet at risk and that have given rise to an urgent change of perspective in the most varied spheres of knowledge. Perspectives that point to the need for a dialogue between spiritual traditions, epistemologies, and artistic practices. In a recent live stream<sup>6</sup>, Boff pointed out that Covid-19 came to teach us something. Teach what? The pandemic is a kind of a cry from mother nature to humanity. But what is this crying? We should leave the materialist perspective of maximum expropriation of nature's resources – of seeing it only as commodities – and abandon the excessive greed resulting from this utilitarian vision, because it is precisely this vision that has been causing drastic changes in ecosystems and migratory changes of viral vectors. If we do not hear this cry, we will only have to assume even more dramatic consequences that may come.

To leave this old paradigm we have to find the “Ariadne's thread” that takes us out of this self-destructive cycle. It is worth remembering that from quantum physics, organismic biology, depth psychology, transpersonal psychology and social ecology a conception of reality emerged as a very complex network of energetic and morphic fields in a kind of cosmic dance or web of interdependent origination.<sup>7</sup> In this perspective, corporeity is multidimensional, as expressed in the words below:

This means that in reality we never find a pure spirit, but always an incarnate spirit everywhere. Its corporeality belongs to the spirit and with it its permanent relationship with all things. Just as the spirit that permeates the concrete body belongs to it. As human-body-being, we emerge as universal relationship nodes from our being in the world with others. This being in the world with others does not have a geographical dimension, but an essential one. That is to say, at each moment in its totality the human being is corporeal and simultaneously in its totality it is spiritual. This complex unity of the human being can never be forgotten. In this way, the most sublime spiritual acts or the highest flights of artistic creation or Mysticism are all marked by corporeality, as in the most everyday bodily acts such as eating, washing, driving a car comes penetrated with spirit. (p. 84 and 85, 2020).

Gradually, a new paradigm of re-enchantment emerges and with it a new way of acting in a network in our professional communication activities, creative programmers, designers, curators, visual artists, cultural producers, actors, dancers, among others.

And this can help lead us to an ethic that allows us to take care of and make our creative and artistic movement an expression of values, attitudes and practical behaviors according to the various cultural and spiritual traditions and in this way connect us with the wisdom of the peoples and learn with each other.

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<sup>6</sup> Class with Leonardo Boff and Eduardo Moreira. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XK\\_E5K8ME-4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XK_E5K8ME-4). Accessed: 8/25/2021.

<sup>7</sup> See HARLAND; KEEPIN, 2016.

Caring is more than an act; it's an attitude. Therefore, it encompasses more than a moment of attention, zeal and concern. It represents an attitude of occupation, concern, responsibility and affective involvement with the other. The attitude is a source, it generates many acts that express the underlying attitude. (BOFF, 2007, p. 25)

That is where “Stories Abbreviated” places itself. For this encounter with our essential nature allows us to overcome the immobilizing anguish that often prevents us from acting for the benefit of beings.

When consciousness becomes an act of communion with each expression of being, the universe comes to itself and is fully realized in us. This essential and original point is linked, in our view, as the most sensitive, poetic, powerful and full dimension of art and dance itself. Therefore, it ties into its own way in which *Abbreviated Stories* is structured to provide an intuitive and direct engagement of people on the internet. Care enters into the nature and constitution of the very meaning of this action at this point.

Another relevant point that supported our proposals was the scope, of experiential realization of dance, not only in terms of situations, but also of agents involved: the body that dances in *Abbreviated Stories*, is any possible ontological concretion, any individuation, circumstantial, however, of elements, however heterogeneous they may be, such as the proposals that involved creative actions. The body that emerges there is fundamentally connected to its web of relations. In this sense, an anthropological approach centered on the body of Thomas Csordas can be of great value. Escaping the establishment of a body-mind opposition, the analytical foundation of this paradigm is provided by experience.

[...] the experience as the signification of meaning, immediate both in the sense of its concreteness, of its subjunctive openness, of its advance towards the sensorial, emotional, intersubjective reality of the present moment; and in the sense that it is the unmediated, unpremeditated, spontaneous, or unrehearsed emergence of raw existence. (2008, p. 2).

This concept deals with the expansion and elaboration of the horizon of perception based on “somatic” attention. As part of a paradigmatic view, this concept proposes a broad interpretation of the cultural world, although it is exceptionally suited for the analysis of eminently corporeal social practices, such as dance. To understand it in this way is to bring centrality to corporeality in its various cultural modulations. However, what interests us most here is that this notion highlights the role of attention as a phenomenological posture in the practice of dance, emphasizing its realization through the body. Being fullness of movement also a fullness of attention and body awareness, which is fundamental to think about the role of imagination in dance. In this integrated way, the body can establish significant relations with elements heterogeneous to itself, concretizing a collective and relational body, in which the poetics present in *Abbreviated Stories* were based.

## The “Breathing Room” as a Path

In our search on how to develop a tangible concept of sensitive and poetic action of welcoming and at the same time allowing people to engage via Instagram in a direct and intentional way in the action, we started to research about well-being and meditation practices. We found a path in Thich Naht Hanh’s teachings on Mindfulness,<sup>8</sup> when he mentions the importance of conscious breathing.

Every house should have a room called “The Breathing Room”, or at least the corner of a room set aside for this purpose. In this place we can put a low table with a flower, a little bell and enough cushions for everyone in the family to sit down. When we feel restless, sad or angry, we can enter this room, close the door, sit down, invite the bell to ring, and breathe consciously. After 10 to 15 minutes of breathing this way, we start to feel better. (2013, p. 194).

From these meditation practices and this ritualization of space to make it a place of rest and renewal – capable of restoring ourselves – we thought of a path where movement could express small gestures or dances for which people would exchange gestures of friendliness over the internet, where each one would show an affection and that would trigger a flow of other affective gestures in order to talk about longing, personal and collective commotion, expressions of art, like when we give someone a flower!

Here it is interesting to mention that this low table with a flower reminds us of the archetypal representation of the Japanese Zen Garden. In this sense, the “space of the Japanese Shinto temple, with its rocks, streams and bushes are reductions of the cosmos; a passage from the chaos of potentialities to actualizations, both in the material and in the spiritual planes.” (CHEVALIER, GHEERBRANT, 2009, p. 391)

In a way, the space of affection that we were working on with *Abbreviated Stories* was the dimensionless space of imagination capable of taking us to a passage from chaos – which is facing the loss of loved ones to Covid-19 – to rediscover lucidity. through spiritual perception of the cycles of infinite life. All this led us to a maturing of the concept of action within the “ImaginAções” Festival, to the definition of the project in its final version, which we will describe below.

## Methodology and Processes for Creating *Abbreviated Stories*

At this point, we are going to reflect on the creation protocols that culminated in the realization of *Abbreviated Stories*. The project was conceived and carried out in a multidisciplinary dynamic formed by a team of choreographers, journalists, visual

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<sup>8</sup> Buddhist monk who was nominated by Martin Luther King for the 1966 Nobel Peace Prize.

programmers, videographers and cultural producers. The methodology used in the present work consisted of exploratory and descriptive research, expanding the field of knowledge about engagement on Instagram to later describe the facts. It also used interpretive analyses on the Reels<sup>9</sup> posted by the voluntary participants who engaged in the proposal, drawing conclusions along with a qualitative analysis. In this way, one can highlight the meanings contained in the acts and practices, which turned to particular situations experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic to conduct an in-depth inquiry, being taken as exemplary (CHIZZOTTI, 1991).

All practices were the result of an original and essential doing of positioning art as care and thought as an action of solidarity engagement of artists on Instagram. The process of creating *Abbreviated Stories* had two steps that are described below.

As we mentioned earlier, from the painting *The Dance* by Henri Matisse, a spark emerged. The dance is a ring-around-the-rosie game, a circle, a circle game with people holding hands, one helping the other, a chain. With the absence of contact in the pandemic, the action was intended, in its beginnings, to build a mosaic of affection, with photos of human touch, hugging and kissing. A virtual flower (figure 1) would be passed forward like a chain. The person who received this flower would post a photo of that affection they missed in the pandemic. At this stage, the action began to gain its first contours. We called it the “Dedication Project”.



Figure 1. The virtual flower as a metaphor for the exchange of affections.  
Image: Cristina Lyra de Carvalho Vianna.

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<sup>9</sup> The posts were made between August 16 and September 6, 2021. The project profile today has 21 publications, 273 followers and 717 following.



From the cycle of manifestation of a flower (figures 2-5) from blooming to fading, the “Dedication Project” soon changed to the “Ephemeral Festival”. From a time-lapse<sup>10</sup> of a flower’s life cycle, sought to foster a contemplation of the impermanence of all things. The idea was that like this contemplation, people would be internally mobilized to reflect on life and its cycles. And so give finitude a new meaning.



Figure 2. The flower as a metaphor for the transformation of life stages. Image: Neil Bromhall.



Figure 3. The opulence of blossoming. Image: Neil Bromhall.

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<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CWEDWLIrBY/>. Accessed on May 16, 2022.



Figure 4. Fading of the flower. Image: Neil Bromhall.



Figure 5. The end as the beginning of a new cycle. Image: Neil Bromhall.

At this point, we thought we'd honor the loss of loved ones by Covid-19. Since every cycle also has a new beginning, we inserted the "Ciranda do Afeto" ("Circle game of Affection", in English) and put movement as healing. At this stage, the project engaged in the activities developed in the Fundamentals of Choreography I and II discipline, which has in its conceptual and methodological referential assumptions that are supported by the Theory of Open

Principles and Connections in Dance by Helenita Sá Earp (2019). This set of practices polyphonically composed some creative scripts established in *Abbreviated Stories*.

The discipline was focused on themes that involved: a) creative exploration of movement with breathing exercises; b) self-massage, c) meditations; d) exploration of objects; e) assembling installations; f) creative visualizations and automatic writing; in an original and essential care based on the Theory of Principles and Open Connections in Dance by Helenita Sá Earp (2019) in dialogue with proposals present in Yoga and Mindfulness. In this way, we carried out movement research and improvisation laboratories aiming at the creation of small dance solos that helped us to build and mature the final concept of the project.

The fundamental point is that, after all, each corporeity has specific practical potentialities, typical of the habitus it embodies, in such a way that it became much more appropriate for each one to address the theme of honoring to loved ones taken by Covid-19 in his emotional and spiritual uniqueness in the creation of its Reels. In addition to individual physicality, there is thus the level of cultural kinesiology, whose dispositions are collectively established, and which particularize the possibilities of each body. The acceptance of this plurality of bodies and their specificities of movement is a central part of the pedagogical foundation of this approach to dance that permeates this proposal. An open proposal that seeks to provide access to dance practice for all bodies. The acceptance of this plurality of bodies and their specificities of movement is a central part of the pedagogical foundation of the dance approach that permeates this proposal. An open proposal that seeks to provide access to dance practice for all bodies. This was especially relevant if we consider the context of the encounter of such different life experiences of the people who engaged in the action and the situations they experienced in front of this drama.

### **Instagram Reels as a Network of Affections**

*Abbreviated Stories*<sup>11</sup> is an invitation for the expression of tributes of those who had their life story shortened because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Through the hashtag #historiasabreviadas, the initiative builds a large mosaic of affections in multiple forms of expression, repositioning art as a place of listening and care (figure 6). The initiative is an invitation to empathy and overcoming, a welcoming and safe place to assimilate the period of mourning we are going through.

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<sup>11</sup> Curators: André Meyer, Cristina Lyra de Carvalho Vianna, Francielle Fanaya, Miriam Struz. Coordination: Cristina Rego Monteiro da Luz, Karen Acioly.



Figure 6. Instagram Reels as a mosaic of affections. Images: Vitória Pedro e Araújo, Thaísa Faustino, José Édipo da Silva Santos and Danielle Vianna Menezes Pinto Almeida.

Dance was inserted as the main format of homage and empathy (figures 7 and 8).



Figure 7. Thaísa Faustino dancing as a form of caring. Images: Thaísa Faustino.



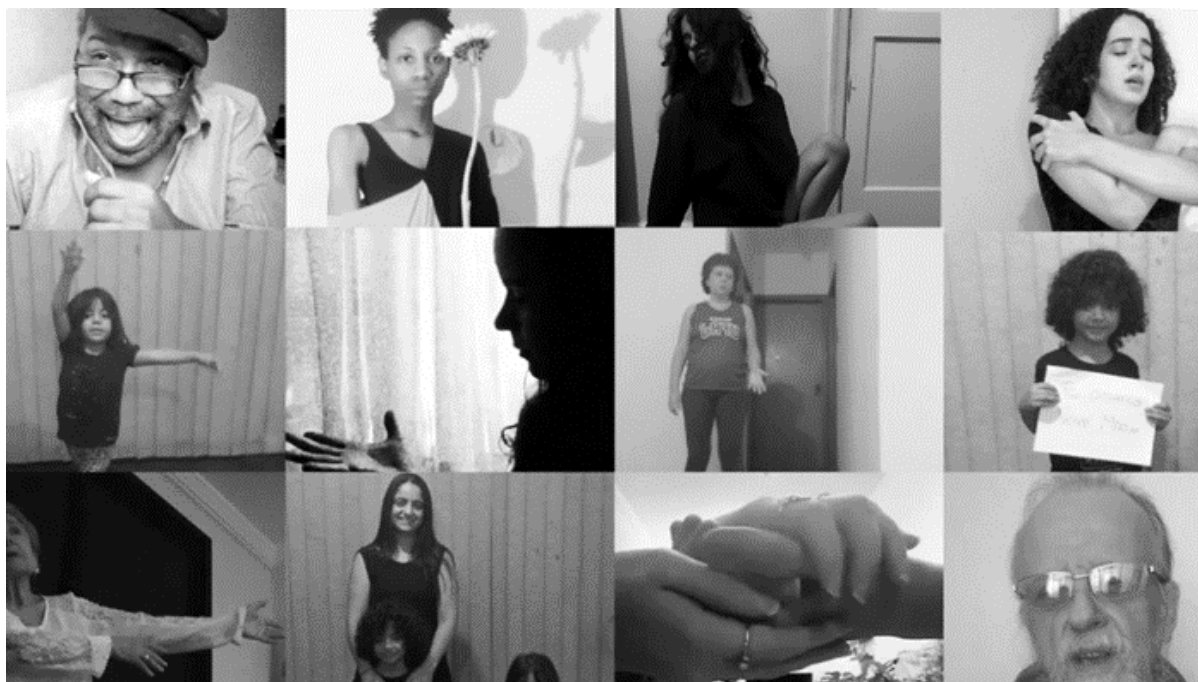


Figure 8. The expression in the theatricality of affective movement. Images: Berenice Xavier, Danielle Vianna and family, José Édipo da Silva Santos, Luiz Claudio Alzuguir, Mari Paz, Thaísa Faustino, Vitória Albuquerque, Yasmin Moreira and Raissa de Sousa Lima.

But there was also openings for drawings, poetry, music and artistic gestures in their broadest sense (figure 9). Our *Abbreviated Stories* took shape. The action intends to reposition art as a place of listening and healing. An invitation to empathy and overcoming, as well as a perfect and safe place to look at the period of mourning we are going through.



Figure 9. The fire element as an archetypal image of transformation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962) dedicated a part of his book (published post-mortem) *Fragments of a Poetics of Fire* to the mythical figure of the Phoenix. The image of the Phoenix involves the sense of renewed potential. "In phenomenology, it is necessary to believe in an unbelievable image, without, however, surrendering to credulity. Poets help us through subtle variations of images, to bring the legendary bird to life" (1990, p. 52) This image was

The research topics in photography, layout and graphic design took place in an integrated way and dialogued with each other, deepening their discoveries and creative processes in their respective expertise. All processes were done in a Shared Production of Knowledge format remotely. All the findings of the collective were strengthened in the elaboration of the action script, where themes were merged, in the sense of the elaboration of imagery frames of the Reels.

## Network Communication for Narrative Construction

In addition to curating and directly calling artists from our professional and social circle, we designed a community strategy to increase our reach. Instagram was the platform chosen for the distribution and dissemination of content because it is a social network with good viralization and engagement metrics. As we said earlier, Reels is the format with the greatest potential currently on the Instagram social network, being possible to publish videos and vertical animations of up to 60 seconds. The reach of Reels style posts is high, as the platform distributes content to users interested in your segment, not limited to your page followers. Unlike the “Stories” feature, also from Instagram, the Reels are stored on the profile after 24 hours and can still appear in the “Explore” tab or in the “Feed” scrolling.

Therefore, to optimize the attraction of people who were not yet following our Instagram and encourage those who already followed to explore the other videos posted, we chose Reels as the main distribution resource of *Abbreviated Stories*.

Some other strategies were decisive for the expansion of the network, such as: 1) Recurring post, after all “those who are not seen, are not remembered”. From the release of the material received until the launch of the festival<sup>13</sup>, we had an average recurrence of one post per day. 2) Colloquial and informal, yet affectionate language. An accessible base mixed with poetic words and expressions, generating more welcoming sensations, feelings and emotions. 3) Synthetic support texts. We prioritized short texts and used spacing between paragraphs for a more fluid reading. In addition to the use of key emojis that lead and make communication more informal, such as: the rose, the star, the yellow heart and reading direction arrows. 4) Use of hashtags to filter and optimize our presence in searches and in user segmentation. In addition to creating the personalized tag #historiasabreviadas (#abbreviatedstories in English), we chose broader ones, such as: #homenagem, #memorial, #corrente #festival, #arte, #artecura, #covid, #covid19 (#tribute, #memorial, #chain #festival, #art, #artheals, #covid, #covid19 in English). 5) Inclusion of the action name at the beginning of all videos, plus standard closing vignette. In this

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kindly created for the action by Professor Cristina Rego Monteiro da Luz, coordinator of the discipline Creation and Cultural Production: Festivals Experimental in the Graduate Program in Creative Media /PPGMC-UFRJ.

<sup>13</sup> On August 28th and 29th, 2021.

way, we were able to create a unity in the posts. 6) Strategy to inflate the community: we entered some pages of common interest to our segment, such as “Dança UFRJ” (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro’s Dance Department) and “Arte” (“Art”). From there, we did a thorough job of following the users in that social network and sending, via direct, an invitation for users to get to know our action. In this way, we gained some followers out of curiosity.

## Final Results and Considerations

In less than 20 days, we gained 200 followers with an average engagement of ten followers per day in a completely organic way. Until the launch of the action on the Cultura em Casa website of the Secretariat of Culture of the São Paulo State (figure 11) the project counted on the engagement of dozens of artists from dance, theater, music, plastic arts and science teachers from different regions of the country.



Figure 11. Launch on the Cultura em Casa website of the Secretariat of Culture – SP.

Building *Abbreviated Stories*, together with the “ImaginAções” Festival, was a touching experience of many hands and many eyes. A work based on empathy and listening, two fundamental pillars for the creation of powerful actions.

During the project we faced several challenges, the biggest one being dealing with a painful topic, but transforming it into hope and positive inspiration. Thinking about an affective action that speaks of death without being painful or intrusive was a key issue. It is easier to talk about joy than sadness on a social entertainment network like Instagram. Still, we felt that it was possible to access people’s loss through a counter-flow path, with good feelings like hope, love and art.

We could observe that the exchange of affections with the public we engaged was intimate, as we shared their artistic skills and sometimes personal stories of their families. We learned throughout the process as we nurtured and were nurtured constantly. There are many feelings that we take from this experience, but the main ones are those of compassion and gratitude. Compassion for sharing the pain of others when listening to mourning stories, however full gratitude, for the dedication of people who exposed their image in solidarity with the theme.

Making a festival is a challenge but making an online festival with people who are just getting to know each other virtually is an even bigger challenge, but in contrast, the project also gave us the opportunity to work in a group, awakening the best of each one's aptitude. It was as if the proposal brought us together and gave us strength to move forward helping each other to provide a cuddle in the midst of a difficult period for all humanity. Today the *Abbreviated Stories* project stands as a way to walk a path and a culture of peace and healing, for everyone who wants to embrace this cause.

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