

Research report

**Developing socio-cultural technologies for
mental health interventions in São Paulo, Brazil:
Interface of arts, health and culture**Eliane Dias de Castro, Elizabeth Maria Freire de Araújo
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Abstract. *The Laboratório de estudos e pesquisas Arte, Corpo e Terapia Ocupacional at University of São Paulo develops teaching, research and assistance activities connected to the public policies concerning mental health, humanization and culture, introduced in Brazil from 2000 onwards, contributing to the quality of services offered to the community. This article presents a panorama of these actions, informed by the social movements surrounding the de-institutionalization of 'madness' and the rights of disabled people, which constitute a new field of practices in occupational therapy. Focusing on the complex demands of the target population and the expansion of their socio-cultural participation, the main methods for monitoring and evaluating these activities are through qualitative research, with the aims to build local knowledge of occupational therapy oriented by creative actions and clinical, artistic and cultural references. The strategies developed increased the access of this public to artistic and cultural experiences in the city territory and contributed to the construction of life projects, forms of participation, living together and the production of subjectivity. Nowadays, socio-cultural technologies have been configured in concordance with the importance of building contemporary proposals for people deprived of their life networks.*

Keywords: Social Intervention, Occupational therapy, Brazil, art and health.

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INTRODUCTION**Constructing a new approach to care based on the interface of health, arts and culture**

The set of practices resulting from the social mobilizations that stood up against the incarceration of mental illness in totalitarian institutions is responsible for a range of inventive experiences in the field of mental health, spread throughout the world. It was in this scenario, at the intersection with other social struggles related to the rights of disabled and socially vulnerable populations that *the Laboratório de estudos e pesquisa Arte, Corpo e Terapia Ocupacional*, along with the Occupational Therapy Course at University of São Paulo (USP), appeared in 1996 in São Paulo, Brazil. Accredited as a Research Group at *Conselho Nacional de Pesquisa* (CNP), the Laboratory produces socio-cultural technologies through social intervention practices that propose creative, participatory solutions for the population, assisted by occupational therapy in the interface of arts, health and culture.

The Laboratory team is comprised by university teaching staff and occupational therapists with graduate studies in interdisciplinary fields and a special emphasis on the dialogue between thought and practices in mental health, arts, philosophy, culture and education. The team also includes interns from the occupational therapy course; post-graduate specialization and Master's students; artists; art-educators and collaborating therapists; and students on grants from USP and public foundations supporting research projects.

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In their everyday activities, the team faces the challenge of the construction of critical knowledge capable of bringing together multiple actions that place the occupational therapy clinic far beyond the fragmented know-how that is so common in healthcare. Inter-disciplinarity is a contemporary presupposition in the consolidation of this area. It demands from research to encompass other fields of knowledge and for these fields to work closely, configuring an inter-connected network of mutually consistent concepts that allow for an approach to problems that favors advances and the necessary inventiveness. Such a process requires the presence of several people who collectively study this way of operating so as to construct contemporary scientific knowledge (Morin as cited in Carvalho, 1992).

To this end, the Laboratory has established partnerships with projects and institutions that operate within the interface of arts and health – which have also contributed to the widening of the field and the number of people benefiting. Among the partners are institutions of social and cultural importance which offer their contributions to projects with shared characteristics and interests, and which operate as important experiments of social change.

A watchful eye and care regarding the activities held help in the process of the socio-cultural participation of the people assisted. Drawing, painting, modeling, music, poetry, narrative, dance, performance, among other artistic manifestations in the life of these people and groups, release movements of commitment to a clinical exercise. In this sense, it is indispensable to take into account the limited situations experienced by those who, facing clinical states and/or absolute social disadvantage, do not fail to find a thread that joins fragments of their stories to creative moments, lead to artistic production and imprint fundamental transformations on their lives (Castro, 2001).

The approximation to the fields of art, health and education, and the possibility of increasing access to the socio-cultural universe facilitate the construction of answers to the complex demands of the populations assisted considering the socio-political questions of the country, in ways that are increasingly important in their trajectory.

These actions promote a collective experience that brings together teaching, research and assistance to the community. It also creates conditions for the development of innovative knowledge in universities and public health and cultural institutions in Brazil, favoring the structuring of more democratic public policies in the country.

As initially mentioned, the Laboratory team is placed in a perspective of resistance to the marginalization of social groups and supports the construction of substantial rights that marked the Brazilian society from the 1980s onwards. Brazil at this time was going through a period of great change, with the end of the military dictatorship and the strengthening of important democratic movements in defense of the peoples' rights, culminated in the declaration of a new constitution in 1988. Standing out among these movements are those focused on improving attention to health, which stimulated interdisciplinary actions and produced new meanings for clinical practice.

In this environment, the Movement for Health Reform led the *Sistema Único de Saúde* (SUS), the organization that administers the public health system in Brazil, with proposals for the decentralization and regionalization of the health service, in a perspective of equality, integrality, universality and free access, guided by the constitutional mandate of health as a fundamental right. Following this, came the *Anti-manicomial* Movement, aimed at overcoming the asylum model and ending practices such as the torture, violence, exclusion and maltreatment delivered in these institutions. Along with these transformations, the organization and struggle of people with disabilities for the right to the same social opportunities as other citizens, such as improvement in their living conditions and socio-cultural surroundings, deepened the demands and widened the construction of proposals that would guarantee access to experiences that allows the development of the creative, artistic, cultural and intellectual potential of everyone (ONU/WHO, 1996). These movements influenced the attitude of professionals and people in general, introducing new concepts and technical approaches to face what in the field of health and culture was limiting the access of people with disabilities or mental suffering to cultural and social benefits.

In health interventions, specifically in occupational therapy, a new notion of rehabilitation has been influential, based on actions, whose main direction was the construction of substantial rights (affective, relational, material, housing, productive and cultural) of the target population. Along with it, there was an interest in researching the transformations happening in the social, cultural, and economic

dynamics of people with social vulnerability (Saraceno, 1995, p.11). Thus, the need for proposals that would restore the creative dimension to life was identified. As a result, in Brazil today there is a marked presence of artistic activities, and corporal practices in the field of rehabilitation and mental health. These activities are part of a set of strategies focused on the construction of life projects, the invention of new forms of social participation, the promotion of spaces of subjective exchange and the experimentation with unique ways of worthwhile production by the people being treated.

It was during this period that the public policies for vulnerable populations were strengthened. The *Anti-manicomial* Movement led to Psychiatric Reform in Brazil and resulted in a mental health policy that proposed new approaches to psychic suffering. Various services were created, with a view to replacing old psychiatric hospitals with new facilities and care strategies: day-care centers, mental health beds in regular hospitals, residential therapeutic services, *Centros de Convivência e Cooperativa* (CECCOs) and *Centros de Atenção PsicoSocial* (CAPS).

Mental health policy began to encourage actions that promoted the integration of users into socio-cultural and community spaces. A great number of experiences in culture, art and leisure workshops were thus made viable through inter-sectorial policies in partnership between public, private sector and civil society institutions. Dance groups, conversation forums, art workshops, music groups and theater companies, all with the participation of people with a history of disability, began to be part of the city scenario.

The *IV National Conference on Mental Health*, held in 2010, widened the debate on inter-sectoriality, considering the importance of establishing forms of cooperation between health and other sectors of society. The proposals recommended the implementation of services in community spaces that would develop projects to promote mental health and the prevention of suffering through art workshops, culture and sports activities, establishing partnerships between health, sports, leisure, cultural and educational services. In addition, they considered it necessary “to guarantee cultural rights in the social, political and economic spheres, improving assistance regarding socio-environmental health, from children to the elderly, and people with a disability, promoting art, and the culture of peace and leisure” (SUS, 2010, p. 105).

Unifying initiatives between health and culture had been underway since 2007, when the workshop entitled *Loucos pela diversidade* [i.e., “From the diversity of madness to the identity of culture”], took place. This was an initiative between the Brazilian Ministry of Health and the Brazilian Ministry of Culture. The workshop brought together professionals, teachers, students, researchers, artists, cultural producers and users of mental health services throughout Brazil, all involved in cultural projects in the area of mental health, recommending public cultural policies for people in distress living in social risk (Amarante & Lima, 2008).

As a result of this initiative, in 2009, the *Loucos pela Diversidade* Prize was established for artists, autonomous groups and institutions that developed consistent and significant artistic practices, predominantly in extremely precarious conditions. In this way, artists and groups gained strength on the Brazilian cultural scene, innovating languages and questioning the value of the places traditionally set aside for people suffering psychically. The valuing of diversity and the right to active participation in cultural life favored in new debates, awards and other public policies that prioritize people in vulnerable social states – many of which are developed in partnership with the fields of health and education – was a mark of the work of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture from 2003 onwards.

The *Cultura Viva* Program represents the main point of inflection in this transformation. Based on the affirmation of culture as a human right, it values cultural diversity, and relocates the role of the State on improving and strengthening the creative force already existing in each corner of the country, especially in the areas of greater vulnerability and social risk. It is also supported by the axes of creation and expression, free access, diffusion and participation in decisions on cultural policy.

Pontos de Cultura, the main strategy of the *Cultura Viva* Program, is implemented by public notices. It began to stimulate projects with human, material and financial resources so that they can function as poles in an interconnected network of diffusion, and enhancing the creative capacity of the population, including the non-material heritage of the country and the popular culture of different groups and regions. This initiative, which does not stem from pre-established models for its functioning,

decentralizes the management and distribution of resources and favors the multiplication of the most varied forms of expression and co-existence (Brasil, 2014).

From these mental health and cultural public policies came repercussions for the policies of humanization in health, which opened up an interweaving of practices and conceptual fields and affirmed a renewal in the processes of the production of subjectivity. *Política Nacional de Humanização (HumanizaSus; Brasil, 2003)* was created in 2003 as a public policy with the objective to humanize the health provision and inform a substantial change in the culture of medical attention by increasing the degree of co-responsibility between patients and professionals and promoting changes in the management of work processes. This policy proposes a collective construction operating on different levels: knowledge exchange between everyone involved in health care (team, users and their social network); dialogues on the ways of working in a team; the widening of spaces for experience sharing; and the addition of new qualities to care practices already developed. The policy of humanization emphasizes that the production of health is not disconnected from the individuals, and that the role, autonomy and proactivity of those involved in this process are reaffirmed. Thus, the actions of this policy occur through 'relational technologies', which enable changes in ways of relating, caring, working and managing care and networking, all shown to be essential in the process of humanization. It is necessary to state that the advances in Brazilian public policies are undeniable, but unfortunately the expansion and maintenance of the offers of projects constituted in the interface of arts and health are still insufficient and restricted. The proliferation of experiences also derives from the production of knowledge resulting from an effort towards its systematization and the militancy of some professionals. Historically, in Brazil there were pioneering experiences that took place throughout the 20th century. These, in more or less favorable circumstances, proposed approximations between the production of artistic activities and participation in cultural life. Developed by psychiatrists Nise da Silveira and Osório César and artist Lygia Clark, these experiences are internationally recognized. They engendered concepts and practices around artistic work in relation to clinical practice and became guidelines for studies, teaching and training in the interface of arts and health. The contemporary movement for the development of actions in this interface highlights questions that can reach a status of relevance to analyze factors for the construction of knowledge, pointing out zones of creation and tension between the arts, culture, clinical practice and health that strive to go beyond the barriers of disciplines that often remain incommunicable.

Since the implementation of public policies focused on vulnerable populations, the *Laboratório de estudos e pesquisas Arte, Corpo e Terapia Ocupacional* has sought to relate its teaching and assistance activities to the principles of these policies, contributing to the improvement of the quality of services offered to the population. The strategies developed have widened access for the people assisted to artistic experiences on the city territory. They have also contributed to the construction of life projects, forms of participation, and interpersonal relations, configuring socio-cultural technologies in line with the importance of building contemporary proposals for people socially excluded, dispossessed of their life networks.

METHODOLOGIES: CONVERGING PATHS As a transversal experiment between the axes of research, teaching and assistance demanded by university work, the Laboratory develops its methodologies in diverse directions, accentuating the possibilities of aesthetic experimentation, clinical practice and training in occupational therapy and arts. In this sense, some methodologies are developed focusing on assistance, while others are directed towards the training of professionals to operate in the art and health interface, in the monitoring of people and their mediation with society. These ways of working will be separated below into two topics, although this separation is more complex in the daily routine of the Laboratory team, since training demands offering assistance to people who, in their turn, stimulate changes in the training of the students.

Teaching methodologies

The approach of students to this work derives from undergraduate work subjects, supervision graduate groups, specialization courses and university study grants. To receive and train these students, the

Laboratory team develops methodological strategies including experiments and interventions along with other students (monitoring graduate students, helping teaching staff in the preparation of the schedule and conduct of classes), and with the people assisted by this Laboratory's teaching-assistance project. The actions that constitute this training methodology have the following principal axes:

- 1) orienting and recording interventions as a memory and inventing device in relation to events experienced; this comprises therapeutic records, and a construction of an aesthetic and expressive register material to assist in the monitoring of the students;
- 2) planning and discussing interventions in group and individual supervisions which offer students support and containment so that their experiences can be thought over and questioned;
- 3) reflecting and studying through reading and writing groups, and preparing seminars in regular meetings to link discussions from supervisions to conceptual perspectives that put the students in contact with the references which sustain practice in the interface of arts and health;
- 4) setting up team discussions dealing with themes related to collective projects and the support network, as well as in-depth thematic seminars allowing the contextualization of each action in the set of proposals from the Laboratory's teaching-assistance project and in the institutional structure of the university.

Intervention methodologies - the Laboratory's teaching-assistance project: PACTO

Little by little, the Laboratory team experiments move to the territories of different subjects and invent ways of composing with or from them, whether by partnership, interference, exchange or diversion. Clinical, educational, artistic and cultural practices are created and developed in these approximations, which seek to reach the main point of interest, namely, the participation of the people assisted by occupational therapists in the socio-cultural spaces of urban communities. The *Programa Composições Artísticas e Terapia Ocupacional* (PACTO) stands out in the range of projects developed and it operates with basic references to contemporary movements in the arts (Burger, 2008 [1974]; Favaretto, 2008; Ranciere, 2005), psychosocial rehabilitation (Saraceno, 2001; Pitta, 1996) and the production of subjectivity (Deleuze, 1997; Guattari, 1992; Pelbart, 2003). PACTO is part of the teaching, research and assistance actions of the University of São Paulo, is a partner in SUS and since 1998 has constructed a network of group projects offering advice on occupational therapy and free assistance for children, adolescents, adults and the elderly, experiencing difficulties in the running of their daily lives, in participating in socio-cultural activities and in facing the problems arising from their physical, intellectual or sensorial disabilities and/or mental suffering along with social vulnerability.

Due to difficult access to other assistance services, the population served by the projects is characterized by a precarious socio-economic profile: problems with housing, transport, difficulty in being admitted to schools, to the labor market, and in social networks in general. People resort to PACTO because they need places for exchange and co-existence, for deepening technical knowledge and experimentation in artistic and body languages and for clinical monitoring in occupational therapy. Some requests for assistance are spontaneous, but participants are mainly referred by health and culture teams or professionals from a variety of fields. Added to this profile is the predominance of users of mental health services, resulting mainly from the fact that most projects are developments of social mobilizations and public health and cultural policies related to proposals for the deinstitutionalization of madness, carried out in artistic and cultural activities in the city territory. It must be pointed out that all projects include the participation of students from all health fields – mainly occupational therapy – and the arts, who contribute to the functioning of the projects and are, at the same time, trained by PACTO teaching team and research services.

All the groups assisted by PACTO network are composed of extremely heterogeneous people, since no project is set up based on diagnostic or social markers, but rather prioritizes individual interests and needs related to the activities being developed. The intention is to engender with participants the power of a group, which avoids annulling or smoothing out differences, leading these to be engines of encounter and social belonging. These projects implant transformations in the daily lives of these people and favor their participation in cultural activities in the city territory, through research and

experimentation, development of an artistic repertoire, strengthening of personal growth, improving relational experience and increasing life possibilities, including access to facilities and services where they can exercise their creative, artistic, intellectual and relational potential (Lima *et al.*, 2009a).

Since it was established, PACTO has monitored groups that use arts and bodily practices as devices in workshops whose methodology includes art making, strengthening relationships with others and enhancing social exchange, cultural updating and the diffusion of the works of art produced in art exhibitions, thus generating the participation of users and their production in the city circuit (Castro *et al.*, 2007). To offer support to group projects, a set of actions focused on the specific demands of the people using the service are developed by *Rede de Sustentação* (Support Network). This is an initiative that offers support to some participants through therapeutic monitoring, individual and family assistance, mediation of health and socio-cultural institutions, help in getting to group meetings and access to other artistic and cultural proposals.

Artistic activities are understood as constructions and experimentations capable of hosting and giving form to singular experiences that stretch the hegemonic limits of understanding and elaboration in a verbal language, enabling other forms of expression. Circumscribed in the scope of human activities and productions, while originating in the field of mental health and clinical practice, the exercise of this work is constituted in the interface between occupational therapy and the arts by moving clinical practice to the field of invention. At the same time, it moves the focus of the intervention on the disease to the encouragement of different ways of life. It also allows new possibilities of action and encounters for practitioners and users.

'Life projects' are developed when necessary, in conjunction with service users and their families, with heavy investment in guaranteeing rights and citizenship, in the attention to the routes of affectivity, and to the reconstruction of life stories. The function of the program's occupational therapists is as interlocutors and mediators between the participants and social spaces, creating the necessary conditions for the widening of possibilities of attending to clinical questions, circulation in city territory and the restoration or initiation of social ties. In this sense, the devices linked to PACTO configure practices of social intervention that affirm an ethical-political commitment and show markers for the production of socio-cultural technologies for the participation of the population in a situation of social vulnerability which accentuate singular traits and value diversity. Such devices have contributed to the effectiveness of public policies in the different locations where they are inserted. In a movement of feedback, they have also improved from the conceptual production and practice generated by the same policies, accompanying changes in the scenario of socio-cultural participation and, consequently, collaborating in the training of students and professionals in occupational therapy.

Territorial relations: partnerships

In order to strengthen the place of experimentation of these ways of acting in the interface of arts, health and culture, PACTO initially developed projects directly attached to the university space. As time passed, the demands were modified (both in relation to university work and projects in the arts, health and culture interface in a national sphere), which caused a gradual displacement in this investment. The actions have now moved exclusively to territory outside the university, distributed throughout various regions of the city of São Paulo, functioning through collaboration agreements.

PACTO's proposal always emphasized ways of existing and participating in socio-cultural processes, and along with this came a dedication to the construction of and collaboration with projects in city territory. Through partnerships with experiments developed in institutions and public services, in initiatives by civil society and non-governmental organizations with a view to public health and culture, PACTO extended its network of attention and training in the interface of arts, health and culture. Throughout this trajectory, many projects have been part of this network: educational sectors of museums and art exhibitions, workshops in associations for people with disabilities, autonomous theater groups, art, dance and choral singing, groups for artistic and bodily activities in CAPSs and CECCOs, workshops and projects in cultural centers and libraries, among so many others. Nowadays, the design of the PACTO network comprises the group units below, which are coordinated by interdisciplinary teams of therapists and artists, offered to the people in heterogeneous compositions (people in a situation of vulnerability because of disability, psychic suffering and/or social risk).

- *Agenciamento LAPA* [LAPA Assemblage]: an inter-sectorial proposal established in the region of Lapa (west zone of the city of São Paulo), joining three institutional segments – CAPS Lapa, PACTO and *Tendal da Lapa* Cultural Center – and the community benefiting from services. It is characterized by meetings to discuss demands for participation in health, educational, social assistance and cultural institutions, formulating interdisciplinary proposals and constructing actions that make viable joint work conditions to face the complex themes that occur in the daily life of the people who live in the region, encouraging participation in cultural events in the area;
- *CECCO Parque da Previdência*: a social center from the public health network that offers workshops of artistic-cultural activities to a heterogeneous population, aiming at experiences in collective situations that stimulate exploration of the territory, contact and living together;
- *Coletivo de Criação* [Creation Collective]: group of artistic research and insertion of productions into the artistic-cultural circuit to extend the visibility of ways of doing, initiate processes of experimentation in languages and artistic production and organize a state of production-process geared to affections, living together, and the horizontality of knowledge;
- *Coral Cênico Cidadãos Cantantes* [Singing Citizens Scenic Choir]: experimentation in the transit between choral singing, arts and health, with proposals for relational and territorial intermediation, with the participation of mental health services users, socially vulnerable people and general population interested in those field;
- *Cia Teatral UEINZZ* [Theater Company]: performance and theatrical experimentations that bring together actors with a history of attendance to mental health services and institutions.
- *CECCO É de Lei*: Non-Government Organization that develops artistic proposals with photos, videos and interventions in the city offered to vulnerable populations associated with drug use, and living in downtown São Paulo.

These practices occur in more or less socially and economically deprived networks, aiming for the inclusion of health services users in the socio-cultural warp. They work to restore participation and life in the community and produce singular experiences of social transformation and artistic and cultural experimentation, increasing the assistance field and the number of beneficiaries. In accordance with this Laboratory's perspective, the field of occupational therapy has shown itself to be effective in the intermediation of these networks, constructing bridges between people and projects, and between the projects themselves, revealing the multiplicity and importance of this work (Coutinho *et al*, 2009; Lima *et al*, 2009b; Maluf *et al*, 2009; Pelbart, 1998; Soares *et al*, 2009).

Finally, in order to go deeper in this report, we chose one of the practical experiences, named *PACTO Exposições*, to illustrate how a group, built and assisted in the above perspectives, can produce creative experiences in order to strengthen and empower transformation in mental health and socio-cultural participation and production.

IN PACTO EXHIBITIONS – THE ARTWORK IN THE WORLD The experiences here affirm that time and space are fundamental so that various forms of doing, expressing, inventing, and knowing can be gathered together in a perspective in which the human condition is presented in its diversity. In the monitoring of the body and art workshops, the emergence of new layers of experience makes it possible to extend connectivity with the world and strengthen co-existence and the creation of ties, which generates multiple projects. In the meetings held, diverse forms of circulation in city territory can be experimented, relations with the artistic-cultural world can be established, and new forms of relations between people can be created.

The experience of creative processes and technical training for the production of art developed in the workshops was anchored in methodologies sufficiently open to initiate an effective dialogue with the needs of the people involved. In addition, it was possible to keep the participants in activity, promote the production of health and create territories to live in the world. In this context, productive forces

became available and strengthened human action. At the same time, the experiences of oppressive marginalization, solitude, idleness and anguish lived out by the participants were confronted.

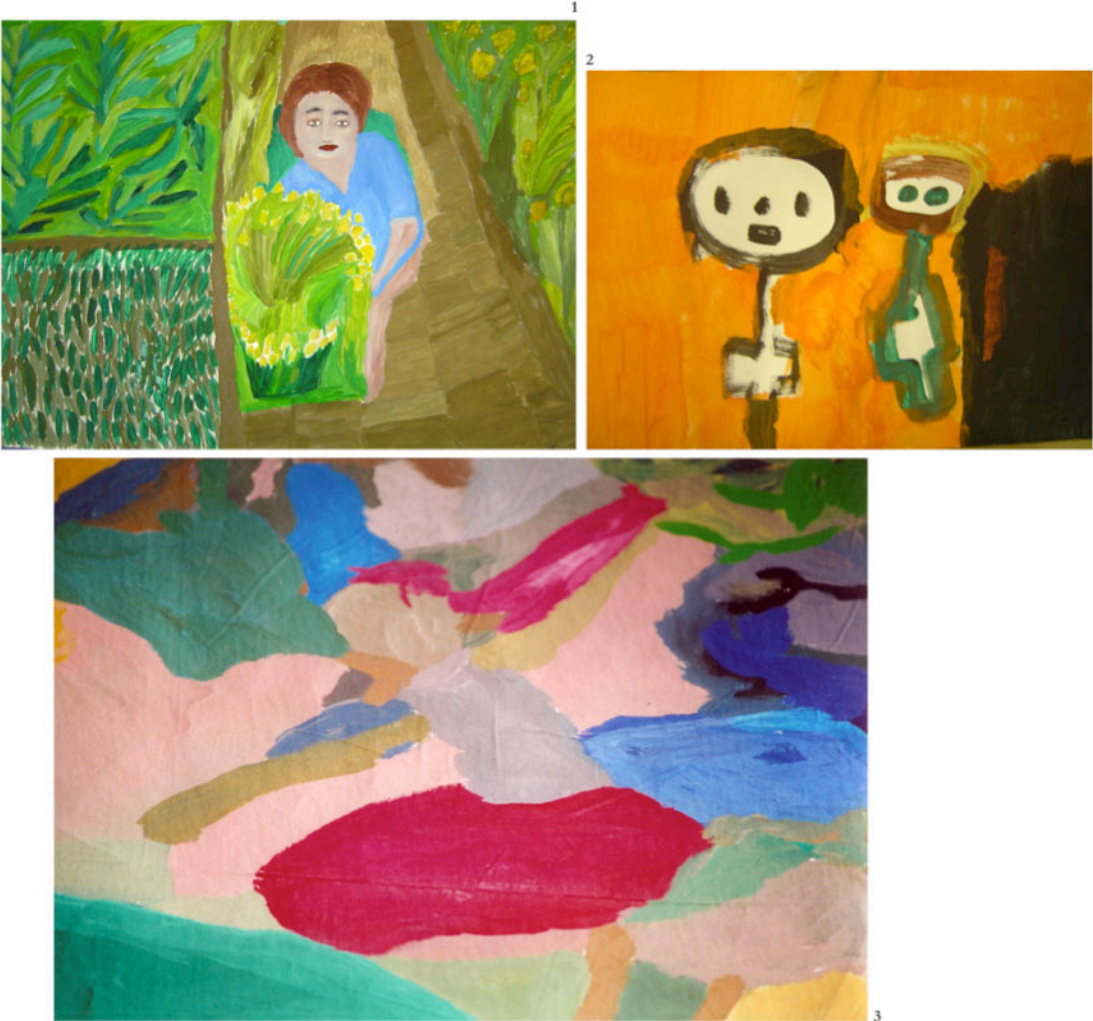
The *PACTO-Exposições* project occupied places of culture, language, creation, research, re-invention of the environment and the enriching of ways of life and sensibility. The idea for the exhibition arose from discussions by a group of participants on what to do with the work of art produced. There was a desire to show what had been done, to have achievements recognized. The exhibition would also have the function of finalizing the stage of the group's work.

Most participants were adults discharged from mental health services, still monitored by mental health workers; others were homeless; and there were also elderly people with depressive traits or experiences marked by great loneliness. These participants were followed up in the *PACTO-Exposições* project for over five years, and throughout this process, an incredible vitality and creative force were revealed. There was an emergence of a new attitude towards mental health highlighted by the desire to transform lives and relations with the wider social-cultural environment.

As the contact and involvement with the artistic production of the workshops revealed a research into art and a renovation of expressive and communicative languages, a collision with the rules of established art inevitably occurred. Unexpected productions deconstructed the way of looking, provoked surprise and questioning, disturbed the sensible organization and demanded that the group take time to think about how to exhibit this production. This was followed by a careful act of curatorship, organizing and selecting individual and group production, which enchanted everyone involved with its expressive strength. Thus, the decision was taken to show this production to an unknown public, who moved around the cultural networks. In a long process of setting up the exhibition, collective decisions were being taken regarding how to exhibit the works, what to say about them and how to say it, and how to materialize the project, which generated the feeling necessary for a creative event. This collective enterprise worked to create an opening to the world of culture in the dialogue with other people, with spectators. The group gave the name *IN PACTO* to the exhibition that arose from this process. Upon conceiving it, a double challenge was faced: preserving the authorial mark of each participant and at the same time making visible the conducting thread that made the work produced in collective workshops coherent. The *IN PACTO* exhibitions took place in two cultural centers in the city of São Paulo and were comprised of 84 works. Paintings, woodcuts, and sculptures were presented through a collective exhibition with opening parties and events and specific materials created for each edition. The exhibitions initiated a process making the works visible, which resulted in an aesthetic fact, and as it gained substance, it came into the world and could be shared. Inserting these works into the artistic-cultural circuit of the city was a way – considered extremely significant by everyone – of valuing these individuals as creators of beauty and restlessness and, above all, regarding their position in the eyes of their families, friends and their place in the world; not only as a consumer of culture but a 'maker' of it, an agent of transformation. The mental suffering, which up to then had been confined to treatment spaces, gained ground into the world, and was transmuted into poetic works. There was an intense and pulsating process of participation at all stages of the work, which demanded group growth in the care for the productions and an invention of ways to work together in the interlocution with cultural spaces. Last but not least, it initiated the work of the occupational therapist as a cultural articulator of singular processes, which made possible the support of the group in the construction of these exhibitions (Barbosa, 2010).

Throughout this process it was noticed that the experience of holding the *IN PACTO* exhibitions emancipated everyone and fundamentally the occupational therapists themselves, generating new possibilities of creative production and its cultural involvement, which improved the socio-cultural participation of the people involved and the entry of the artistic production in this interface field. This experience connected micro-actions to the broad structure of the proposals, their management and support.

The following images show some works and texts that emerged in this process. Each participant was invited to write some words about his or her experience of the exhibition. The images and some individual texts above were part of the *IN PACTO* virtual catalog. They were selected to show those experiences in another way (the image captions and some explanations about them are after the references).

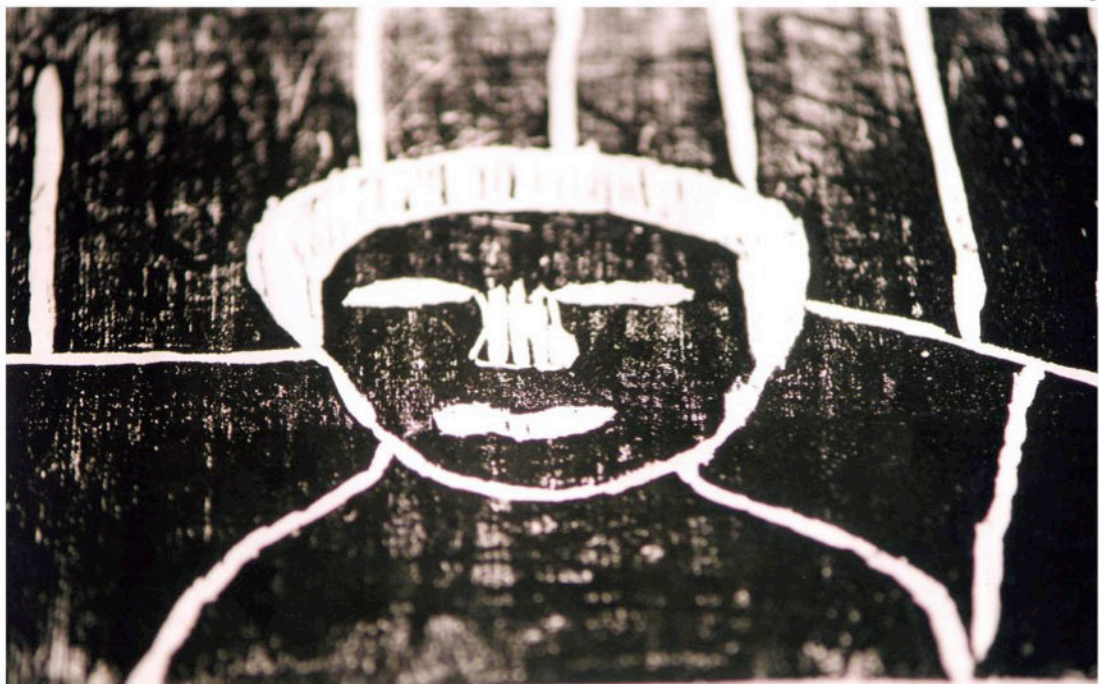




“In my unconscious, I see myself trapped in culture,
and I see in Arts the growth of a person.”

Fê Ribeiro





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10



Collective text produced based on texts of each participant in the IN PACTO exhibition:

It was a grey and cold afternoon
At the sound of a tune
Leaves danced in the western wind
I was in love with you
A torment inspiring feeling and suffering
Whoever hears your singing is not surprised

Htn,lvpqmdvkgkkkkkujggggggggee

Wagner enjoys painting Wagner
Art projects my feelings for people
Feeling, expressing, doing
That's what I did
I did Occupational Therapy
I've spent wonderful hours
Traveling inside curves coming from infinite imagination
And everything latent in me has become something
Passion
I've become soap
With my lemon-green plush pet

I see myself trapped in culture
There is always light and hope at the end of the tunnel
And the battle to learn many new things continues...

CONCLUSION

Cultural displacements

The *Laboratório de estudos e pesquisa Arte, Corpo e Terapia Ocupacional*, as a work in progress, has developed its own care approach as a response to necessity. It has extended and promoted openings in artistic and cultural spaces in the city of São Paulo, so that these spaces could receive the population whose circulation has been restricted to the health network. From this proposal arose the possibilities of divergent paths to the processes of homogenization of differences and of the historic-cultural tendency to institutionalize and devalue vulnerable people or those experiencing psychic suffering. The idea is that new sociability and new forms of resistance to processes of exclusion can be generated. PACTO, as a clinical-artistic-cultural program has contributed to the transit in the interface between arts and the production of health in a confrontation with a cultural territory that is extremely contradictory, dominated by a culture of consumerism, with the consequent exclusion of those who cannot participate in it.

In a world where there is a massive increase in psychic suffering, Franco Berardi (2011) proposes that social and political action should happen above all as mental and relational therapy. Therapy, according to the author, is not a technique of adaptation and integration of individuals into the normality of the society of consumerism, marked by constant competition and exhausted bodies, but the activation of sensibility and empathy. Aiming for this activation of sensibility and empathy, the long work experience, which involved the conception, implementation, development, support and care of this collective project, has made viable practices and constructions of networks that are important for both students, teachers, researchers and those people directly benefitting from the project. In this perspective, what stands out are the investments made in the training of professionals specializing in providing services in the interface of the arts, health and culture, and the production and structuring of knowledge that can support actions on this frontier.

These are questions that involve the production of expertise and knowledge and generate innovative practices. They can serve as a reference for other experiments and create data for future integration into public policies aimed at the production of health and the socio-cultural participation of the people assisted. The direction here is a permanent invention of a culture that does not prevent any segment of the community from participating, configuring a space of sensibility, corresponding to the necessary common exercise of politics:

Sensibility is the ability to understand signals that are neither verbal nor able to be put into words. It is the faculty for discerning the indiscernible, that which is too subtle to be digitized. It has always been the primary factor of empathy: understanding between human beings always happens, in the first place, at an epidemic level. And here is the political battlefield today. The intensification of the rhythm of exploration of the brain has led to the collapse of our sensibility and that is why the insurrection to come will be more than anything else a revolution of bodies. I think about a new type of political action capable of touching the profound sphere of sensibility, mixing art, activism and therapy. (Berardi, 2011, p.1)

The implications of the network of actions and projects presented in this paper highlight points of strength in a territory of fragilities that demands an approach that is simultaneously aesthetic, clinical and political. This approach considers the effects of the social functioning in life, as well as the movements of this functioning and the initiation of other policies of subjectivity, in which the mental space does not have its possibilities for experimentation strangled and in which life can truly expand.

NOTE This text is a result of the main research project of the *Laboratório de estudos e pesquisa Arte, Corpo e Terapia Ocupacional* and the authors worked together on both. The text was written in Portuguese by the authors and translated into English by a native translator.

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LEGEND FOR IMAGES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Paintings

1 - Maria Izabel; **The garden**, 2001; Gouache on paper; 43.5x63.5 cm.

2 – Wagner; **Wagner**, 2003; Gouache on paper; 31.5x43.5cm.

3 – ValériaPujol; **Dancer**, 2003; Oil;74x92cm.

4 – Fê Ribeiro; **Spirit lost in purity**, 2003; Oil; 80x100 cm; and part of his individual text about his experience of the exhibition.

5 – Marina Bonometti; **Floral**, 2003; Acrylic; 40x43 cm;

6 – Gragazzola; **Seduction**, 2003; Acrylic; 40x50 cm.

7 – Gragazzola; **Pilgrim**, 2002; Gouache on paper; 32.5x45 cm.

Woodcuts

8 – Joanes; **Narciso**, 2004; Woodcut on silk paper; 33x36 cm.

Sculptures

9 – Xester Rocha; **Coll – Pirate of the Universe**, 2004; Excavation in cellular concrete; 53x18 x18.5 cm.

10 – Xester Rocha; **Escultura 1**,2004; Excavation in cellular concrete; 53x18x18.5 cm.

Collective Work

11 – Collective Work; Hands, 2004; Woodcut on silk paper; 64x44 cm, and the collective text.

In this text, fragments of each participant's text were combined to produce a collective written piece. The extract “Htn, IvpqmdvKgKKKKKujgggggggggee” shows the language experimentation in the creative process of one participant.