

Images in cultural psychiatry

Crossing borders and inhabiting margins in Brazil: art, subjectivity, health and participation in Lygia Clark's and Hélio Oiticica's poetics

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Abstract. *This paper presents partial results of a post-doctoral research conducted at TrAIN - Transnational Art Identity and Nation Research Center. This research is part of a broader study designed to investigate how the fields of mental health and art became interrelated in Brazil between the mid-19th and 20th century. Our coordinates in the construction of this investigation were various works, paths and experiments, performed by artists, patients, doctors and therapists who brought together art, madness and clinical practice. In this field of interface, Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark played an important role as artists who have their poetic project marked by a close proximity to the production of subjectivity, health, and social participation. Their works were very much informed by a Brazilian experience with art developed in a Psychiatric Hospital. Conversely, pathways opened by their inventions could be of interest to contemporary mental health practices.*

Keywords: Art, mental health, subjectivity, social participation, occupational therapy, Brazil.

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INTRODUCTION At the end of the '90s, a group of researchers, occupational therapists, artists and students started an experiment at the *Universidade de São Paulo*, Brazil, that put together social, cultural and clinical practices to offer the community, and particularly to those who had difficulty participating in social life, an opportunity to develop their creative potential in different approaches and proposals in the field of art. We were not offering medical treatment, but group spaces to learn and practice artistic activities, which had a clinical dimension.

Words like creative process, body experimentation, participation and coexistence were involved in this proposal we called PACTO (**Note 1**), *Programa de Composições Artísticas e Terapia Ocupacional* (Artistic Composition and Occupational Therapy Program). This program provides free assistance to socially vulnerable people who face the weakness of social support networks – such as people with disabilities or mental health problems – by promoting artistic and bodily activity groups. This experience allows a new understanding of the practices in the art and health care interface, enabling us to observe the effects of these activities on people's lives and revealing the power of art as an instrument of self-emancipation (Lima *et al*, 2009).

Such an Occupational Therapy (OT) approach at the border with art, promotes encounters with aesthetic experimentation embodied in the most varied artworks and vital activities. Sculptures, paintings, gestures, movement, sound, texts, dispersed words created by individuals or groups, reflect extreme situations experienced in the confrontation with clinical states or social disadvantage (Castro,

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2002). Some of them do not transverse the limits of the treatment space. They are like aesthetic fragments or performances that cannot be reproduced. However, some of these works, crossing the thin layer that separates them from cultural production, present themselves in a wider collective space, capturing attention beyond those of the clinical specialists (Lima & Pelbart, 2007).

Figure 1



Inhabiting this territory of interface means that we are there with people making and doing things together (dancing, singing, painting, chatting, constructing objects); in short, building a common world. Thus, we are taken with the strength of art works, or by something that is not yet art, but perhaps may become art (Bausch, 2000). They provide great joy and learning, which allow us to sustain the more precarious and fragile elements in the life of each individual. And they can only do so because they present the experience of creating on extremely unstable and shifting ground.

MATERIALS AND METHODS At the same time as initiating this practical experience, we started working on a genealogy of these kinds of practices in Brazil, carrying out a historical study designed to investigate how the fields of mental health and art became interrelated in Brazil between the mid-19th and 20th century. It was also a kind of alternative genealogy for Brazilian OT, whose legacy is in fact closely related to the field of art (Lima, 2009; Lima & Pelbart, 2007).

Following this line of research, we dove into Hélio Oiticica's and Lygia Clark's work, trying to investigate their objects, thoughts, ideas, ways of doing and propositions, lines that connect these productions with clinical issues. Our interest was to retrace their connection with previous Brazilian experiences that have put together art and therapeutic practice, and examine whether their work was of interest to contemporary Brazilian health practices.

On doing this genealogy, we treated each one of the artworks and events as layers of time, trying to find what concerns us nowadays in these experiences. Thus, we worked with history, not in a linear perspective, but as a way to visit layers of time in a certain territory of experience, following Lygia Clark's pathways as she worked with the memory of all times present in one single body. According to Hélio Oiticica, the past is interesting as it makes up part of a dense present. These artists invite us on a journey not into our past but through our future (Braga, 2007).

RESULTS

A Brazilian difference: background and context

Clark says in one of her writings that Oiticica's work and her own could only have been done in Brazil, with the background they had (1997). Of course, the work of art is always the product of a heritage,

but we also consider the pointlessness of attempting to search for origins within cultural production, since every act is based on a variety of previous acts (Asbury, 2003). In this sense, what we tried to do in this project was to enrich and make more complex the knowledge of Lygia's and Hélio's background, highlighting some aspects that compose their heritage which goes beyond the field of art itself.

Many aspects composed this background. Some, pointed out by Paulo Herkenhoff (1999), indicate that Lygia's and Hélio's environment was impregnated by the proximity between art and madness (**Note 2**). In the 20th century, madness was seen in Brazil as a 'nomadic reason', says Herkenhoff. But more than that, he says that the neo-concrete movement (**Note 3**) in Rio de Janeiro had roots in the Occupational Therapy Section directed by Nise da Silveira (**Note 4**) at the *Hospital Psiquiátrico do Engenho de Dentro* (Engenho de Dentro Psychiatric Hospital). This experience, developed during the 1940s, resulted in the *Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente* (Unconscious Image Museum; **Note 5**) and had the collaboration of Almir Mavigner and Abraham Palatinik, young artists at the beginning of their careers at that time; Ivan Serpa, a pioneer in the concrete movement in Rio, and also Hélio Oiticica's teacher; and Mário Pedrosa, the most influential art critic at that time (Herkenhoff, 1999, p. 48).

Figure 2



Pedrosa is one of the four critics Oiticica considered capable of understanding his work. Not by coincidence, among the three others we find Ferreira Gullar, who wrote a book about Nise da Silveira, and Frederico Morais, who accompanied the appearance of Bispo do Rosário's (**Note 6**) works on the Brazilian cultural scene in the 1980s. Three of the four critics quoted by Oiticica were involved, interested and working with personages or events that made up the territory where art, madness and clinical practice met in Brazil during the 20th century. Of these, I would like to focus here briefly on Pedrosa's approach.

Pedrosa is one of the most important critics of art in Brazilian history. His combined engagement with politics, and the arts enabled him to renew the art world after World War II, by revitalising its utopian spirit (Asbury, 2007). In 1945, after his return from exile, a group of artists begin to gather around him to organize an artistic avant-garde in Rio de Janeiro. Among them: Ivan Serpa, Almir Mavigner, Lygia Clark, Lygia Pape, Abraham Palatinik, and later, Hélio Oiticica. In 1946, Pedrosa established a section in the *Correio da Manhã*, a Rio de Janeiro newspaper, to discuss art. In that same period, he was invited to visit the OT Section at *Engenho de Dentro* Psychiatric Hospital by Almir Mavigner, who worked at that time in an administrative role at the hospital, and had proposed working with Nise da Silveira in the Painting Studio (Castro & Lima, 2007).

Pedrosa (1995) considers that Nise da Silveira's initiative of organizing an Occupational Therapy Section in a Hospital, was among the more relevant and peculiar events at the time in the Brazilian cultural and artistic field. From this initiative emerged art exhibitions which, according to the critic,

had enormous cultural, aesthetic and psychic relevance, contributing to the rupture of intellectual, elitist, narrow and conventional concepts about artistic phenomena and their subsequent development.

Figure 3



In 1947, Pedrosa took part in organizing the first exhibition of works produced in the OT Section and also participated in an intense debate in the public sphere about the quality of the works exhibited and the relevance of the experience that was taking place in the hospital (Lima, 2009). After a series of articles, and to end the debate, he published *Arte, necessidade vital* (Art, vital need), an essay in which we can find germinating many ideas that he would later further develop. Some of these are also very connected with ideas that would cross over to the neo-concrete movement and the works of Clark and Oiticica. I would like to point out some of them here.

In this essay, Pedrosa says that “the will of art manifests itself in any man on our earth, regardless of his meridian. He could be Papuan or Afro-Indian, Brazilian or Russian, literate or illiterate, balanced or unbalanced” (Pedrosa, 1996, p. 46; **Note 7**). He also states that “there can be no barriers to the enchanted world of forms; there is no queue to enter its space, which belongs to no one and is common to all men without distinction. Joyful will be humanity when all men can enter in this space” (Pedrosa, 1996, p. 56; **Note 8**). Pedrosa concludes this text declaring that:

The main objective of a persistent, systematic artistic occupation is not the production of a masterpiece. (...) What comes from the head and the hand of the artist is not the most important aspect. What is important is what his or her personality acquires from such activities (Pedrosa, 1996, p. 62; **Note 9**).

In another paper written for the catalogue of the *Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente*, Pedrosa remarks on the importance of the environment created in the Painting Studio, which provided ways to experience the creative process. He says:

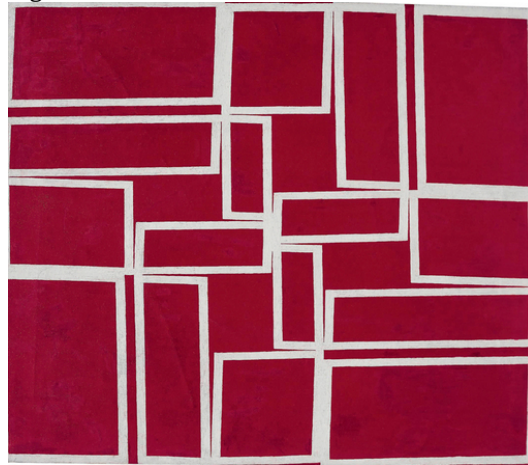
The first thing to verify [in those artists] – more or less talented, suffering more or less from infirmity – is that none of them could be what they are or were in isolation (...) In solitude any of them could have been simply destroyed by life. The society of Engenho de Dentro, despite its precarious resources, gave them an anchor to life (Pedrosa, 1980, p. 11; **Note 10**).

In the following pages we will try to show how these ideas informed and transversed the neo-concrete movement and, more specifically, Clark’s and Oiticica’s poetics.

The Neo-Concrete Movement: expressiveness, subjectivity and participation in art

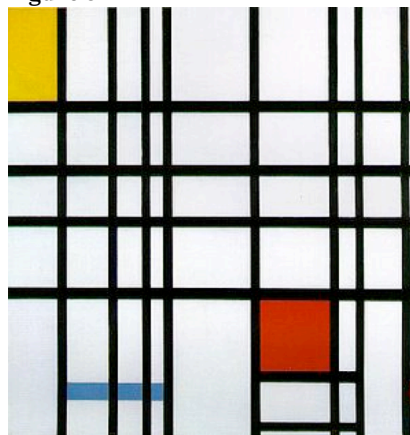
Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica made up part of an intensely productive, restless group of artists in Rio de Janeiro who, from the beginning of the '50s, exposed themselves to pre-war European avant-garde, especially the constructive tradition. Guy Brett says that the approach of these artists to this tradition was done with remarkable comprehensiveness. They interpreted the legacy of constructivism considering that, to Mondrian and Malevitch, painting was an instrument towards new ways of life (Brett, 1992, p. 227).

Figure 4



According to Mondrian, quoted by Hélio, there is no escape for the non-figurative artist; they have been brought, by their work, towards the end of the art as a thing separate of the surrounding environment. “But this end is at the same time a new beginning. Art will not only continue but will realize itself more and more” (Mondrian as cited in Oiticica, 1986; p. 17).

Figure 5

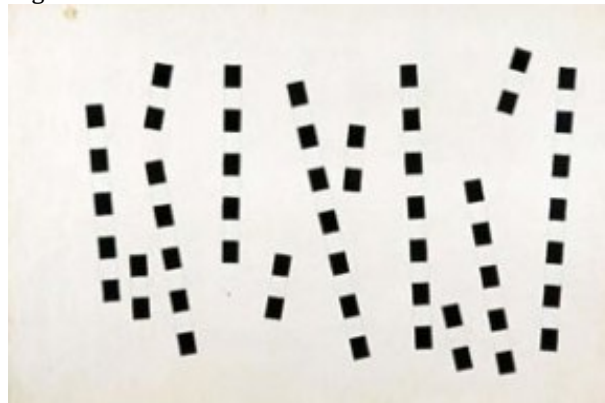


Following this idea, Lygia Clark says that for the concrete artist the exit is the real space (Clark, 1997). In order to create new ways of living, the neo-concrete artists shifted this tradition towards expressiveness, bringing the notion of subjectivity against the privilege of objectivity (Brito, 1999, p. 58). For Lygia, in neo-concrete art, the appreciation of the expressive gesture occurs in dialogue of the production with the spectator. The viewer ‘lives’ the work and the work “in expressing itself, expresses more than itself” (Clark, 1997, p. 274). Here the expression is immanent: what is expressed is the process of creation itself. Therefore, more important than any object, resulting in the creation process, the act of making is what is real and engenders poetry. “From there on I attribute an absolute importance to the immanent act carried out by the participant. (...) The work is the act” (Clark, 1997, p. 151).

Figure 6

The act is duration, and contains in itself its own coming-into-being. Past and future are implicated in it. Time lives at the moment of the act and becomes the new vector of the artist's expression. Hélio Oiticica arrived at time as an essential dimension of the work in non-representational art (Oiticica, 1986). It is important to notice that the expressivity here is of the work itself that happens to exist in the act that occurs between all the participants. Thus, what is expressed is an encounter and a process in which, when creating the work, participants recreate themselves.

At this point, it is worth noting that expression was at the centre of Nise da Silveira's clinical practice and thought. For this psychiatrist, OT's aim is to offer activities to those who are immersed in the unconscious, which could allow them to express content that would be impossible to express in words. In addition, it is also important to point out the paradoxical situation, brought up by Herkenhoff (1999). The first Brazilian constructive paintings were made inside *Engenho de Dentro* Psychiatric Hospital by Artur Amora, during the '40s. Working with dominoes, he achieved a plastic reasoning with black squares on a white background. According to Herkenhoff these were the first geometric works seen by Rio de Janeiro's young artists.

Figure 7

To Almir Mavigner, the works of the painters from *Engenho de Dentro* make it possible to discover a group of artists that were not influenced by foreign tendencies, in the history of Brazilian modern art (Mavigner, 2000).

Sharing this background, Oiticica's and Clark's works are related in many aspects. For both of them art was – following the expression of Mário Pedrosa – an experimental exercise of liberty (Brett, 1992). For Hélio, this experimental exercise was not to create works of art, but was related to a collective dimension of the creative state, the only way to overcome control structures and cultural consumption (Oiticica, 2007). From the object of art one begins to look for perceptive behaviour created in the

participation, in order to make it possible for everyone to find in themselves a clue to that creative state (Oiticica, 1986).

Although developing practices intimately connected, Hélio and Lygia had their own questions and singular contributions. Lygia Clark once defined their differences: “Hélio and I are like a glove. He is the outside of the glove, very much linked to the exterior world. I am the inside. And the two of us exist from the moment there is a hand wearing the glove” (in Figueredo, 1998, p. 7; **Note 11**).

Connecting aesthetic experiments to clinical practice and social participation

For Hélio Oiticica the artistic event was a relationship. He believed that what could give the characteristic of the artwork was not the external appearance of it, but its meaning arising from the dialogue between the artist and the material with which he expresses himself (Oiticica, 1986, p. 30). In the collective experiences, Hélio observed a contact within the group in which the common point was the disposition of participants to deal with the imponderable.

In *Parangolé* (colored structures resembling clothing, capes, banners, tents) Hélio invited the participants to wear the color and dance with it. The structural unity of these works was based in the act of the spectator, carrying the banner or dancing with clothes; through this act, the work achieved its expressive totality (Oiticica, 1986).

Figure 8



In 1965, the director of the MAM-RJ, *Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro Museum of Modern Art) blocked the entrance of a samba dance group that would have presented Oiticica’s work at the Museum for the opening of the Exhibition *Opinião 65*. Hélio led them outside to present their work in the square. The reaction of the museum shows the limited art circle at the time, the prejudice in relation to those who were not part of the Brazilian socio-cultural elite and, finally, the abyss that separated art from the people who did not belong to its system. Hélio says of this event that it enabled him to discover the connection between collective and individual expression and that “knocking down social prejudices, group and class barriers, etc., would be inevitable and essential to the development of this vital experience” (Oiticica, 1986, p. 73; **Note 12**).

Hélio’s relationship with the Mangueira community, with whom he lived for a while, was – according to the artist himself – one of the most important experiences in his life, and greatly changed his work. By experiencing both a high level of human communication in that community and the importance of the actions, Hélio became conscious of the artist’s isolation. Sharing a certain way of inhabiting the margins of society with them, Hélio wrote in one of his *Parangolés: Da adversidade vivemos* (From adversity we live) (Oiticica, 1986; **Note 13**).

Parangolé is environmental art. It joins *Penetráveis* (Penetrables) and *Ninhos* (Nests) in the creation of a world where the work of art creates a shelter for meanings and for collective participation. According to Hélio, these works do not give a vision for the world; they are propositions for the construction of singular worlds, with the elements of each one’s subjectivity. “Inhabiting a room is more than being in it, is to grow with it” (Oiticica, 1986, p. 120).

Guy Brett (1969) says that the invention of *Penetráveis* opened up new possibilities for the development of Hélio's poetics, enabling him to create *Projetos* (Projects). With these works, Hélio intended to take the participants to another level far from every-day-life, in search of expansion of their sensorial and perceptual capacities and of the discovery of their own expressivity and creative center. The aim here is that each one could find inside oneself his or her inner freedom and a clue for a creative state (Oiticica, 1986).

In 1969, during his artistic residency at Sussex University, in England, Oiticica was able to do some experimentation regarding his idea of constructing a *Barracão* (Shack). This project refers to a certain kind of experience in which a collective context might emerge; an experimental cell of an experimental community where people would live, as he said. The *Barracão Project* is linked to the concept that life itself should be the final aim of all aesthetic experience. In a letter to art critic and friend Guy Brett, Hélio says that he does not want to keep his aesthetic experience apart from real life anymore.

Figure 9



I feel the idea (I have been having for some time) grows into a need (urgent and irreversible) for a new community, based on creative affinities, despite cultural or intellectual differences, or social and individual ones. Not a community to 'make works of art' but something as the experience in real life – all sorts of experience that could grow out of a new sense for life and society – kind of constructing an environment for life itself based on the premise that creative energy is inherent in every-one. The objective point would be to construct a kind of wood house as in the 'favelas' where people would feel it were their place In its whole this idea would be that of a kind of open space, environment for experience, for creative experience of every imaginable sort. Creativity is inherent in everyone, the artist would just inflame it, put fire, free people from their conditioning. The old way of looking at the artist as someone intangible is dead Of course these ideas are the beginning of something. I don't yet know what it will be, they still have to take form ... (Oiticica, 1992: p. 135).

In Lygia Clark's poetics, writings and creative process, art and life cannot be separate. For her, art comes from the belly; from the centre of the human body where everything that counts has its profound origin. Her artistic work, the effects of this on the viewer-participant, her own analysis, everything is connected to one and the same thing: art, creation and life unified in one single experience to be expressed in the book she would like to write someday (Figueredo, 1998).

In the beginning of the 1960s, Clark worked as an art teacher with blind children at the *Instituto Benjamin Constant*, in Rio de Janeiro. This experience seems to have deeply marked the entire subsequent development of the artist's poetics (Carneiro, 2004). Among other characteristics of her work from the '60s, we would like to highlight a constant concern with the problem of communication; an interest in the expansion of sensorial experience, displacing the primacy of vision, in particular the emphasis on the sensations of the body in movement; and, the statement of the possibility for anyone to make art, regardless of their living conditions, health, age, personal history.

We could think that this experience would be the germ of what was to culminate in the classes with students at the Sorbonne, during the 1970s. In both practices, education and art are crossed by a clinical dimension, in their connection to creativity, in the aim of expanding the space of encounter with oneself and with others.

In 1968 Clark left Brazil, during the military dictatorship, and went to Paris where, a few years later, she began teaching at the Sorbonne. Working there gave Lygia a regular group with which to develop her work and accompany its effects on the students for a certain period of time. With the students, she was able to create innumerable propositions that were part of what she called *Corpo Coletivo* (Collective Body). They were constructed by a group that lived the artistic experience together, exchanging contents with profound psychic qualities. According to Lygia, these exchanges were based on a kind of connection that can only be communicated in an organic way. In fact, she said later, the word

communication was too weak to express what really happened in the group (Clark, 1997). This kind of artistic experiment could not take place just once, like a happening, because what is important in them, is the process.

Figure 10



The meaning given to it is that there is a socializing in time and a joint elaboration in which each individual changes, expressing himself, connecting affectively or not to each element in the group, creating an exchange impressions which goes beyond the propositions and affects the life of each member (Clark, 1997, p. 306).

The fusion between art and life was found here, in the moment of the act that, for her, is the only living reality. Henceforth, life became infinitely more important than the work of art itself (Clark, 1997). According to Lygia, the participants of these propositions could be found at any place, and sometimes were more easily found outside of the art system: with children on the streets, with deaf, blind or autistic people. The work becomes anonymous and everyone has the possibility of creating their own becoming. That is why she says:

It is a borderline work: Impossible to define it with absolute precision. Starting from certain experiences, and their verbal expression in groups, I reach the edges of psychoanalysis. (...) I do not program the course beforehand. (Clark, 1997, p. 314).

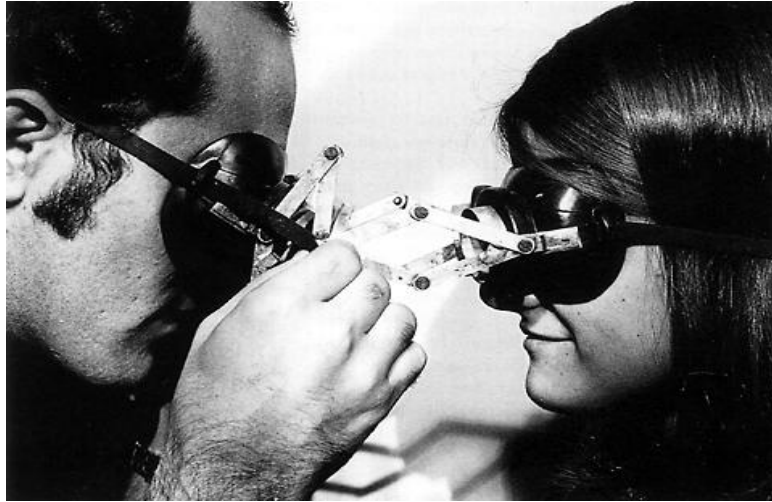
From her work with the students at the Sorbonne, she began to move towards an engagement in clinical practices. As she says:

I went into psychology. (...) I don't want to be a psychoanalyst but I want to put my work at the service of people who can make it worth something in this sector. (...) I will have a direction in the future and it will be this which will make me go to another field, if this is the case, or it will make me simply live life with the whole series of knowledge which my work has given me. (Clark, 1997, p. 279).

When Lygia returned to Brazil in 1976, she began to work with one person at a time in the proposal she called *Estruturação do self* (Structuring the self), in which she invented relational objects and explored the sensations they provoked on the body of the participant. In a letter to Mário Pedrosa, she clarifies:

It is such a biological, cellular experience that it is also only communicable through an organic and cellular manner. From one to one, to three or more, something always comes out of the other, and it is extremely intimate, communication from pore to pore, from hair to hair, from sweat to sweat. (Clark, 1997, p 250).

Figure 11



This work completes the process in which she gradually changed her audience. Beginning by addressing her work to museum and gallery visitors, she found her audience among young people at the Sorbonne post-1968, then among anonymous passers-by on the streets of Paris and finally, one-to-one, in her *consultório experimental* (experimental office). It was not by chance that Lygia would address her last work to the patients of a mental health hospital, through the request she made to Lula Wanderley and Gina Ferreira, that they should continue her experiment in clinical spaces. Not only because she could see the clinical effects of her propositions but also because she recognized in psychiatric patients a kind of disposition needed for her work (Wanderley, 2002).

Despite the fact that very few people could understand Lygia's last work, Suely Rolnik (1997) believes that it is an extension of what she was doing from the beginning of her career, in an extremely consistent development. Lygia Clark's whole body of work seeks to provoke in the spectator the singular state of art without art. For her, experiencing a state of art is achieved not only in the creation of an object of art but also in the creation of objective and subjective existence. What motivates her aesthetic trajectory was the search for a solution to an ethical-political problem: the liberation of the human being from their internal and external coercions and the exercise of freedom.

DISCUSSION

Clark's and Oiticica's poetics as political practice and ethical position

The works of the artists we have been following are inextricably connected with a macro and micro-political dimensions, which are both essential for the health of a society and the health of each individual. Lygia and Hélio carried out a political activity by taking art out of the museum and addressing their propositions to different audiences from the usual ones in museums and galleries and, mainly, by extending to this audience the opportunity and ability to create, making them co-authors of the works of art.

Their actions produced changes in the distribution of the sensible, muddling codes, defining new competencies in shared space, altering art practice *modus operandi*, reclaiming aesthetics from their current narrow confines to reveal its significance for contemporary experience. They introduce new individuals who did not belong there before and suddenly acquire both visibility and enunciative power, to aesthetic practice. For Jacques Rancière (2006), the distribution of the sensible is central to the relation between art and politics and reveals the existence of a common world, in which sensibility defines forms of visibility, exclusive places, moments in time and kinds of activities.

Holding in check the place and the function of the artist and the audience, Lygia and Hélio acted within this distribution, which led to artistic practices that drifted beyond the institutional terrain of art. The artists propositions' aim was to create programs open to development in such a way that there

was an intensification of a total collective art, determined by the discovery of popular organized and spontaneous manifestations (Oiticica, 1986).

There is also a micro-political dimension in their practices, which go beyond intervening in the visible reality and operate transformations in the sensible reality, creating expression for what is not yet articulated as language. The micro-political actions fall within the plan of creation, whether creating forms of existence, creating concepts, or creating works of art (Rolnik, 2007). According to Hélio, art is the invisible made visible by the gesture of the artist. More than making them visible, expressing body sensations makes them something that we can experience. Therefore, new forms of feeling, thinking and living can emerge, transforming contemporary sensibility (Oiticica, 1986).

Lygia and Hélio had realized the political and social nature of their aesthetic practice with a revolutionary impact: "...liberation for man, the release of a repressed desire. The participant rediscovers a sensory energy deliberately numbed by our social habits" (Clark, 1997, p. 188). The investment in a relational quality of artistic proposals, updated only at the encounters, and the attempt to create propositions that lead to a widening of sensitive capabilities, are entirely associated with social, political and ethical issues. This environmental art excludes nothing, from social criticism to limit situations. "Whatever is oppressive is in opposition to it - the 'socio-environmental' position is the starting point for all social and political changes" (Oiticica, 1986, p. 78; **Note 14**).

Dealing with the Mangueira community, Hélio met a world where survival depends on close attention to the possibilities of life. The encounter between Hélio and this community enthralled everyone involved in becoming. The artist would seek, from then on, to invent tools for individual and collective survival and for overcoming our colonized condition. Hélio and Lygia dreamed of new worlds. And on dreaming, they effectively created other worlds; multiple virtual worlds but no less real.

Lygia Clark developed a project for the transmutation of art in a living process and made a transition from representational space to an organic one. With her work, she walked toward experiences in which art, psychoanalysis, and body expression converged, interested in what happens in the encounters and intersections. Hélio created environments in which individual spaces compose themselves in collective assemblages, inventing new ways of living together. He discovered the strength of margins by working in the street, where people live their lives.

The importance of Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark in the Brazilian cultural scene does not refer exclusively to the aesthetic field, but also to their determination to cross and discuss the territories of artistic, clinical, social and political practices. The radical leap (Brett, 1989) they made had an impact on art, philosophy, science, culture and life in general. Their legacy is the courage and power of an act of transformation of individuals and collectives.

The invention of *transdisciplinary* practices and the work in hybrid territories have been important features in the field of the art and health in Brazil. Studying these artists in a research centre abroad gave us the opportunity to look at this reality from a distance, which allowed us great accuracy to map the differences that led to the emergence of such works in the Brazilian context, particularly the way in which Brazilian culture relates to the intersections between art and madness. Perhaps this difference is connected to a certain ability to grasp and embrace experiences and processes that are beyond rational reasoning. When faced with the work of artists from *Engenho de Dentro*, Jung pointed out this difference. He said that those works could only have been made in an environment where people were not afraid of the unconscious (Jung as cited in Pedrosa, 1980).

Our artists also had no fear of the unconscious, of desire, of the invisible. They taught us a constructive attitude that can orient a clinical practice we could call constructive: expansion of sensibility and intuition, attention to what surrounds us, a constant combination of the means that are actually available and their use at the time of need. This constructive attitude is guided by ethics that combine the production of subjectivity and the construction of the world.

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LEGEND FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1 Emigdio de Barros. 1968. Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente. Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 2 Fernando Diniz. 1950. Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente. Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 3 Raphael Domingues. 1948. Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente. Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 4 Hélio Oiticica. Metaesquema. 1958. Coleção César e Claudio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 5 Piet Mondrian. Composition with yellow blue and red. 1921. Tate Gallery. London.

Figure 6 Lygia Clark. Caminhando. 1963. Photograph from the catalogue Lygia Clark. Barcelona: Fundació Antoni Tàpies, 1997.

Figure 7 Arthur Amora. s/d. Museu de Imagens do Inconsciente. Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 8 Hélio Oiticica wearing Parangolé Cape 01. 1964.

Photograph from the Catalogue Hélio Oiticica: the body of the colour. London: Tate Modern.

Figure 9 Hélio Oiticica. Penetrável Magic Square no. 05. Museu do Açude. Rio de Janeiro

Figure 10 Arquitetura Biológica. 1972. Photograph from the Catalogue Lygia Clark. Barcelona: Fundació Antoni Tàpies, 1997.

Figure 11 Diálogo: óculos. 1968. Photograph from the Catalogue Lygia Clark. Barcelona: Fundació Antoni Tàpies, 1997.

NOTES

1. The abbreviation 'PACTO' used to name the program has some interesting connotations in Portuguese and Spanish. In these languages *pacto* means alliance or agreement between countries, groups or people to stop fighting. The alliance referred here is among people from different backgrounds, genders, limitations, disabilities or diseases; but also between areas of knowledge and fields of practices, comprising the political orientation of the artworks.
2. The term madness is used here following Foucault's approach to the subject in his book *Madness and civilization: a history of insanity in the age of reason*. According to Foucault (1971) madness is the result of a social construction more than a medical truth; the way Western society has dealt with it has been reflected on the relationship between art and madness (Hunton, 2011; Providello & Yasui, 2013). For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on how these relations have crossed the works of some Brazilian contemporary artists.
3. Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica were part of this artistic movement which will be discussed later, from page 6.
4. To better understand the work of this psychiatrist, see Castro & Lima, 2007.
5. For more information visit the website: http://www.ccms.saude.gov.br/o_museu_vivo/index.htm
6. Arthur Bispo do Rosário and his work are part of the debate about the boundaries between art and madness, in Brazil. Hospitalized for almost fifty years in the *Colônia Juliano Moreira*, a psychiatric hospital in Rio de Janeiro, he produced there one unclassifiable and unique work, a parallel universe recreated by divine command, that can be analysed in the context of contemporary art, as did Frederico Morais. For more information, go to: <http://www.museubispodorosario.com/>
7. Our translation of the original: "A vontade de arte se manifesta em qualquer homem de nossa terra, não importa seu meridiano, seja ele papua ou cafuzo, brasileiro ou russo, letrado ou iletrado, equilibrado ou desequilibrado."
8. Our translation of the original: "Não pode haver barreiras ao mundo encantado das formas; não há filas para se entrar no seu recinto, que não é de ninguém, que é comum a todos os homens indistintamente. Feliz humanidade quando todos puderem penetrar o seu campo mágico!"
9. Our translation of the original: "O principal objetivo de uma ocupação artística persistente e sistemática não é a produção de obras primas (...) O que sai da cabeça ou das mãos do artista não é o mais importante. O que é importante é o que adquire com tais atividades sua personalidade."
10. Our translation of the original: "A primeira coisa a se constatar [nesses artistas] – com mais ou menos talento, mais ou menos atacados na enfermidade – é que nenhum poderia ser o que é ou que foi no isolamento (...) Na solidão

poderiam qualquer deles ter sido simplesmente destruídos pela vida. A sociedade do Engenho de Dentro, com toda a precariedade de seus recursos, lhes deu ancora à vida.”

11. Our translation of the original: “Hélio era o lado de fora de uma luva, a ligação com o mundo exterior. Eu, a parte de dentro. Nós dois existimos a partir do momento em que há uma mão que calce a luva.”
12. Our translation for the original: “A derrubada de preconceitos sociais, das barreiras de grupos, classes etc., seria inevitável e essencial na realização dessa experiência vital.”
13. Our translation for the original: “Habitar um recinto, é mais do que estar nele, é crescer com ele.”
14. Our translation for the original: “Tudo que há de opressivo está em oposição a ela – a posição ‘sócio-ambiental’ é ponto de partida para todas as modificações sociais e políticas.”

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