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PRESENTATION OF THE SPECIAL ISSUE: the collective body of laughter

**APRESENTAÇÃO DO DOSSIÊ:
o corpo coletivo do riso**

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**Presentation of the special issue:
the collective body of laughter**

**Apresentação do dossier:
o corpo coletivo do riso**

In imagining this special issue, we thought of stimulating reflection on the political and performative developments of the art of laughter and clowning in current social structures. Grounded on theoretical principles that involve the Body, Politics, Collectivity and their relations with Laughter, we sought to gather reflections and examples of comedy theater that could inspire dialogue and inventiveness. And we thank each and every one of those who willingly contributed their ideas and shared their thoughts.

We seek to understand the body as the instrument of dialogue between being and space, which instills ideas and emotions and which contains semiological potency, both individual and collective. We suggest that said potency is organized and structured based on sociocultural and aesthetic elements which sees the body as a locus of expressiveness and experience. With this paradigm, we mainly searched for theater artists who work with laughter and humor, but also welcomed the proposals that came to us opening space for compositions about corporality on stage, and decided to embrace reflections involving the relationship with different audiences—whether they were social groups in sensitive situations, learning groups, or those who enjoy theater comedy. Our first encounter in this regard was with Diego Machado, dancing with words and their musicality, creating situations that evoked humor.

We understand politics as the set of actions and attitudes that cause the germinative essence of each person to sprout and grow, composing their subjectivity in relations with otherness and the collective. With Lorena Maria Lopes, Beatriz Costa Alvarez, and Maria Brígida de Miranda, we reflect on festivals as a place of encounter and political learning and the opportunity they provided for the development of female clowning; with Maricélia Nunes dos Santos, we discuss comedy shows and misogynistic social and artistic practices.

We wish to understand collectivity based on the understanding that it presents stable but not fixed hierarchies, and that proposals and peculiarities emerge from it that shape individuals and remain over time as traces of intentions and achievements. Márcio Marques de Carvalho encouraged us to reflect on the social function of the logic of absurdity, while with Joana Marques Barbosa, a clown-mother-researcher, we experienced the intersectional challenges of female clowning in Brazil

We view and experience laughter as a performative and political act, involved in processes of teaching and composing artistic actions. We believe that laughter is organized under the aspects of direct audience participation, of unpredictability that adds the present moment to the performances, of ritual movement, and artistic elements focused on the composition of humor. Felipe Augusto



da Silva invited us to reflect on the clown teacher and how clowning can contribute to teacher training and educational processes; with Elison Oliveira Franco, we were invited to reflect on the phenomenology of comedy and the possibilities for anti-racist education; Gleuter Alves Guimarães, André Almeida Nunes, and Roberta Machado Silva invited us to appreciate the relation between reflection and cinema and the importance of involving audiovisual media in the recording of female clowning; with Francisco Cristiano da Fonseca, Diego Brito Bezerra, and Amidete Melo de Aguiar, we were reminded that clowning asserts itself in the form of comedy and laughter, but it is also a space for resistance and critical reflection on the human condition; and Brian Barzague Pereira and Raquel Castro de Souza allowed us to observe the tensions between comedy and the internet.

With the desire to stimulate an inter-arts perspective, we invited clown and theater director José Regino de Oliveira to present his research on the relationship between comedy and drama, which was conducted to improve training for comic acting. And to broaden the debate around training and its important role in stage composition and artists' self-awareness, the organizing partner for this issue, Marcelo Cordeiro, has prepared a review of the proposal by Phillip Zarrilli, director and actor, based on Asian martial arts, which we have added to the dossier.

We believe to have gathered texts that underscore the reflective production on Laughter in Brazil today. And we dare say that this production encourages the study of laughter and its contribution to decolonizing education, alive and powerful in the search for a balanced and non-prejudiced world.

Ephemera Journal welcomed this adventure with openness and affection, which made us very happy! Evoé.



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