







# o tempo das cerejas

materiais | diversos

## **O Tempo das Cerejas**

O Tempo das Cerejas is a space created at Materiais Diversos in April, 2020, to reflect on topics that intrigue us and amplify the reflexive dimension of our work. Here, we invite artists and thinkers to share their opinions, knowledge and points of view, in a personal and informal way.

Initially, it was inevitable that these thoughts would gravitate towards the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, to lockdown and the “new normal”. Most arrived in the form of a text, in addition to a “choreographed” letter and a poetic-photographic essay. Monthly, between April and November, 2020, we received seven essays, each one thereafter available as audio recordings.

Materiais Diversos has been conceiving and publishing work which reverberates from the programming it develops, concretizing not only the objective of building an archive, but also creating objects which are amendable to the interest of any person, and that anyone can handle. In this way contributing to a collective memory on topics and aspects related to contemporary performative arts, and affirming the importance of materializing in the form of publishing processes, reflections and projects.

In partnership with the Communication Design course of the Escola Artística António Arroio, within the context of the FCT - Formação em Contexto de Trabalho (Work-related Training), the O Tempo das Cerejas contents gain a space for consulting, archiving and dissemination, conceived around their subjacent premises. The students specializing in Graphic Design developed an editorial Project which will provide for reading in different formats, with a design keeping in mind accessibility to a wide array of audiences.

Within this context, three editorial formats were created, which consist of: a digital publication — available in PDF; a DIY object — available in PDF, which the public can print and publish their own work at home; and in a version for graphic print.



# João Sousa Cardoso

## the invisible ones

João Sousa Cardoso holds a Doctorate in Social Sciences from the University of Paris Descartes (Sorbonne). He was a grant recipient from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation between 2006 and 2009. He directed *Sequências Narrativas Completas*, which premiered at the Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, and *Os Pescadores* by Raul Brandão, which premiered at the Teatro Municipal of Porto in 2016. He directed the project *TEATRO EXPANDIDO!*, the year the Teatro Municipal of Porto reopened, between January and December of 2015, a project which surveyed dramaturgy in the 20th century, staging 11 plays in 12 months, and mobilizing dozens of professional and amateur actors. He also created the shows *O Bobo* (2006) based on Alexandre Herculano, *A Carbonária* (2008), *Raso como o Chão* (2012) and *Barulheira* (2015) based on Álvaro Lapa. He directed the films *A Ronda da Noite* (2013) based on Heiner Müller; *Baal* (2013), *A Santa Joana dos Matadouros* (2014) and *Na Selva das Cidades* (2016) based on Bertolt Brecht. He is a professor at the Belas Artes Faculty of the University of Porto and at Lusófona University. He writes regularly for the newspaper *O PÚBLICO*.

The current pandemic and quarantine we have been forced into, reminds me of the eight thousand silent soldiers of Qin Shihuang, a spectacular collection of terracotta sculptures representing the first emperor of China's armies. Perhaps because of the refinement of the multitude of still, individualised and disciplined, dignified and expectant characters, prepared for battle; perhaps because we recognize in them a complete example of art is funereal origins; perhaps due to the ancient practice of raising wonderful forms destined to quietude, and the darkness of the tombs of power. The artisans' job was to imitate life and promise the prestige of immortality. But the buried clay community was not only made up of warriors: in other wells, figures of workers, acrobats and musicians were identified, mixed in with the bones of many artisans and their tools, which leads us to believe that they were buried with the emperor as a guarantee of secrecy regarding access to the mausoleum and its treasures. We owe the discovery of Qin Shihuang's tomb, in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, which was begun in 246 BC and took 38 years to complete, to local farmers who, in 1974, were digging a well east of Mount Lishan. As in the Mayan city of Yaxchilan, in Mexico, at a turn of the river Usumacinta on the border with Guatemala, the buried pyramids were mistaken for hills submerged in the tropical forest, so too in Xi'an an earthen pyramid, 47 metres de high, and built by 700 000 pre-historic workers, close to the emperor's tomb – in the uncertainty of the damage produced by interference– evaded the technical intrusion of Archaeology, and remained at rest during the passage of time, which is its right.

This digression through the arts of ancient China and one of the forgotten Mayan cities, illuminates the unexpected and spectacular

cultural event which has befallen us, through days of imposed confinement, in an international quarantine with no end in sight. Cities are empty and mineral as a Giorgio de Chirico painting. We hear of an unprecedented silence, never-before heard in Paris and New York. "Of those cities will remain what passed through them, the wind!" warned Bertolt Brecht. It is the end of an era, and the feeling of an unfathomable tremor which brings the new. What we are witnessing is the gasp of modernity and a violence which put the sudden brakes on the fantasy of a heroic, aimless cavalcade, which no longer served anyone or the world. The aesthetic world which the Italian mercantile and well-travelled republics invented; the political and diplomatic world inherited from the French revolution; and the economy of production and work imagined by the industrial revolution, which Charles Dickens uncovered in a London sick with cholera and imperialism, seem to be from an obsolete cultural era.

And, recluses in a domestic world watching the events on television, via the press and in the anarchy of commerce on social networks, we investigate the mechanics of solitude, our invisibility, which is a global hygiene, and the animal necessity of practical assistance ("Charity begins at home, and justice next door." Goes the famous Dickens adage). And in this retreat, actors, dancers, all performers and creators who work in the performing arts fields, and make a living through an entertainer existence, in publicly exhibiting their bodies, a short-cut philosophy and amazing abilities, naturally endure a test. Many will find temporary channels, becoming virtually present, some will discover the benefit of retreat as an invitation to study, and others will be transformed into new men and women. Very few will achieve

all three. In *The Theatre and its Double*, Antonin Artaud understood this alliance between the epidemic and the indifference of creative work: “Like the plague, the theatre is a formidable call to the forces that impel the mind by example to the source of its conflicts (...) If the essential theatre is like the plague, it is not because it is contagious, but because like the plague it is the revelation, the bringing forth, the exteriorization of a depth of latent cruelty by means of which all the perverse possibilities of the mind, whether of an individual or a people, are localized.” The sun and the planets will continue on their course and we will better explain to the children that connection between invisible forms and the matters of earth. Like the Chinese who buried the first emperor (the one responsible for the unification of the country and building the Great Wall) in 210 BC, together with a replica of the world in which precious stones represented the stars, pearls were the planets and lakes of mercury the seas. The same peasants, working in the ceramics kilns would invent, shortly thereafter, the theatre of shadows.

When we leave quarantine, armed against this benign virus which everywhere spreads death and reveals the invisible ones, Europe may itself be revealed as a devastated landscape. That will be the time to restore the anthropological practices which articulate scattered social dimensions, and organize the conditions for existence in an ecosystem that predates us and, without prejudice, dispenses with the human species. They will be the days of a new era, rich in threats and new values, animated by reasonable efforts and extremist programmes, dependent on each of us, on unpredictable factors and on the imagination of a prepared community. One thing is for sure:

modern myths of upward mobility, individualism, the solar triumph of reason and capital can fall from their magical prestige, carried by the current of the river Lethe, without us having to abdicate the poetics which from them remains. As I have always understood communism, before and after the horrors of Stalinism and the gulag, bequeathed us a vast and terrible poetry which is moulded not only in historical facts and all of Brecht, but more than that. Perhaps we feel, at that moment, that the era of disembowelling the earth, of mining exploitation, of the enslavement of miners, which fed industrial civilization, has ceased. It will be an era of prospectors. With galoshes buried in muddy clay water, we will discover small nuggets of gold which we will understand how to be thankful for. This too will be called a cultural revolution or education.

Perhaps, more out of necessity than knowledge, art will come closer to everyday things like William Morris and arts and crafts, Bauhaus and Fluxus, dreamed of as a response to the wars of modernity, repeatedly launched and apparently lost. And thus, it is possible to return to the forms of an anonymous, associative production, in which tradition and invention renew the ancient ties which the history of art attempted to sever, without fully accomplishing. The hand will once again be valued and with it, manual work, physical contact and presence. Isn't it this what *Hand Film* (1966), directed by Yvonne Rainer in the context of contemporary American dance, and which I never tire of sharing with my students, is about? From the primacy of the naked hand in the empty space, alone and at the same time haunted by the memory of the "negative hands" on the rugged walls of European Paleolithic caves and of martial gestures, of dance and the

healing of Eastern mudras? When we leave our quarantine and the decreed State of Emergency, we will inhabit technology and digital culture in a new way and, demystified, they will know paths which are un-thought of, risky, law-enforcing, archaic and tribal. But if the electricity goes out, we will be more ready to fan the fires animated by narrators and dancers and we will continue to erect extraordinary forms, perhaps to once again destine them to invisibility, because the joy in experiencing them together, in the wood shop and the enjoyment of usefulness, will be a new reason, and the most ancient one, against fear of the unknown, of the night, and of death. China has known this for thousands of years.





## Alessandro Sciarroni's Text

Alessandro Sciarroni is an Italian artist active in the performing arts, visual arts and theatrical research. He has presented his work in dance and theater festivals, museums, galleries and unconventional places, in important institutions and events around the world, among which Biennale de la Danse de Lyon, Kunstenfestivaldesarts (Brussels), Impulstanz stand out (Vienna), Festival d'Automne, Centquatre and Center Pompidou (Paris), Festival TBA (Portland), Biennale di Venezia, The Walker Art Center (Minneapolis) or Museo MAXXI (Rome).

His work goes beyond gender definitions - he uses the theatrical structure, but he can use techniques and experiences of dance, circus or sport, regularly involving professionals from different disciplines. In addition to rigor, coherence and clarity, it seeks to discover obsessions, fears and weaknesses in the act of interpreting, through the repetition of a practice up to the limits of the physical resistance of the interpreters, considering a different dimension of time and an empathic relationship between the audience and the artists.

My work consists of organizing the human body's movement in time and space, within a system called choreography.

In my choreographies, *dance* is always the archetype of a practice, an ancient mystery which causes us to move in unison, *a secret about a secret* as the American photographer Diane Arbus would say, when speaking of the meaning of her images.

Around the end of February, I was told we needed to stop, that we should cancel the performance dates which had already been scheduled, and that we couldn't rehearse for the new production. I thought, my work exists and is legitimized exclusively through *presence*.

I chose to clean my home before dedicating myself to any creative process. I took my time in retaking control over my spaces, over objects, and I dusted the books one by one. I didn't feel at all like reading. I did not contradict my sadness when the ghosts came to visit me, and I thought no more of dance until I was asked to write this text.

*One can know the entire world*

*Without stirring abroad*

*Without looking out of the window*

*One can see the way of heaven*

*The further one goes*

*The less one knows*

The epidemiologist Frank Snowden, from Yale University, says that epidemics are a type of disease which act as a mirror to human beings, and show us who we truly are. To explain this concept, the scholar evokes the most feared disease of the nineteenth century: Cholera,

a disease of the Industrial Revolution and, consequently, of rampant urbanization, when masses of people arrived in large cities — a catastrophic environment with no existing sanitary or living preparedness, and no hygienic-sanitary system in place. In that environment, a disease which was transmitted through the fecal-oral route, took maximum advantage of the situation.

### THE TEATRO DELL'ARANCIO

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to show my work in a small village in central Italy, a few kilometres from my home: Grottammare. The space which hosted the performance is called Teatro dell'Aran-  
cio, an 18<sup>th</sup> Century building that lost its wooden decorations during the Spanish flu epidemic between 1916 and 1918. The interior of the theatre had a stage, an auditorium and three levels of decorated wooden boxes. Today none of the original decorations remain.

Because of the high number of deaths caused by the epidemic, the wood which adorned it was used to build coffins.

Even though the place maintains its original name and the exterior walls are original, when entering there is a strong sense of being in "a false" place, and that the Teatro dell'Aran-  
cio has been lost forever. In contrast, the memory of the radical actions which depleted it, is incredibly present.

The word "theatre" has two meanings: it indicates a place, as well as an activity which is developed within its interior.

The word "dance", on the other hand, has one single meaning, it exists solely in its immaterial nature.

## SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME

In 2012, I had the opportunity to work for an extended period of time on an ancient popular dance called *Schuhplattler*.

The first written sources date back to 1050 A.D., and they say that the dancers would rhythmically slap their shoes with the palms of their hands. This dance is still practiced today, and is passed down from generation to generation in the small urban centres of Tyrol and Bavaria.

The performance which resulted from the research on the *Schuhplattler* is called *FOLK\_S*.

At the time, I believed that a tradition such as dance would be extinguished from the moment nobody else could practice it. But in reality, the matter is a bit more complicated than that, and this was confirmed six years later when I began studying another popular dance which is a little over one hundred years old: the *polka chinata*.

In 2018, I found out that there were only five people in the world who were able to dance the *polka chinata*, a dance from Bologna, from the early 1900s, born spontaneously in ballrooms, which was disseminated taking on almost agonistic connotations; it was even danced under the arches of the city. Last year we asked the connoisseurs of this tradition to teach us to dance it and, together with some Italian festivals, we decided to create workshops to keep it alive. The project is called *Save the last dance for me*. Approximately three hundred people participated in the workshops, and at least twenty were able to achieve a good technical level. When we presented the initiative to the Pinacoteca of Bologna, I had the opportunity to speak with an an-

thropologist about the project, who explained to me that dance does not go extinct the same way species go extinct. Dance is an immaterial object: transience and intermittency are already contemplated in its nature. Effectively, after having disappeared for decades, the polka chinata came back to life well before I recovered it. It was thanks to the dance master Giancarlo Stagni, who recently gave it a new life after discovering some videos from the 60s.

Dance can be reborn after disappearing for entire generations. It only goes extinct if it is forgotten.

I don't think it's a coincidence that, in the last few weeks, social networks have literally been invaded by video recordings of theatre and dance performances. I think that, probably on an unconscious level, it is an attempt to save these phenomena from being forgotten. Another important trend relative to social networks was the publication of one's childhood images.

*Ages and Aeons quit the room*

*Exploding into timelessness*

*No entrances or exits now*

*No need for obituaries or final judgements*

*We knew that time would end*

*After tomorrow at sunrise*

*We scrubbed the floors*

*And did the washing up*

*It would not catch us unawares*

**INTERVIEWER:** In an interview with the *New Yorker* you said that epidemics “reflect our relationships with the environment—the built environment that we create and the natural environment that responds.” Is this also true of the coronavirus pandemic? Are epidemics the mirror of human vulnerability?

**FRANK SNOWDEN:** “With the coronavirus, there are at least three dimensions that show how Covid-19 may be the mirror of what we are as a civilization. The first, is that we are on the verge of being almost 8 billion people in the entire world. Next, there is a myth that we can have an infinite economic growth and development even though the planet’s resources are limited, which is an intrinsic contradiction. Nevertheless, we have been building our society on this myth, thinking that both of those things can in some way reconcile. There is, therefore, a problem. Besides that, this situation transforms our relationship to the environment, and in particular to the animal kingdom. We have declared war on the environment and destroyed the animals habitat — this is the era of eradication and extinction of species. What’s happening is that human beings are coming into contact with animals at a frequency and in a way which has never happened in the past. And today we can point to the diseases which demonstrate this: avian flu by definition, as with MERS and SARS and Ébola. And now we have the coronavirus. I would say this pattern is not random. In other words, we live in an era of repeated spill-overs. And in particular, we seem to be very vulnerable to those viruses where bats are the natural hosts. Another characteristic of globalization is that we create a world of large cities, megalopolis connected by rapid air transport, which means

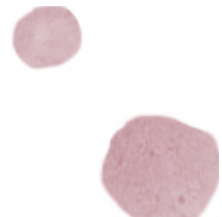
a spill-over happens, I choose a place randomly, in Jakarta in the morning...the same virus is in Los Angeles and London that night. Given that, I would say the coronavirus is taking advantage of channels of vulnerability which we ourselves have created. I would also say that this pandemic is the quintessence of the epidemic of a globalized society. Globalization means destruction of the environment, the myth of infinite economic growth, an enormous demographic growth, big cities and fast air transportation; it's all connected."

The Earth is dying and we don't even notice.

At the end of January of this year, a solicitation of funds began, to save a country house in on a beach in Kent, in the United Kingdom, across from the Dungeness nuclear power station. It is Prospect Cottage, a dark wooden building with yellow shutters, the last home of Derek Jarman, a visionary British director, artist and activist who died of AIDS in 1994. Jarman was able to grow, among rolled stones from the beach, flowers and patches of grass, in addition to a small vegetable garden. During the months in which the flowering lost its vigour, he would decorate the interior and exterior of the house with the detritus brought by the waves or old war armaments dug up on the beach.

Thanks to Keith Collins, starting in 1994, Prospect Cottage became a place of memory, a pilgrimage destination for many artists and followers, a source of inspiration and a commemoration space.

After the death of Collins, the Tate London, which is now in charge of the Jarman archive, and the Creative Folkstone, which tends the garden, launched a crowdfunding project. In order to guarantee a future



for Prospect Cottage, a budget of 3.5 million Pounds was estimated, with a target date of 31 March, 2020.

While battling blindness, shortly before falling victim to AIDS, Derek Jarman left us his theory of colours: "Chroma". In this book, each chapter is dedicated to a colour, noting in the margins memories and quotes in a lyrical combination of classical treatises, diaries, anecdotes and poetry. The chapter dedicated to the colour blue is the screenplay for the final film he left us and concludes with these verses:

[...]

*Our name will be forgotten*

*In time*

*No one will remember our work*

*Our life will pass like traces of a cloud*

*And be scattered like*

*Mist that is chased by the*

*Rays of the sun*

*For our time is the passing of a shadow*

*And our lives will run like*

*Sparks through the stubble.*

*I place a delphinium, Blue, upon your grave*

8,347 donors contributed to the funds for saving Prospect Cottage. The project reached 106% of its goal, and 3,725,982 Pounds were received. All the verses I used in this text were taken from "Chroma".

## ITALIAN

Il mio lavoro consiste nell'organizzare il movimento del corpo umano nel tempo e nello spazio in un sistema che si chiama coreografia. Nelle mie coreografie la danza è sempre l'archetipo di una pratica, un mistero antichissimo che ci fa muovere all'unisono, *il segreto di un segreto* come diceva la fotografa americana Diane Arbus parlando del significato delle sue immagini.

Intorno alla fine di febbraio mi hanno detto che ci saremmo dovuti fermare, che avremmo dovuto cancellare le date degli spettacoli già fissati e che non avremmo potuto fare le prove della nuova produzione. Ho pensato che il mio lavoro esiste ed è legittimato esclusivamente dalla *presenza*.

Ho preferito mettere in ordine la mia casa piuttosto che dedicarmi ad un qualsiasi processo creativo. Ho preso tempo per riprendere il controllo sui miei spazi, sugli oggetti e ho rispolverato i libri uno ad uno. Non avevo nessuna voglia di leggere. Ho assecondato la mia tristezza quando i fantasmi sono venuti a visitarmi e non ho più pensato alla danza fino a quando mi è stato chiesto di scrivere questo testo.

*Si può conoscere il mondo intero*

*Senza muoversi di casa*

*Senza guardare dalla finestra*

*Si vedono le vie del cielo*

*Più si va*

*Meno si sa.*

L'epidemiologo Frank Snowden dell'Università di Yale sostiene che le epidemie siano una categoria di malattie che fanno da specchio agli esseri umani e che ci mostrano chi siamo veramente. Per spiegare questo concetto lo studioso racconta della malattia più temuta del diciannovesimo secolo: il colera, *una malattia dell'industrializzazione* e quindi dell'urbanizzazione dilagante, quando masse di persone si riversavano nelle grandi città - un ambiente catastrofico dove non esisteva alcuna preparazione sanitaria o abitativa, senza alcun sistema igienico-sanitario. In questo ambiente una malattia che si trasmetteva per via orale-fecale, ne traeva il massimo vantaggio.

## IL TEATRO DELL'ARANCIO

Alcuni anni fa mi è capitato di presentare il mio lavoro in un piccolo paese del centro Italia distante pochi chilometri da casa mia: Grottamare. Lo spazio che ospitava la performance si chiama Teatro dell'Arancio, un edificio del 'settecento i cui arredi lignei sono andati distrutti durante l'epidemia di spagnola, tra il 1916 e il 1918. L'interno del teatro presentava un palcoscenico, una platea e tre ordini di palchi lignei decorati. Oggi non rimane più alcun resto degli arredi originali. A causa dell'elevato numero di persone decedute per l'epidemia il legname degli arredi è stato usato per costruire casse da morto. Sebbene il luogo abbia mantenuto lo stesso nome e le mura esterne siano originali, entrando è forte la sensazione di trovarsi all'interno di "un falso" e che il Teatro dell'Arancio sia andato perduto per sempre. Al contrario, la memoria dell'azione radicale che l'ha depauperato è incredibilmente presente.

La parola “teatro” ha due significati: indica un luogo, così come indica l’attività che si svolge al suo interno.

La parola “danza” invece possiede un solo significato, esiste unicamente nella sua natura immateriale.

### SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME

Nel 2012 mi è capitato di lavorare per parecchio tempo su un’antichissima danza popolare che si chiama *Schuhplattler*. Le prime fonti scritte risalgono all’anno 1050 d.c. e narrano di danzatori che si percuotevano ritmicamente le scarpe con i palmi delle mani. Il ballo viene praticato ancora oggi e viene trasmesso di generazione in generazione nei piccoli centri urbani del Tirolo e della Bavaria.

La performance che è nata dalla ricerca sullo Schuhplattler si chiama *FOLK\_S*.

All’epoca credevo che una tradizione come la danza potesse estinguersi nel momento in cui nessuno fosse più in grado di praticarla. Ma in realtà la questione è un po’ più complessa di così e ne ho avuto la conferma sei anni dopo, quando ho iniziato a studiare un altro ballo popolare che ha poco più di cento anni: la polka chinata.

Nel 2018 sono venuto a conoscenza del fatto che esistevano solo cinque persone in tutto il mondo ad essere in grado di ballare la polka chinata, una danza bolognese dei primi del ‘900 nata spontaneamente nelle balere che si diffuse assumendo delle connotazioni quasi agonistiche fino ad essere ballata sotto i portici della città. Lo scorso anno abbiamo chiesto ai detentori di questa tradizione di insegnarci a danzarla e assieme ad alcuni festival italiani abbiamo deciso di attiva-

re alcuni workshop di trasmissione per mantenerla in vita. Il progetto si chiama *Save the last dance for me*. Sono circa trecento le persone che hanno partecipato ai workshop e almeno venti di loro sono riusciti a raggiungere un buon livello técnico nell'esecuzione. Quando abbiamo presentato l'iniziativa alla Pinacoteca di Bologna ho avuto l'occasione di parlare del progetto con un'antropologa, che mi ha spiegato che la danza non si estingue nella stessa maniera nella quale si estinguono le specie. La danza è un oggetto immateriale: nella sua natura è già contemplata la transitorietà e l'intermittenza. La polka chinata in effetti dopo essere sparita per decenni è tornata alla vita ben prima che io la recuperassi. Fu grazie al maestro di balli di sala Giancarlo Stagni, il quale la riportò in vita in tempi recenti grazie al rinvenimento di alcuni video degli anni sessanta.

La danza può tornare dopo essere sparita per intere generazioni. Si estingue solo se cade nell'oblio.

Non penso sia un caso il fatto che nelle ultime settimane i social network siano stati letteralmente invasi da documentazioni video di spettacoli di teatro e danza. Credo che, forse ad un livello inconscio, si tratti di un tentativo di salvare questi fenomeni dall'oblio. Un altro trend importante sui social è stato quello di pubblicare le proprie immagini dell'infanzia.

*Eternità cosmiche ed ere lasciano la stanza*

*Esplorendo nell'infinito*

*Nessuna entrata, nessuna uscita ora*

*Nessun bisogno di necrologi o giudizi finali*

*Sapevamo che il tempo sarebbe finito*

*Dopodomani all'alba*

*Abbiamo pulito i pavimenti*

*E lavato i piatti*

*Non ci coglierà impreparati*

**INTERVISTATORE:** In un'intervista al New Yorker lei ha detto che "le epidemie riflettono il nostro rapporto con l'ambiente, sia quello che abbiamo costruito che l'ambiente naturale. Questo vale anche per la pandemia di coronavirus? Le epidemie sono lo specchio della vulnerabilità umana?

**FRANK SNOWDEN:** "Con il coronavirus, ci sono almeno tre dimensioni che mostrano come la Covid-19 sia lo specchio di ciò che siamo come civiltà. La prima è che stiamo diventando quasi 8 miliardi di persone in tutto il mondo. Poi abbiamo il mito per cui si può avere una crescita economica e uno sviluppo infinito anche se le risorse del pianeta sono limitate, il che è una contraddizione intrinseca. Eppure abbiamo costruito la nostra società su questo mito, pensando che le due cose si possano in qualche modo conciliare. Quindi c'è un problema. Inoltre, questo trasforma il nostro rapporto con l'ambiente e in particolare con il mondo animale.

Abbiamo dichiarato guerra all'ambiente e distruggiamo l'habitat degli animali –questa è l'era dello sradicamento e dell'estinzione delle specie. Quello che succede è che gli esseri umani entrano in contatto con gli animali con una frequenza e in modi che non sono mai accaduti in passato. E possiamo ora indicare quali sono le malattie che lo dimostrano: l'influenza aviaria per definizione, così come la MERS

e la SARS e l'Ebola. E ora abbiamo il coronavirus. Direi che questo schema non è casuale. Vuol dire che viviamo un'epoca di ripetuti spillover. E in particolare sembra che siamo molto vulnerabili a quei virus per i quali i pipistrelli sono un ospite naturale. Un'altra caratteristica della globalizzazione è che ora abbiamo creato un mondo di grandi città, di megalopoli collegate da un rapido trasporto aereo, il che significa che uno spillover che accade, scelgo un posto a caso, a Giacarta al mattino...lo stesso virus sarebbe presente a Los Angeles e a Londra la sera. Quindi direi che il coronavirus sta sfruttando canali di vulnerabilità che noi stessi abbiamo creato. Direi anche che questa pandemia è la quintessenza dell'epidemia di una società globalizzata. Globalizzazione significa distruzione dell'ambiente, il mito di una crescita economica infinita, un'enorme crescita demografica, grandi città e trasporti aerei rapidi; è tutto collegato.”

La terra sta morendo e noi non ce ne accorgiamo.

Alla fine di gennaio di quest'anno è stata avviata una raccolta fondi per salvare un cottage su una spiaggia del Kent, in Inghilterra, che sorge di fronte alla centrale nucleare di Dungeness. Si tratta di Prospect Cottage, un edificio in legno scuro dalle persiane gialle, ultima dimora di Derek Jarman, regista visionario, artista e attivista britannico morto di Aids nel 1994. Jarman riuscì a far crescere tra i sassi arrotondati della spiaggia fiori e cespugli coltivati, oltre a creare un piccolo orto. Nei mesi in cui la fioritura perdeva il suo vigore decorava lo spazio interno ed esterno della casa con i detriti portati dalle onde o vecchi ordigni bellici rinvenuti sulla spiaggia.



Grazie a Keith Collins a partire dal 1994 Prospect College divenne un luogo di memoria meta di pellegrinaggio di molti artisti e seguaci, fonte di ispirazione e spazio di commemorazione. Dopo la morte di Collins la Tate di Londra, che si occupa ora dell'archivio di Jarman e la Creative Folkstone, che si prende cura del giardino, hanno lanciato il progetto di crowdfunding. Per garantire un futuro a Prospect Cottage è stato stimato un budget di 3.5 milioni di sterline da raggiungere entro il 31 marzo 2020. Mentre lottava contro la cecità, poco prima di rimanere vittima dell'Aids, Derek Jarman ci lascia la sua teoria dei colori: "Chroma". In questo libro ogni capitolo è dedicato ad un colore, annotando a margine ricordi e citazioni in una lirica combinazione di trattatistica classica, diario, aneddotica, poesia. Il capitolo dedicato al colore blu, è la sceneggiatura dell'ultimo film che ci ha lasciato e si conclude con questi versi:

*Il nostro nome sarà dimenticato  
Col tempo  
Nessuno ricorderà il nostro lavoro  
La nostra vita passerà come scia d'una nuvola  
E si dileguerà  
Come la nebbia inseguita  
Dai raggi del sole  
Perché il nostro tempo è il passaggio d'un ombra  
Le nostre vite svariranno  
Come scintille tra le stoppie.  
Metto un Delphinium, blu, sulla tua tomba.*

Sono stati 8.347 i donatori che hanno partecipato alla raccolta fondi per salvare Prospect Cottage. Il progetto è stato completato al 106% e sono state raccolte 3.725.982 sterline. Tutti versi che ho riportato in questo articolo sono tratti da "Chroma".



## letter by Quim Bigas

Quim Bigas Bassart was born in Malgrat de Mar and lives between Barcelona and Copenhagen. Artist working within the fields of choreography, dramaturgy and information procedures. He is dedicated to projects that seek to unfold a sense of place through the dispositive of dance and choreography. The artistic work that he has been doing during the last years, either within a research frame or with more thought-out formats as a product, uses different elements or constitutions of the event in order to contribute and conceive encounters.

Since 2018, he is an associate professor on choreography at Den Danske Scenekunstskolen in Copenhagen.

Between 2018 and 2021 he is part of the EU project Dancing Museums, in collaboration with Fundació Mirò (Barcelona) and Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona). Between 2018 and 2020 he is part of the EU project More Than This, in collaboration with University Carlos III (Madrid) and Mateo Feijóo- Naves Matadero (Madrid). During 2019, Quim has premiered DV (Desplaçament Variable) in Mercat de les Flors as well as being involved in a series of performative lectures around archives In DV (Desplega Visions). He also keeps touring his previous works MOLAR, APPRAISERS and THE LIST.

*Treat carefully and go one by one*

*Dear person holding this paper:*

*The following words you are going to read have been written several times.*

*First in a free-flowing writing then in a clearer layout, trying to make my words readable...*

*Then asking for sense, for movement... Some of the things that stayed out have to do with the legitimacy of several thinkers or ideas of being a guest as well as some personal stuff... it is being edited several times...*

*And now the following pages are excited to find you.*

*In most pages, you will meet some images. Please, **keep them on the paper. Move them around if you wish to make reading possible.***

*Once you are done, please be sure that all the images are in the right place/on the right page. You can check the index on the last page in case of doubt.*

*This is full of touch.*

Quim Bigas

**HOME**  
**STAY HOME**

Sun is coming through the windows and the living room is quiet quite warm. There are paper cuts all over the table as traces of an ongoing activity, some wrapping paper on a chair and lots of newspapers and books on the little table at the center of the room... My Whatsapp just rang, my niece just answered to a previous message I'd sent her yesterday. My partner has rearranged some plants and they look pretty in the window. He is in the other room. A room that has many papers lying around on top of the desk, sweaters on the bed and a yoga mat lying on the floor.

I can say that the place in which I am is a lived space. A living place. Inhabited. Full of materialities and objects that go from one place to the other. The papers will go to other places. They might even travel to other countries. Like this paper on its way to Portugal.

No one knows where this paper comes from before being here... We don't exactly know the future of the papers we hold.

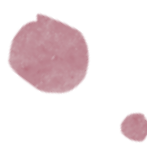
In the evening, we open the windows. The air feels fresher, or I am becoming a romantic about how well this situation might be for the ecosystem?

If there has been a period of time in which we are aware of the consequences of movement, it is now.

Movement, it's precious, meaningful...

Let movement matter.

Movement is happening.



As an artist, I am still confronted (and will be for a while) by the ethics of this situation.

I fell there are lots of layers implied in this. Some of these layers are more graspable and wordy and others remain more ghostly, as something flying around, that we can't, and might never, name. Let it be. Let it stay.

**STAY.**

**STAY Home.**

Within the field of choreographic practice, I often asked myself: "WHAT IF I AM STAYING HERE? WHAT IF THIS IS THE PLACE?". Staying as a potentiality to unfold something. Of the action, of the situation... to be with movement, and places... to stay immanent... stay in a movement, acknowledge the movement. For instance, the movement of this writing. A movement that goes and functions beyond the words that we are here. Motion comes in, qualities might crystalize, meaning is just one more movement of the many things that are happening now.

Suspension, agency (?), affect.

Matter.

Again.

Be where you are and don't be where you are not. Your neck muscles are tense tense.

You might need to send some air to it.

Again.

Air.

Air ~~throw~~ through me and out of me. Air ~~throw~~ through me and out of me... air as a particle... a gathering of particles... particles that we share... Air as a connector of the common. No borders, no frontiers, no difference.

A friend just wrote me a Whatsapp. In Barcelona they can hear the birds where before they could only hear cars. They can smell the air. They can breathe. Let's see it this way:

while we stay, people can breathe.

At least, people breathe differently. The sky is clearer.

While we stay, the place unfolds differently. Places still exist without us. Even an abandoned place is going somewhere... is moving... building something.

What are we constructing from where we are?

From here, home is still something to construct.

Ongoingly on its way.

Staying

Unfolding.

Staying means, also, to allow things. ~~Allow the other things that doesn't go through me.~~

Other things. To be aware of movement on different scales.

This new context reveals, to most of us, the consequences and effects derived from whichever kind of movement.

Dancing, as an accumulation of movements and attentions via many bodies... as an invisible thing that brings forward particles, sensations... absence... Dancing is here and gone. Dancing with the fluctuation of attentions. I am here. And this here is already different. I am here.

**HOME.**  
**PAUSE.**

How is time right now? Time is not necessarily having (or giving me) a sense of direction. Suspension.

**PAUSE**

Belonging rarely means being.

I've been asked to send a 2-minute video of one of my works. I am also editing a dossier to send to programmers. Does any of this make sense? Did it make sense before?

Today I've had a Skype meeting with someone I met on a gig. It was great and reaffirming to know that our bodies encounter each other once and that, in one way or the other, we are still with each other.

There are many people with me even if I am alone.

There are many things with me even if I am alone.

**PAUSE**  
**SENSE**

We are in many people even if we are not aware.

We are in many things even if we are not aware.

Movement

Again

Movement of the "manyness". Phenomena with a certain capacity to affect. Affective capacity. Flow... or in its way.

When I was dancing with my silly dance today, I felt the motion of things. The unfolding of my body, the fluctuation of my modes of attention... being in the void... taking in and letting go. I am where I am and moving with that situation. Sensing is happening with without my need to rationalize... it is happening by having a body that is limited yet endless in its modes of sensing and being affected. Dance is the void I need to inhabit these days. A dance that it is allowing me to be with the ungraspable. With the fluxus within otherness and self-reassurance. No one knows where the dance goes yet we are dancing. Staying. Dancing.

With spaces, architectures, breezes, texture, weight, digestion, light, darkness, air, nerves, clouds, sounds...

I rarely move alone.

Dance can find me as the force of invocation. As a force towards a wish, hope that is subtle and, most times, silently moving and sinking in.

## COMING

Sense movement unfolds unfolding from where you are. Spot movements in 360o de-grees. Change perspective and keep changing perspective. Sense the different dimensions... project... imagine... give space...

It is happening and yet gone.

Where we were is gone, so the beginning of this letter is also gone.

## HOME

### STAY HOME

If you can.

There are houses that are dark, others that are tiny and others that are bright and full of space. There are houses that are empty while people are trying to find an affordable place to life live. Houses with ten people in very little space and houses with two people with plenty of space. Houses with bed bugs and houses with pretty flowers in the window.

There is hail/snow falling from the sky. The sound it generates is relaxing.

We don't know exactly the future of the houses that host us. Change place.

## STAY

When a task/rule comes to light, many implications arise. Staying might make you wonder about the possibilities of doing so and to reflect on how to create conditions for staying **for everyone. Staying might unfold aspects** of the context **in which we live. Staying might give** you information **that supports something further than** action or light the **opposite that can only be sustained by action**. What do rules do to us?



# Mafalda Dâmaso

going forward, not backward  
radical ideas to rethink culture  
after Covid-19

Lecturer in Culture, Media and Creative Industries Education (teaching the module Conflict, Diplomacy and International Relations among others; MA Cultural and Creative Industries; MA Arts and Cultural Management; MA Global Media Industries), King's College London.

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Research Fellow 2019–2021, Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California Expert (Project: Science of values and identity in the political process) – Joint Research Centre, European Commission and cultural expert in the Next Left academic group of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies.

As academic Raymond Williams famously wrote in 1976, culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language. One of the reasons behind this complexity is the word's origin. Culture derives from the French, which in turn follows the Latin *Colere*: to nurture, to grow, to tend to the earth, to protect, to honour. In other words, culture is not only a sector of activity or, as anthropologists define it, a way of being. It is also a practice of care.

In 2020, as we live through a global pandemic, the cultural sector is imploding all around the world with only some exceptions – namely Germany and France, whose governments have promised massive investment programmes to support a cultural structure that was built over decades. Across borders, artists, musicians, actors, dancers, cultural managers and citizens have organised to lobby their local, regional, national and transnational authorities. On their side, governments are beginning to try to respond to thousands of desperate calls for financial help.

Although putting out this fire is – of course – the priority, a question remains unaddressed: when the pandemic is over, what cultural sector do we want?

My goal with this text is to suggest three principles to answer this question. However, it is important to recall what the situation was just before the pandemic hit. In the European Union, after 10 years of austerity or low levels of investment, cultural policies and funding tended to prioritise buildings over investment in skills development, urban centres over decentralised cultural provision, projects rather

than long-term stability. That is, the logic of the spectacle was prioritised over that of relationships. With only some exceptions, pre-Covid cultural policies and strategies were short-term, unequal and unsustainable.

Now, we must save our cultural institutions and support our cultural professionals. This is crucial. And when the pandemic is over, we must rethink the cultural policies and strategies that support the sector.

Below, I propose three ways to radically redefine cultural policies and funding: impact-driven cultural investment, a virtual cultural currency, and recognizing culture as key for the sustainable development transition that is required.

### **1. Goals, not numbers**

For decades, cultural debates have taken the share of different iterations of the same disagreement: one side of the barricade believes that funding should support what they see as the best cultural practices, independently of public demand; the other side tends to support funding the cultural practices that are preferred by the population. While there are pros and cons to both approaches, redefining the question may help us find an answer to it.

Alongside limited cultural funding, the last decade has seen the re-emergence of conversations around how culture can contribute to other goals: from learning to wellbeing, from tourism to urban regeneration. This led to occasional increases in targeted local investment,

which was evaluated based on shifts in audience numbers. The assumption underlying this process is straightforward: the expansion of cultural audiences indirectly supports other sectors (education, tourism, jobs...), which would also be strengthened in turn.

But what if, instead of focusing on the number of shows that are organised, the number of people that enter cultural buildings, the number of Zoom calls uploaded online, we create programmes of cultural investment that are dedicated to supporting our long-term goals? This is not to say that other forms of financial support would become irrelevant, but that the type of funding programmes would be diversified. If our goal is to develop cultural activities (for example, a music festival) in a specific context whose population rarely interacts, that is, with the aim of developing new or existing relationships and strengthening the local sense of community, that should be one of our explicit goals. Rather than numbers, our focus should lie on processes developed and nurtured by culture. *Colere*: to nurture.

## **2. An alternative currency for the cultural sector**

In recent years, one of the most innovative proposals in cultural policy has been the idea of providing cultural cheques. According to the latter, individuals in specific groups are given access to cultural activities independently of their socioeconomic background. The problem with this proposal is that, without constraints to its use, such funding may reinforce existing patterns of inequality. In other words, cultural checks may reinforce cultural consumption that would take place in

any case, creating a line of indirect public support to, for example, music conglomerates and/or individuals from privileged backgrounds. Rather, if we start from the recognition that access to culture is unequal and that investment directed at supporting a lively cultural ecology should, by definition, aim to reduce such patterns of inequality, it is not enough to increase cultural consumption from individuals belonging to specific groups (the idea behind cultural checks). On the contrary, this should be combined with ring-fenced support to small-scale cultural organisations that employ staff throughout the territory and develop process-based work in a long-term approach.

In this logic, it makes more sense to support a virtual cultural currency. Complementary currencies supplement national currencies; since they can only be spent in designated entities that recognise them, they keep money (or, in this case, public investment) circulating locally or nationally. Therefore, an alternative cultural currency would block the indirect redirection of public expenditure towards platforms that not only compete against small creators but also, in some cases, are registered in tax havens. Setting up an alternative cultural currency, establishing agreements with cultural entities that work with their communities, and providing loaded virtual cards to individuals from specific groups would contribute to growth in demand for local cultural organisations, building a more balanced cultural ecosystem. *Colere*: to grow.

### 3. Sustainable development is cultural

Experts believe that the environmental disturbances that have contributed to the development of Covid-19 may be reinforced by uncontrolled climate change. Transforming our economies and building societies that can respect the targets of the Paris Agreement for climate is the biggest challenge that we face. However, the role of culture in this domain is rarely acknowledged. In 2015, states sitting in the United Nations General Assembly agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals.

These 17 principles will allow societies to meet development goals while also allowing the planet to thrive. They are to be achieved by the year 2030 and include zero hunger, quality education, and good health and wellbeing, among others.

Nonetheless, they do not include access to culture. That is, although cultural elements are included within the 169 specific targets that compose the Sustainable Development Goals, it would be an exaggeration to say that culture is perceived as a key actor in the sustainable transition.

And yet, culture – as that which allows us to come together beyond our family, social and professional circles, rethink our present and reimagine our future – is the ideal catalyst for development at the fast pace that is demanded by the Paris Agreement.

A 2015 report by academics Joost Dessein, Katriina Soini, Graham Fairclough and Lummina Horlings identifies three main ways to un-

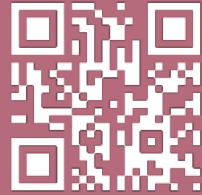
derstand the relation between culture and sustainability.<sup>2</sup> The first is culture in sustainability, which understands culture as the fourth pillar to implement sustainable development alongside social, economic and environmental actors. The second perspectives is that of culture for sustainability, which sees culture as the central dimension through which the other pillars interact. The final model is culture as development, that is, culture as the foundation for (and not merely as support for or the catalyst of) sustainable development.

If we are to imagine and put in practice the policies, the structures, the moves of living that will allow us to respect our planet, this requires global cultural change at a speed and level never seen before. Culture is that which connects us, but it is also openness to experimentation, embedded forms of thinking, moving forward despite uncertainty. It is what we, as humans, must urgently relearn: *colere*, to tend to the earth.

The pandemic is not an opportunity. It has caused pain, despair and destitution whose memory will never be erased. But when the virus is under control, we will gather again. And we will once again believe that the future is open. We owe it to ourselves. *Colere*: to protect, to honour.

# Christiana Galanopoulou

2020



Christiana Galanopoulou is an art historian, curator, festival programmer, dramaturge and author of texts on art. She is the artistic director of MIRfestival in Athens, a performance/ live media/ image adventures festival, which she founded in 2008 ([www.mirfestival.gr](http://www.mirfestival.gr)). She has collaborated with numerous Greek and European cultural institutions and she has commissioned and co-produced art works. In 2000 she founded VideoDance, a festival on movement and the moving image, which she directed until 2007. She studied Archaeology and Art History at the University of Athens, and she holds an MA in Curating and Gallery Studies from Essex University and a DEA in Contemporary Art History from Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. She is a PHD researcher in the University of Athens. Her work focuses on the intersection between contemporary audio-visual culture and performance and on contemporary forms of performing arts. She has published articles on dance, performing arts and audio-visual arts. Her work focuses on utopian concepts in contemporary performing arts.

After the end of World War II, the biggest fear of people was a nuclear destruction of the human life on the planet. This fear was nurtured by the opponent powers during the Cold War era and it gave birth to a big number of artworks about the dystopic landscape of the «day after».

I remember growing up in the fear of a nuclear war. In the 1980s, when I was a teenager, USSR still existed, a fear of a new nuclear holocaust was hovering and many artists were protesting against it and demanding peace. Nobody ever imagined that the fear of a pandemic would replace this fear – even when AIDS HIV was first discovered.

Because of the fear of a nuclear war or gas bombs, when a block of flats was being built in Athens right after World War II, in the 1950s, a bunker was added underground, so that the inhabitants can find there a last refuge if there was a war. If a building had an underground shelter it was considered to be a better option, and the flats of the building were more expensive to rent or to buy.

I live in Athens in a building erected in 1951 and, strange as it might sound, it does have a bunker: two big rooms made of solid concrete in the underground. There is a small air duct invisible from the outside to provide air (which one can close if the air is poisoned) and the access to the bunker is through a very small door (minimizing the surface that is not covered by concrete) with an iron air-tight door, similar to the ones of submarine ships.

In case of an attack and if the bunker was to be used, the inhabitants of the building would be advised to leave their personal affairs in their flats, and only take the absolutely necessary with them, including gas masks. Then they would all squeeze in the bunker. 12 families would

have to share about 60 square meters. Visiting the bunker of my building a few days ago brought a funny image to my mind: a gas attack in the Coronavirus era – would it force people to get in the bunker trying to keep the “social distance” rules at the same time?

A glance at this old kind of defence against the “enemy’s attack” and the recent kind of defence invented in 2020 against the “virus-enemy” could reveal something: Confinement is considered to be a salvation in both cases, but under different terms. In one case crowding was salvation, in the other the so-called “social distancing” is considered to be. It seems like those two extremities have a common denominator: the fear of an attack of an “external enemy”. But if we look closer, we will see that there is something very common concerning the two “external enemies”: they both derive from the human activity. From the distorted use of nature’s resources. And to be more precise, from the arrogance of humans against their species, against life and against nature.

But there is something more that is common: the culture of a policy of fear. A “culture of fear” built carefully and effectively in the society. A policy that results into the feeling of loneliness and defencelessness, which is nurtured in every possible way.

When do people feel completely defenceless and more vulnerable? In the realm of loneliness. Alone.

Feeling that their community is broken. Or in front of an invincible enemy that they cannot fight alone but neither can they fight together with their community. But there is another question here: how did we as a society cede to our representatives the right to use the politics of fear? Is there a way to fight against the policies of fear?

In the short time of confinement and de-confinement we have seen the image of a world we only knew from dystopic literature, a world we do not know if we want to live in. We have seen people dying alone, while their keens were looking at them from a screen, not being allowed to hold their hand during this passage. We have seen our educational systems trying to persuade little kids that the other kids constitute a danger; elderly people being scared to hug their grand-children and isolated people getting more and more lonely and gradually losing their appetite for life. And yet, the above images did not erase the ones of children dying of famine in other parts of the world, the ones of refugees fleeing wars, the ones of homeless people dying alone in the streets; they were just superposed on them. The number of suicides of the post-confinement period is yet to be counted, but the collective depression is already palpable.

And how do we intend to react to all that?

Everyone seems to agree that health is a priority.

But is health possible in an unhealthy social and political environment?

And how are we trying to cure the disease?

Are we trying to cure it or just to avoid dealing with it?

Do we expect seclusion and fragmentation of societies to be a medicine for anything?

How did societies react to pandemics before us?

Is a disease a purely biological phenomenon?

Is a pandemic a biological phenomenon at all - considering that the only components of the word are "pan" (all) and "demos" (city-in the

sense of an organized society of citizens)?

Could we see a **pandemic** as a disease of **democracy**?

Does suffering from a pandemic reveal deep, fundamental problems in an organized society?

Does a crisis in one level (in this case the biological one) reveal a deeper crisis in other levels?

In ancient Greece a pandemic was interpreted as a sign of a fatal misuse of power by its leaders and as a punishment of the society for its wrong decisions.

In some cases it could be interpreted as a need for deep political changes reflecting the cure of the social disease.

If the crisis is social, political, democratic, what could be the cause?

How deep could we go into diagnostics?

And if we get to realize them, could we cure the very fundamental causes of this crisis?

Do we even want to cure them?

When a society suffers, is it a political issue?

When a society suffers, what is the cure? Is there a cure?

Is the suffering of humanism a symptom or a cause?

What would Plato or Aristotle advise us?

Is the disease of a society a question of citizenship?

But how did we end up discussing citizenship?

Maybe because this is the most fundamental issue we have to face as a society...

Is this situation new? Or is it the new stage of a deteriorating reality?

Talking personally, I cannot see it out of its historical context and out

of a series of events that were accumulated and led to it. To my opinion what we live now has already been there in the society, as part of a value and culture crisis for many years now, but we were afraid to admit it before it became too obvious.

In the short confinement period many hidden or invisible problems surfaced. The tremendous uncertainty only seems to be harming the weaker ones in all senses – and first of all in the financial plan. Markets do not seem to fear so much. Which means that once more the globalized economy seems to be able to survive without even caring about human beings. We have seen hunger becoming a visible threat. And we have seen human life being crushed as if it was worth of nothing. Is this what it is going to be? Is this a world we dreamt of? Is this a world we want to live in? Can we imagine a world without human touch? Can we imagine the world without the magic of the human contact? Is this a world which can produce art? And if we are to have art, what should this art stand up for?

I am not afraid to live in a world without flights, but I am scared of a world without values other than the financial ones. I am not afraid to live in a world without luxury. But I am scared of a world without hugs and tenderness, of a world without deep and spontaneous encounters in the real space, without deep, life-changing human experiences; without the chemical reactions that enable encounters to give birth to something; without social and political coexistence; a world without all that is inspiring human relationships and great art.

Imagining a world as we want it has always been a revolutionary practice. And for me this should be the issue right now: to imagine what

kind of a world we will fight for. And to find the ways to fight for it together as citizens, whatever it takes.



# Gabriel Feitor

going back to our roots  
to combat fear

Researcher and Doctor of Modern and Contemporary History from Iscte-IUL.

Master in Contemporary History from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto and Bachelor in Modern and Contemporary History from Iscte-IUL. He has published several articles on History and is an Independent Councillor for the Alcanena City Council. Was associative director of, and collaborates with, the regional press.

Rereading the old Sérgio was a wise choice for a period of voluntary isolation. That ancient and dusty thing having been relegated to the shelves of the confines of History, to the vanguard of ignorance, I decided to rescue it. I admire António Sérgio very much. It is no surprise that sergian rationalism has influenced my political thinking, avowed social-democrat from the left that I am, and it is from that point of view that this essay takes its direction. It makes think and rethink, about ethics, morality, politics and the economy. In fact, from his teachings, from my faculty days, I took the maxim of transforming morality through economics and economics through morality, both simultaneously in action, and both dependent on each other.

At this moment, we are facing a very complicated situation. There will certainly be an economic loss, the consequences of which we don't yet know. And many of the certainties we did have up until a few months ago, have begun to go up in smoke. It is fear that emerges. From what I continue to try and extract, cooperation is, perhaps, the key word for a sergian world view which urges the unravelling, in the computation of a lesson to be had, from the present. And it is no accident that that former minister Miguel Poiares Maduro, in my political antipodes in an Expresso article on the repercussions this pandemic might have on liberal democracies, accentuates cooperation as the cornerstone in the economic process of globalization. In his own way, of course, but he does reference it. It is within this context of trampling on individual liberties, of social difficulties, that I invoke Sérgio.

It is in the knowledge and invocation of this/these historic legacy/legacies that we must ponder and spring to action with the necessary public policies for the present times. If there is an element that makes up part of the DNA of the democratic left, and which was gradually forgotten as a tool of social transformation via reform, it is associatio-nist socialism. I am referring to socialization via association, in the co-operative or the municipality, in order to be more encompassing in its methodology. Nevertheless, according to Georges Lasserre, it was through cooperativism, one of the three branches (on par with trade unionism and political socialism in its various nuances), that in the worker's movement in Portugal, after the 25<sup>th</sup> of April revolution, a great dynamism was observed, whether in the consumer cooperatives, or those of production, or housing. In fact, the Constitution enshrines the cooperative sector as one of the fundamental elements for the economic organization of the Republic.

António Sérgio was, without a doubt, its biggest doctrinaire. The pandemic we are going through is only a call to attention to the sergian maxim we referred to and, above all, a warning: this model of unbridled growth, based on profit, cannot continue, as something worse may happen. It urges us then, to find forms of sustainability. If, during these past years there had been an incentive towards the conscience of cooperation, perhaps today we would be able to act in ways that were not exclusively individualistic and/or collective, but would play a conscious role of the collective of the interdependent individual, this one interdependent on the other. If throughout the years we had invested in an alternative economic model, parallel to cooperation and

mutual aid, today we would have more of a capacity to confront the difficulties this crisis will bring. And this has repercussions in various areas of our lives, from environmental sustainability and the fight against climactic changes, to the desertification of the interior. Because, more than ever, we need each other.

This cooperative and communitarian spirit was, in fact, quite visible during the first months of confinement in the aid to precarious workers, especially the “cultural invisibles”, which, faced with the State’s failure, led the *community* to organize itself and intervened to assuage an unforgivable absence.

We also were able to observe how the social vulnerability provoked by the pandemic revealed serious housing problems in large urban centres. The democratic left has the moral obligation to find solutions to this problem rescuing, for this purpose, associationist socialism. If Covid-19 showed us the indispensable role of the State in the essential sectors for living in community, associationist socialism can and should be a complement in the role of socialization. It is not enough for citizens to have *freedom of*. It is also necessary for them to have the *freedom to*, in order to complete the designations of equality and fraternity of the republican triad, and to be truly free. And, in order to be truly free, it is indispensable to have a roof over one’s head.

Taking the example of the problem of housing in the urban centres, and prices accessible to a middle class increasingly crushed, the cooperative solution is the one that offers the best conditions of protection from speculation. It’s true that the Municipality of Lisbon is alrea-

dy working on this, but it must be the Government, through incentives and/or lines of credit, which must launch the initiative. There are many ways to do so: from revenue from all the cooperatives transformed into credit for each one to build, to construction with public support for sales, and construction by the cooperative remaining its property, but rented to the cooperatives or even granting, as a lending contract, degraded public buildings to the cooperatives with these being responsible for their reconstruction and maintenance.

More answers? António Sérgio has a few: “we intend, for this reason, the socialization of the means of production and exchange (or distribution, more precisely); however, the most appropriate way of achieving this seems to be the one that most respects the autonomous individual is power of initiative and the eminent dignity of the true person, always acting in an attitude which is positive, creative, fraternal, magnanimous, full of tolerance and sympathy, of a warm generosity and the love of men [...]. Cooperatism for us is not dogma, a closed doctrine, a fanatical faith, something exclusionist [...], but simply a method – and not the only one – of solving economic problems, and of socializing the economy without going through politics”.

I repeat that the left has the moral obligation to rescue associationist socialism. I say it not only in service to political reason but, essentially, to humanism. The World is changing and it is necessary for politicians to once again speak with those who have an ideology – without half-measures. On the other hand, with an increasingly liberal right, whether it's the democratic right or the new radical populist right, associa-

tionist socialism is an answer to the fallacy that “socialism hampers freedoms”. If the State must play its fundamental role, and not be an impediment but a tool for conferring *freedom*, associationist socialism is the socializing dimension which the free individual possesses. Last but not least, the human side: the constitutional right to housing for the dignity of the person, in equality and without discrimination.

We are urged then, to return to our roots, to the *commune*, to the community, to combat fear. And for this, we need everyone.





## Cátia Terrinca

i highly recommend the  
blue pencil used on  
the tyrant father's law

Geminiana, born in Lisbon in 1990, grows up in Santo António dos Cavaleiros. She earns a bachelor degree in Theatre from ESTC and RESAD, and develops her personal and artistic project between Portugal and Cape Verde, between Portuguese and Creole. Working simultaneously as a professional actress, her time is mostly dedicated to UMCOLETIVO, a structure founded in 2013 with Ricardo Boléo, in which she explores rewriting processes as a dramaturg and actress, seeking to build a language which contradicts the daily, capitalist hustle, and bringing to the discussion feminine and feminist questions. She chose to live in Elvas and it is here that she currently is also fulfilled as programmer of the festival A Salto. She is a mother.

*I have a friend  
Who applies her makeup at night  
To dine alone.*

*Today I lined my eyes,  
Underneath my eyes,  
In blue pencil.*

*The blue pencil is blue  
It doesn't cover the eyes  
Nor does it allow them to see*

*I seek God  
I seek God  
I seek God  
In every law.*

*Is he just?*

*(If silence were  
Were peace, only peace  
And never the gag)*

## 12 Steps for sweetening totalitarianism

1. António Costa is the Prime Minister of Portugal.
2. I am not António Costa's daughter. My father's name is Inácio Terinca.
3. Citizens must be clearly informed. Children as well.
4. I don't like being educated by the government. My father gave me few orders.
5. About education, they say when you say no, you must explain why.
6. Why can't we be with each other, António Costa? I want to be with my father.
7. I would like to hug you. May I hug you? It's 20 seconds of oxytocin.
8. If we produce more oxytocin, we are improving the National Health System.
9. I would like to hug you without feeling like a criminal.
10. In 2021 I will live.
11. In 2020 I survived at life.
12. Does it also seem to you that #OrgulhosamenteSós is a good hashtag for when we are sick of being home?

**NOKIA**

No, you won't betray me. You are not a buffoon. Oh, I watch you tenderly. Keeping the memory of when I write messages like this. I'd like to keep it. Imagine that, suddenly, we all Awake to never again.

15 October, 2020

There is no adolescence in contesting the law of life

I don't think I am afraid of death. I remember visiting the on an especially cold, windy and rainy day. Freedom for me has never been about having money in the bank. I am poor enough to receive 500 euros per month, have a son and eat or-ganic. I have my privileges. I don't pay for rent as the house belongs to my parents.

Among other things. I have chosen to live, whenever possible. I do theatre. That must be my Mars. I may die from several things I don't avoid. One of them is, in fact, being a professional in the Performing Arts. Others, simpler, being in a car, drinking from the same glass as some friends, petting street dogs, and so on. I confess that I don't understand the reducing of existence to the binomial being alive/being dead. And this wide open philosophical crisis in 2020 must be denounced by those who want to live. The puritanical saviours of numbers want us behind screens. #estamosjuntos. As if leisure were a sin, we must only go out for essential reasons.

Would it occur to a washing machine to go to a concert? Sometimes I remember primary school: if you have finished the difficult word, you can draw. We must police ourselves, given the impossibility of a poli-

ce officer to help each one of us. We can do it. And then the time for drawings will come. I have cramps in my imagination. I have cramps in my heart. I have cramps in my dreams. Why do we run against covid-19, with such an apparent tremendous collective dedication? We run, ignoring the world as if only the running mattered, as if only running existed, if the only thing that mattered in this race was getting to the end (that long-term #vaitudofcarbem) with your vital signs. A Portuguese legend I once read spoke of the sea. Once upon a time there was the sea. Sometimes the sea killed boats and fishermen, because the waves were high. One day, the sea found out it was the wind which drew the waves and went to ask the North star if he could speak with the wind. The North star was afraid and sent him to the moon. The moon knew nothing about it, and the sea ended up speaking with the sun. The sun laughed. I think of this. I drink a glass of cold full fat milk. I hesitate between thinking of a performance or invoking a conversation with epidemiologists and philosophers. What illuminates chaos? I know, or I pretend to know, it is the gathering. That nectar of which the Gods want to deprive us. And so I write in tomorrow's calendar: try to mark December 31, 2020 as a day for GATHERING: post covid-19 policy.

