DESIGNERLY MODUS OF WANDERING AND SHARED FILM CREATION IN "CORPOS PALIMPSÉSTICOS"

ARTISTIC CREATIONS IN TIMES OF SOCIO-AFFECTIVE CONTINGENCIES

FLÁVIO ALMEIDA*

RENATA FERRAZ**

*   LabCom/UBI - Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Beira Interior
       UNIDCOM/IADE - Design and Communication Research Unit, IADE–Universidade
       Europeia (Portugal)

**   LabCom/UBI - Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Beira Interior (Portu-
       gal)/ CIEBA Faculty of Fine Arts of University of Lisbon (Portugal)

Flávio Almeida has a degree in Music, a Master in Design and Visual Culture and a PhD in Design. He has works in the areas of music, visual design, audiovisual and multimedia installation. His research interests are distributed in the areas of graphic design, visual culture, image analysis, audiovisual, videogames, Japanese graphic culture and music.

Renata Ferraz has a Ph.D. in Arts (Moving Image), a Master in Multimedia (Audiovisual) and a Degree in Performing Arts. These areas converge and determine each other in her work in filmmaking, acting, research, and teaching. Shared creation allied to audiovisual narratives and new technologies studies have accompanied her practice in the last twelve years.

Corresponding Author:

flavio.almeida@ubi.pt
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5228-8099
Ciência Vitae: (6C1C-4C76-E086)

Renata Ferraz
renataferraz.info@gmail.com
Ciência Vitae: (FA10-5B91-EFE1)

Abstract:

"Corpos Palimpsésticos"[1] emerged in 2020, in a moment of worldwide pandemic due to Covid-19 and because of the end of our relationship as lovers. Soon after our separation, and thanks to the call for proposals of the Residency Program "Residências em Residências Circolando / Central Elétrica 2020 – FASE 2", the idea of mourning the separation through a creative gesture was born. The fruition of artistic objects in their physical places has been interrupted due to the restriction to people gathering in closed spaces. This new reality has forced artists to rethink the format of their works so they could reach a public that, without the usual places, is now reterritorialized in a digital environment. Thus, the project's goal was the production of video-performances and the constant online sharing of our creation process. The project had an interdisciplinary approach, and although design and filmmaking were the privileged areas, the work also included text creation, photography, music, and scientific research. We will analyse here existing approaches of creation methods such as co-creation in documentary, art-based research, art thinking and a recontextualization of design thinking in order to reframe these modes of creation in "Corpos Palimpsésticos". By using more than a single methodology, we are interested in a process where our areas of research/creation can dialogue randomly in a non-hierarchical way.

Once the residency was over, we systematized the creation process that gave rise to this text. Finally, we created the term "Designerly Modus of Wandering" and used the term "Shared Film Creation" of a previous research to base our creative journey in the areas of design and film creation.

Keywords: designerly modus of wandering, shared film creation, interdisciplinarity, pandemic, creation processes, transmedia, video-performance.

---

1   Palimpsestic Bodies (our translation)

Instruction V

Finalize a work

Notice the transformations around you

Expand the creation of a transmedia work

Moto perpetuo

Introduction

We had been living as a couple for four years and developing artistic works together when the Covid-19 pandemic started and we broke up with. Right after this we decided to initiate this artistic project. With the public call for the Residency Program "Residências em Residências Circolando / Central Elétrica 2020 – FASE 2", the idea was born for us to mourn the separation through a creative gesture, with the production of artistic works that would be presented online[2]. Once the residency was over, we systematized the creation process that gave rise to this text. We expose here the reflections of each phase of this creation process, through methodologies based on a dialogue between different disciplines as will be covered in "Methodological Approach" later in this article.

Due to the pandemic restrictions, the Residency Program demanded that the artistic residency happened in the homes of the selected projects' artists. The work during the residency took as a starting point the relationship of our bodies, as a former couple, which ones represented an archive of a relationship that no longer existed. But this work also proposed an unusual encounter opened to unexpected interactions of a future relationship. The separation occurred on March 14, 2020 during the voluntary quarantine, four days before the State of Emergency was decreed in Portugal. Given the fact that the two artists had never lived together before, the mourning of the relationship began to be done with each person in their own home on opposite sides of town. The current pandemic context together with the ending of the relationship, brought about the loss of our common experiences in an unavoidable way.

As Covid-19 pandemic imposed an unusual social reclusion, our project also imposed an unusual situation: a broken-up couple living together for the first time. Although the ending of a relationship supposes the separation of a couple, the project proposed exactly the opposite with us mourning our relationship ending in the same house.

In this context, the self-imposed rules for our artistic creation would become our bodies territories of memory. It would not be possible either to detach oneself from the experience lived previously, nor from the mourning established at that moment. There was one more determinant element at the moment of the application: the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which also served as a kind of guide for the writing of the project. It was in this context, between mourning and the virus, between the physical, cognitive, affective, and social spheres that the project for the residence was built. It was composed of three pillars: the characteristics attributed to the palimpsest, as a way of rewriting the terms of our relationship; the adaptive potentiality of the virus; and at the artistic realms of each one of us.

Creative approach

The term palimpsest refers to the parchments of Ancient Greece and Rome:

> We generally call "palimpsests", the manuscripts written on parchment whose first writing was removed by washing or scraping so that a second text could be transcribed on the same parchment. Sometimes the parchment was reused yet a second time (bis rescriptus or ter scriptus), so that the same

---

2   The initial conversation in which the proposal for this project emerged can be seen online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFX-QcocVfg

manuscript conveys to us three scriptures and three texts of different chronologies. (Escobar, 2006, p.16) [Our translation]

The reuse of a parchment was due to its high cost coupled with the need to continue to record new stories, even if it meant the loss of the previous ones. This was the first characteristic of the term palimpsest that interested us when we wrote the project for the residence. The second one was related to the fact that the ink did not disappear completely from the parchment, which turned possible to identify one or another character of the first text under the new one.

In "Corpos Palimpsésticos" something similar would occur. In the face of the impossibility of writing a new story on a blank piece of paper it was necessary to find possibilities to fade our memories away as an former couple, so we were able to make room for new ones. First, the dissident powers of the relationship that no longer existed were established, and later became another one in the context of the confinement and artistic residence. The creative gesture, therefore, would concern to the transmutation of an original story common to both, namely an interweaving of the previous stories and those that would be written during the residency.

This transmutation inherent to the idea of palimpsest can also be observed in the adaptive capacity of the virus and served as a second pillar for the creation of the residency project. Among other variables, the virus endures thanks to its power of mutation. The virus not only transmutes to survive the immune system of its host, but it also forces the host to metamorphose. To survive the virus a complex process of adaptation is required by its host (Coccia, 2020). Our relationship would also go through a two-way adaptation. It would be necessary to let the separation to take over our bodies, which once deprived of their identity as a couple could be at the service of the creative gesture.

As a third foundation, the project also relied on the creative polyvalence of two areas: design and filmmaking. Each one of them was grounded in other areas. Namely, audio-visual narrative, performance, music, and academic-artistic research. The initial proposal was to create a sequence of instructions for actions that would generate performative acts. These, in turn, would be performed and filmed, resulting in video-performances. The creation of the action instructions was inspired by those proposed by Yoko Ono in her book Grapefruit (Ono, 1964). Several artists/performers, mostly from the 1960s and 1970s, created art pieces through instruction, such as Carolee Schneemann, Vito Accoci, Marina Abramović, Merce Cunningham, and John Cage to name just a few. The Grapefruit book had particularly interested us because it is a book rich in diversity of instruction in different artistic languages. The instructions there opened up possibilities for visual, sound, tactile, textual and plastic explorations. The way of creating performances through short and simple instructions proved to be an inviting idea for this project. In addition, we were accompanied by contemporary texts from the social science domains about the virus and transmutation processes (Agamben, 2020; Coccia, 2020a, 2020b; Amadeo, 2020). Thus, the project presented for the residency had a procedural (following the idea of palimpsest), contextual (through the pandemic), and interdisciplinary (through our artistic domains) character.

The residency was composed of four stages, as showed in the Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

	Action 1	**Action 2**	**Action 3**
Stage 1	Theoretical Study	Residency Period Preparation	
Stage 2	Research	Creation of Action Instructions	
Stage 3	Writing of Instructions	Creation of Performances Adapted to Audiovisual Language	Conduction and filming of Actions Inside the Residence / Surroundings
Stage 4	Film Edition	Music Composing, Sound Mixing, and Colour Grading	Final Film Version
Result	Four Video-performances to be viewed uninterruptedly in 20m36s		

The first moment was dedicated to theoretical study and preparations for the residency period. In the second phase, the already mentioned series of instructions of Yoko Ono served as a *motto* for the research and for the action instructions creation. In the third phase, the instructions individually pre-conceived and defined by us were written. These instructions served as a narrative script for the experimentation and creation of performances adapted to audio-visual language. In the third stage also, the performative actions were conducted and filmed. These actions were performed inside the residence or, according to the rules of the State of Emergency, in the surroundings of the residence area and for short periods of time. In total, four video-performances were created. So, they were edited, the music composed, the sound mixing done, same to the colour grading, and then finalized in the fourth phase. The video-performances are supposed to be viewed uninterruptedly as a 20 minutes and 36 seconds film.

Besides the film, the residency resulted also in two videos about the creation process, photographic essays, a musical composition, texts, participation in the festival "FUSO 2020", a publication in a book chapter "FAL 20" (provisional title), an invitation to an invitation to show the film at the Museum of the Guard in the exhibition entitled "Paixões, cartas e jogos na pandemia" and the present article. The objects created during the residency were publicly shared and presented in different medias: Facebook, Instagram, Vimeo and YouTube, reaching an audience around 900 people.

A transmedia project

Evans (2011, pp.19-21) presents several interpretations of the term transmedia in an attempt to define its origin and its nuances through various authors. It can be noticed an agreement of opinions regarding its meaning in the field of media communication. Transmedia would then be the storytelling practice that involves multiple platforms to transmit a narrative. Evans (ibid.) still explains that the term transmedia was originally used for marketing purposes to promote a story and its characters in different media and contexts. Transmedia

then has an intrinsic relationship with intertextuality and the creation of narrative universes. Also, due to the diversity of media and contexts in which the story is presented, transmedia must have a plurimodal character, especially when it is related to different outcomes such as movies, toys, video games, graphic novels, web stories, books, etc.

This plurimodality requires an adjustment ability to the original narrative, either to recreate the story in another medium or to create extensions of the narrative universe, valuing the singularities of each communication platform. Julio Plaza, a keen interlocutor on the issues of communication, intermediality, and the engaging semiotic discussions, offers the term "intersemiotic transit" to define the process of translation and interdisciplinarity of different media. Plaza (2003, p. 66) refers specifically to technological media, which according to him incorporates diversified sign systems created by humanity throughout its history into a new technological support capable of simultaneously housing different medias. And these languages, once transcoded and transmitted to an audience, make it possible the intersemiotic and creative transit among the visual, verbal, and acoustic. This intersemiotic transit referred by Plaza expands beyond the field of intermedia translations or a theoretical support for academic definitions about the nature of multimedia, intermedia, transmedia, cross media, etc. The creative process itself, according to Plaza, has this nature of transit in different areas of knowledge.

This is an important point in order to think about the creative process mentioned here. As said in the introduction, the creative gesture involves different artistic areas such as audio-visual, sound and performance which were responsible for defining the objects created during our residency. It also encompasses other areas such as literature, sociology, philosophy, biology and multiple outcomes such as a book chapter, a scientific article, photography, video, and publications in social networks.

Without deviating from the central theme of this article, which builds up space in the interlocution between shared creation in cinema and design, it is prudent to use Rudolf Arnheim's thought about the creation process as a conceptual direction. For him, at least in the sphere of artistic creation, the core of creative thinking lies in the junction of two important cognitive processes, intuition, and intellect. Both are valuable and indispensable. Intuition acts in global perception and intellectual analysis acts in abstraction (Arnheim, 1989, p.29).

For both Plaza (2003) and Arnheim (1989) there is a constant transit between areas of distinct and sometimes antagonistic specialties, such as intuitive fluidity and logical-analytical concretism. Although Arnheim has his attention focused on research in the arts field, creativity and the processes of creation are not self-contained in this idea only.

This is possible to verify in Deleuze also:

> Ideas, we must treat them as potentials already engaged in this or that mode of expression, in a way I cannot say that I have an idea in general. According to the techniques that I know, I can have an idea in such and such domain (…) (Deleuze, 2005, p.291). [Our translation]

According to the philosopher, inventiveness is not restricted to the artistic discipline. It exists in all areas of knowledge, once specific ideas are constructed to each domain of performance. In line with this idea, Kimbell states that:

> [...] the word "creative" is not just reserved for designers, musicians, and visual artists but also computer programmers and opinion-makers such as columnists. These professionals find meaning in work which is characterized by flexibility, autonomy, and creativity and which blurs their professional and personal lives, as they move across national borders without

being anchored to industrial modes of production and consumption. (Kimbell, 2011, p. 288)

Regardless the field, creativity is present in an investigation of a problem and in the imagination of possible solutions. It is during the immersion in the work and the research for its development that creativity flourishes, guided by such the cognitive processes mentioned above.

Methodological approaches

For the classical Greek thinkers ideas are not generated by intellectual or intuitive processes, but by intervention of deities. It is known that since anthropocentric advent, which emerged during the Renaissance, there is an exaltation of human capabilities as the central agent in the production of knowledge. The idea of method aims, among other things, to eliminate randomness throughout the creation process. In the exact sciences a method is an indispensable procedure. In artistic areas, the methodological procedure becomes dispensable for the creation of works. Artistic expression enjoys a wide freedom of procedures that may or may not be systematized through working methods. Then, the methodology of creation will be developed by the artist if he or she wishes to do so.

In the area of design, specifically in graphic design, the question of a method as an indispensable tool for solving problems becomes controversial. The graphic designer is an agent whose goal is to solve problems of visual communication. However, there is also an opening for subjective graphic expression, with an experimental and artistic approach. It will be, in principle, the project and its needs that will define the degree of expressive freedom or methodological rigor (for example: the visual freedom in creating a poster for a musical event, or the rigor in structuring a manual for medical equipment). In other words, a method is a tool for organizing work to solve specific problems, but it does not necessarily increase creative expression.

In this sense, Jones (1984, p. 10) states that a method is primarily a means of resolving a conflict that exists between logical analysis and creative thinking. He advocates the idea that any method in the field of design must allow both forms of thinking simultaneously and avoid fragmentation to achieve efficient and creative results. In its less experimental aspect design focuses on problem solving, gets the result through a rigorous working process and not through random steps.

According to Cross (1984, p. 303), the studies on design methodology occurred in the early 1960s in a still timid and decentralized way by a network of academics and professionals that became known as The Design Methods Movement. This beginning is not related to the discipline that is nowadays known as "design thinking", as we explain below. It is important to emphasize that the designer's way of thinking and working is not necessarily defined by the term "design thinking", but rather by a "designerly way of thinking" or "designerly ways of knowing". The differences between these methods are essentially important to understand the role that design played in the creation and management of content for "Corpos Palimpsésticos".

The popularly known term design thinking is an attempt to systematize the creative process that arose, as the name suggests, from design and expanded to other areas, especially in the corporate sphere. Several authors point out the differences between approaches regarding design thinking, its origins and praxis, and its areas of action (Hassi & Lasko, 2011; Kimbell, 2011; Georgiev, 2012; Cross, 2010; Johansson & Woodilla, 2010). Design thinking, in its most widespread form, is a young conceptualization dating back to the early 2000s. The term applies to the process of idea generation and innovation in a business context, with a focus on collaboration among different elements of a team (usually non-designers) with focus on the user and in the problems' creative solution. The term was made popular by Tim Brown, CEO (chief executive officer) of the design consulting firm called

IDEO. The standard procedure for conducting design thinking contains five steps, namely: empathize (immersion in the context of the problem), define (data analysis and insights), ideate (brainstorms and ideas generation), prototype (a solution proposal) and test (checking the solution created).

There are then two perceptions here about ways of thinking in the design practice. First one concerns to research on design practice and the investigation of the genesis of ideas to present viable solutions for projects, besides the use of integrative thinking, an holistic perception of the project and other elements that aim to create a theory about the designer's thinking and mode of operation, as seen in Cross. The second one, popularized by Tim Brown, is a more practical strand of "thinking by doing", with practical applications oriented to be used in various areas by non-designers, especially in corporate contexts with managerial discourse. The first one is the investigative approach of designers to understand their own working and creative processes and it aimed also to design education and literacy. The second one is a domestication of design in the form of methodological tools for a sort of applications in different situations by a variety of professionals with a focus on creating solutions with the user as their central concern. According to Kimbell (2011, p. 239) "Concern with design's place in the world and thus with larger social or political questions is lost when design is mobilized within a managerialist framework."

The methodological role of design in "Corpos Palimpsésticos", follows the Cross approach more focused on "designerly ways of thinking" rather than the more popularly notion of "design thinking". It is also relevant to point that the term "design thinking" is not present in essential works on the history of visual design (Meggs & Purvis, 2012; Hollis, 2001; Palacio & Vit, 2009). Cross (2006), presents some definitions about what the Royal College of Arts considers to be the nature of design and its way of thinking and acting. Among the most important, design is considered to focus on the conception

and the realization of new things, application of the art of planning, invention, the making and, as he said, "Design has its own distinct 'things to know, ways of knowing them, and ways of finding out about them. Cross (idem, p. 2) compares the cultural values between the sciences, humanities, and design. Science, according to the author, would value objectivity, rationality, neutrality, and concern with truth. The humanities would emphasize subjectivity, imagination, commitment, and concern for justice. And design would have as its major features the practice, ingenuity, empathy, and a concern with adequacy. These last two characteristics, without detriment to the others, are essential to an interdisciplinary project. It is up to the designer to understand how the other areas that belong to the project work, and how the designer can fit into this context to develop an appropriate work that adds to the production process.

In other words, there are ways of thinking and practicing design in an artistic project, and our approach does not follow the generalist model of mainstream design thinking. The design was applied in a contextualized way, aware of the needs of the project, less rigid in relation to the imposition of pre-defined process steps, and also it welcomed various approaches that belongs to Art Based Research. It was Shaun McNiff (2008) who systematized this approach that considers artistic expression as a privileged object to carry out academic research. He proposes a reconciliation between the domains of art and scientific thought. McNiff points out that this method makes it possible for questions traditionally put by researchers to artists can now be elaborated and answered by the same person, in this case, the artist herself / himself. Our process resembles the methodology thought and experienced by McNiff, in which the artist, after creating her / his object, reflects on specific aspects involved in its production.

Unlike seeking optimized solutions, the role of design in "Corpos Palimpsésticos" was one of adaptation to the predominantly artistic nature of this project. There were no

methodological impositions for the optimization of the work. There was, instead, an appreciation of ingenuity, empathy, and adequacy, like a palimpsest ready to be rewritten, instead of using pre-established directions.

With that said, the creation was a two-way street. It resembles recent studies of co-creation in documentary filmmaking. In March 2020, a group of research-artists from the US and Canada organized a dossier entitled Co-creation in Documentary: "Toward Multiscalar Granular Interventions Beyond Extraction" (Zimmermann et al, 2020). The document presents important clues for the process experienced during our residency, to the extent it proposes a practice of self-reflection, as well as aesthetic and ethical decisions made jointly among filmmakers and portrayed people. This type of approach presents itself as an alternative to a vision of a singular authorship. In this sense, the co-creation projects do not start from the idea of a single person, but from the political and aesthetic demands that emerge during the process. Our residency encompassed three important characteristics to co-creation: the interdependence between the result and the context in which the film is created; the process as a privileged space for experimentation, and a flexibility during all stages of creation.

Reece Auguist, one of the authors of the mentioned dossier, formulates some questions, valuable for the reflections highlighted here, which can be summarized in: How do we solve problems together? Why are we working together? How do we work? What does happen when things in the world and things among us change? How do we create cinematic or multimedia objects when the centre of practice is based on dialogue? (Park Center for Independent Media, 2020). Although we were intimate in the past, our new status as a former couple, brought with it some issues — affective, political, and social — that transformed the intimacy of yesteryear into an unknown territory, about to be reterritorialized. Therefore,

the questions dear to co-creation were also questions that accompanied all the moments of "Corpos Palimpsésticos", before, during and after the residency, reaching the reflections presented in this text.

Without disregarding the importance of such reflections, the work developed by us proposed a step ahead of that one given by co-creation, approaching the idea of "shared film creation" (Ferraz, 2018). There is a fundamental difference here between the two practices. In co-creation of a documentary filmmaking, people portrayed occupy a double position during the making of the film: in front and behind the camera. They not only contribute to the material of the filmmaker, but also interfere in her / his ethical and aesthetic choices through a critical dialogue during the whole process of creation. Shared film creation, on the other hand, besides positioning the person portrayed on both sides of the filmic apparatus demands on the filmmaker to also attend to both sides of the camera. This practice results in a less categorized ways of presenting the role of the filmmaker during the process of thinking / making films. Besides it also gives to the person portrayed a status as important as that of the filmmaker to the making of the film. Both transfigured into one another, being observed at the same time they observe. During the creation of "Corpos Palimpsésticos", both of us accomplished this double role: observers and being observed concomitantly in the same creation. In this way, shared film creation, unlike co-creating, does not focus on solving common problems. Rather, it is a constant generator of questioning, which drives and modifies the filmic construction itself.

Thus, both approaches, design thinking through "designerly way of thinking" approach and shared film creation presented themselves in dialogue, pointing new ways to our creative process, generating and redefining the problems that emerged during the residency. Below, we will present some examples that show how this process took place.

Fragments of a creation

To make it easier to follow this process, we explain here the four action instructions that were created during the residency which originated the script of the four video-performances.

Instruction I: Mourn together in home confinement. Let the lost person be your company.
Instruction II: Allow your most difficult memories to see the surface. Let your skin absorb it. Change skin.
Instruction III: Wash everything that remains harmful in the river. (In case of confinement a small bathtub would be fine). Stir the water until it shows something healing.
Instruction IV: Throw soap bubbles to the sky. [Let them fall on your protection mask, until them comes way from your face]. Take a deep breath. Repeat.

During the first moments of the residency, the organization of the daily routine was the focus of our attention. Because we have quite different diets, we started the organization with food. More specifically, by preparing wild fermented foods that normally takes about a week to be ready for consumption. It was during the preparation of the fermented vegetables that the first creative idea occurred: to elaborate a text to create a dialogue between the fermentation process of the vegetables and our maturation process of ideas. After the vegetables were immersed in water and salt, it was necessary to close the glass jars so that the air from the outside would not hinder the process. In the days that followed the preparation, a process of transmutation took place. As a result, changes in taste, texture and smell were observed in the vegetables. But the most significant change was that they became stronger. This can be verified in the considerably longer life they have then compared to raw vegetables. As we were confined, we just closed the door of the apartment and let the fermentation process to take place (fig. 01).
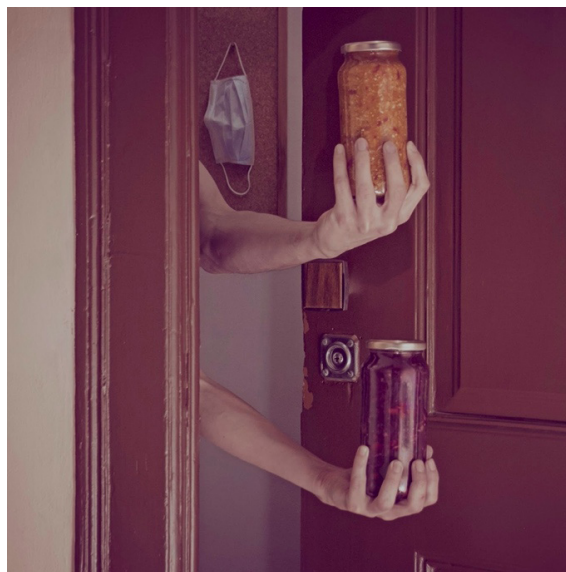

Fig. 01 FERMENT #1. The vegetables began the fermentation process on our first day of residency, May 17.

This first movement gave rise to a series of social media posts about fermentation. From the beginning a pertinent question was posed to the context of transformation that is not just about the fermented or our relationship, but also one on a global level. Thanks to the epidemic context, it was possible to realize an intimate project like this. In other times, the same residency program would be held at the headquarters of Circolando / Central Elétrica in Porto, which would not make sense for the creation as pointed here. But if the pandemic turned this peculiar work possible, it also shaped the ways in which it was carried out. The transformations imposed by the pandemic have unavoidably accelerated the predominance of new technologies in everyday life. In this regard, José Gil, formulated:

> Covid-19 would be the springboard to catapult the collective to a higher level, that of the digital society. Instead of progressing gradually, passing through intermediary phases, the pandemic will force a brutal

leap, imposing the digitalization of all activities in-discriminately. The order of subordination would be inverted: the digital, which was subject to the he-gemony of habits linked to the physical body (deterri-torialization forced bodies to displace or expropriate themselves), would become dominant, conditioning other social acts, when not suppressing them (Gil, 2020). [Our Translation]

The State of Emergency measures, imposed by governments globally, corroborated the construction of new practices and new forms of interaction with artistic manifestations. In this frenetic rhythm towards a digital society, presenting the pro-cess and the outcomes of the residency exclusively online was the result of these adaptations. In the new order in force, the artists were released of their habitual tools and ended up by accepting it with little resistance, while the audience without access to the conventional means of artistic fruition needed to be reterritorialized in the digital (Ibid).

Facing this context, we started a particular path of creation. Without a method to start with, as proposed by the shared filmic creation, we were adrift, face to face, the designer and the filmmaker trying to find ways to interchange the tech-niques of their respective areas and, thus, to elaborate the texts for the action instructions that, later on, would give body to the video-performances.

During the initial phases of the residency, we decided that "Corpos Palimpsésticos" needed a visual identity that would direct us towards an aesthetic horizon, both for dissemina-tion on social media and for the development of the project. We started, then, a visual exploration of the past through a photo of us as lovers we were (fig. 02).

Following the idea of palimpsest, we have chosen to overlap our bodies as layers of texts over texts. The title of the work was added over the image of these bodies as another reading layer. But the visual result was not very versatile because it

Fig. 02   First visual experiment

was a single photograph and with low resolution, which made it difficult to adapt for dissemination and use in video. We de-cided, then, to do a photo shoot following the same visual language of the original photo. But this time, the backdrop would be eliminated to acquire visual minimalism and greater flexibility in the use of the images.

The photo shoot was filmed to serve as an object of narrative expansion on social media, showing the work in progress. Since the images would be released in social media that would not allow explicit nudity, the visual construction con-sisted of selecting frames from the photo shoot and using ty-pographic resources to make a self-censorship of our bodies (fig. 03). During the residency, we did not realize that this solu-tion made us corroborate with the order in force, since we did not find alternatives to bypass the censorship. However, while writing this article the issue became evident, so we decided

to point it out here. The accompanying text was written in the format of Instructions for Action:

"STAGE 1 - DRAFT FOR INSTRUCTIONS #1 - Record the process of creating the first photo of the residency. Create strategies in order the naked bodies images are not censored by social media. Trust the work that begins. Look at the other person. Assume that your confinement is a privilege of your condition." ("Corpos Palimpsésticos", 2020)
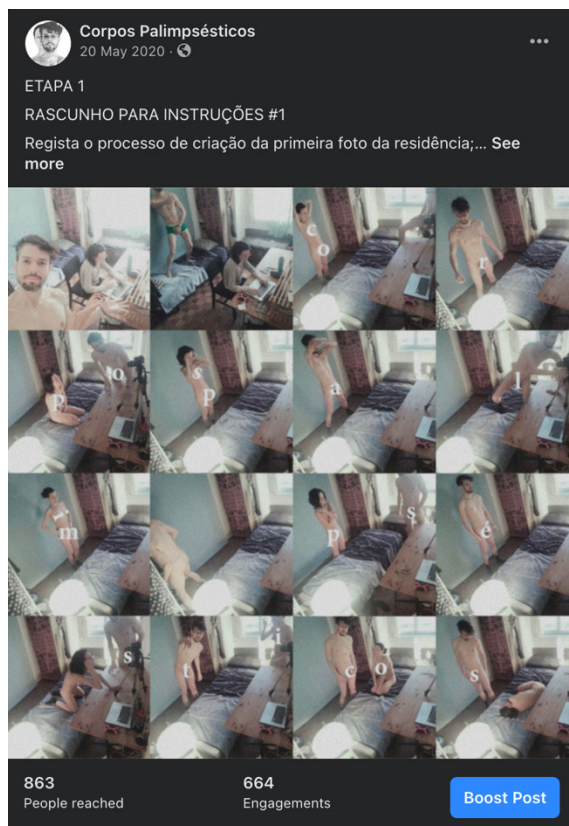

Fig. 03 The photo shoot publication in social media.

The text that accompanied the photo shoot turns explicit our interests during the artistic residency: to register and to divulge the creation process through digital media; to trust each other, despite the end of the relationship as a couple; to take a stand politically in front of that experience. It consisted in the privilege of working inside a safe environment, unlike part of the population that was forced to throw itself into the danger of contamination.

As said before, there is no shared film creation without attentive listening to the needs and creative work of the other. The same thing happened here. However, the listening was not only a dialogue between the people involved in the creative gesture, but it also evoked a self-reflection of our practice and our positioning before what was happening to us. In this sense, it found resonance with what Jacobs (2018) writes about the relationship between design thinking and art thinking. Among the mindsets explored by the author, three of them were relevant for this project, especially in the visual creation stage: the metacognition, the prolonged research, and the conversation with the work. The last two will be treated in more detail throughout this chapter. For now, what interested us is the first one. Metacognition allows us to migrate the focus from creating the need for a solution of the problem to think about the problem itself. It becomes an approach that values the exploration of the problem in a relentless way and one that is attentive to its own problem creation process. It is a way of being, constantly attentive to the creative process, giving emphasis to the questioning rather than the solution. With the perspective of metacognition, along with the initial photo shoot, images were obtained to rework the visual identity of "Corpos Palimpsésticos" (fig. 04).

Fig. 04   Development of a visual proposal.

As it can be seen, the most representative visual elements of the previous photo (fig. 01) are still present in this one, namely the overlapping of the bodies, the text, and the differentiation of the bodies by the colours. By re-evaluating these results, it was noticed a direction to the International Typographic Style with contemporary reinterpretations as it can be seen in graphic minimalism, the use of grotesque typography (Helvetica Neue) and superpositions of visual elements (fig. 05).

Fig. 05   Examples of posters of the International Typographic Style. (A) Josef Müller-Brockmann, 1954 (B) Josef Müller-Brockmann, 1960 (C) Dietmar Winkler, 1969. Source: Meggs & Purvis (2012)

At that point, there was an aesthetic and visual communication issue to be solved: to maintain the notion of overlapping bodies, but with adequacy to the characteristics of the whole project. Concomitantly with the development of the visual identity, the action instructions and the texts about the process were written. As previously mentioned, the action instructions were elaborated to serve as a script for the filming of the video-performances. The actions contained in the instructions, therefore, did not foresee an improvised performance. They were designed by us. We defined the shots, the lighting, the costumes, the location of the filming, the movement of the bodies in the space, etc. This kind of metacognitive attention requires a long reflexive approach. It evokes a second mindset pointed out by Jacobs (2018), a prolonged research, which is only possible thanks to an immersion in the thematic. To allow the understanding of the problematic issues of each area, an expanded time was necessary at this stage, as the shared film creation also proposes. From this expanded time and allied to a sensitive listening, it was possible for our artistic domains to meet, in a way that the video-performances could be a hybrid territory. So, the result has the characteristics of the creative gestures of both.

After setting this temporal quality the third mindset of art thinking by Jacobs is the interaction with the work. The artist allows himself / herself to have reactions to the work while it is being created. Similarly, in many moments during the residency, our greatest companion was not the other, but rather, the work in progress. Regarding specifically Jacob's conversation with the work, we were interested on a reflection upon Instructions II and III. Jacobs thinks this conversation as a constant dialogue of the artist's actions and the reactions to his / her work. Such interaction provokes structural changes in the artistic object. In our case, the actions, and reactions during the construction of the work were multiplied by two. We were in dialogue with what was happening between us and with the object itself. And, above all, this was a dialogue that was also mediated by the way we look each other, as in the shared film

creation. With these various layers of dialogues, Instructions II and III were built concomitantly, while the visual identity of "Corpos Palimpsésticos" was constructed.

Instruction II turned out to be a study on the potentiality of transmutation and renewal of the relationship, through our bodies as archive. In Instruction II, transmutation was represented by exchanging skins (fig. 06). This was refered in the instruction by letting what was no longer needed to come to the surface, in a way it could be eliminated with the old skin. In the creative realm, too, an exchange occurred: the superposition and transparency of the bodies created in the realm of visual design made it possible a connection with the transparency of the skin over the skin of the video. On the other hand, the studies of plans for the video brought inspiration for the visual identity definition of "Corpos Palimpsésticos".

Throughout the renovation of the skins, in many shots of Instruction II it is difficult to tell to whom the filmed body belongs. The detailed shots showed only parts of the bodies with a light that is always indirect. Finally, the old skin low light and transparency created an image of analogous tones, almost monochromatic, which matches the colours of the first and second skin layers.

The resolution of the visual identity followed the grammar of Instruction II, such as framing that prevents the identification of the bodies and the chromatic proximity between the different layers of skins. In this case, both bodies lost their colours to display grayscale values (fig. 07). The typography was also readjusted. The title of the work was reduced to just a red visual note in a serif typeface (Minion Pro). As mentioned before, the social media disclosure required management in relation to the censorship policies in force. To overcome this requirement, we created a phrase that was distributed across our body images. This phrase and the name of the project were divided into three graphic elements that allowed their redistribution as needed by the body images.
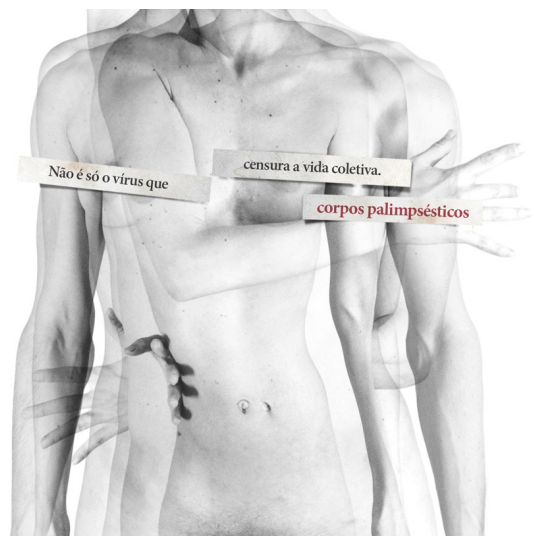

Fig. 06   Frames of Instruction II.

Fig. 07   Final visual identity

This choice allowed a colour contrast between the title and the image, and a style contrast between contemporary and traditional. This same typographic family was used throughout the text for the creation of the video-performances.

Our bodies were shot to create the visual identity of the project but were also filmed to be inserted through video mapping projection in Instruction III (fig.08). This instruction is a visual consequence of Instruction II. In this instruction, the bathtub and the sk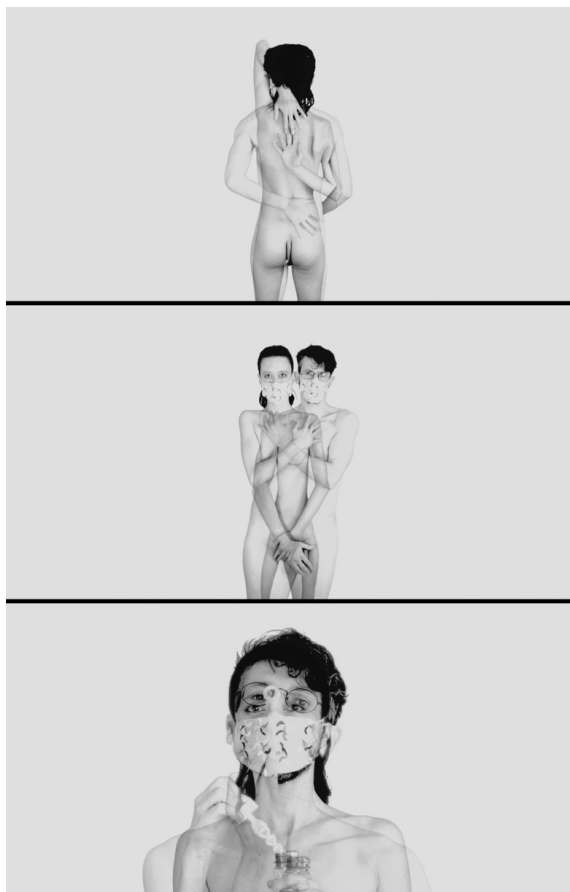ins are the visual elements that reinforce the visual coherence and the narrative. In Instruction II, we switched skins. The skin that is no longer part of our bodies was deposited in a small bathtub, which was illuminated by a cold and bluish light, in contrast with the warm yellow of our skins (fig. 09).

The images initially thought for the visual identity found their place in these two instructions. Their presence is not directly seen in Instruction II but was revealed in Instruction III. The way of thinking about the production flow in design is adapted to the artistic development of the work through the adaptation of the visual identity in the video narrative. It was realised that the filmed and photographed images of our naked bodies used in the visual identity, would play a narrative role in Instruction III. The skins deposited in the bathtub throughout Instruction II would be removed from our bodies again. However, this time, they were already memories, immaterial objects represented through the video mapping projection (fig. 09 and fig. 10). This process required that the same conditions and image treatments used in the photography of the visual identity were recreated in video.

Fig. 08   Frames from filming / photo shoot for Visual Identity.

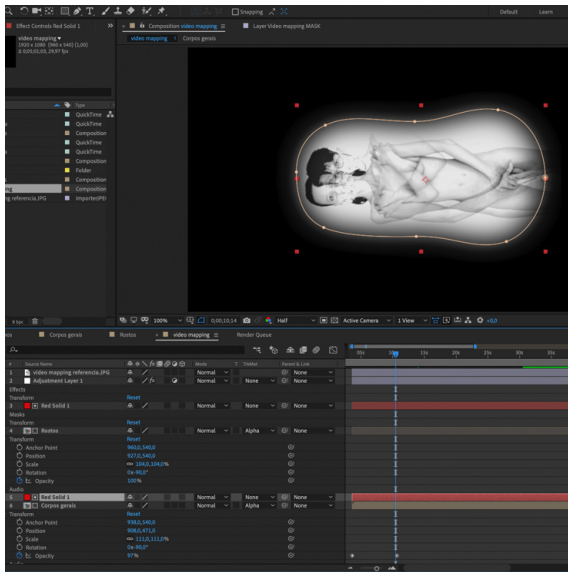Fig. 09   Frame of Instruction II.

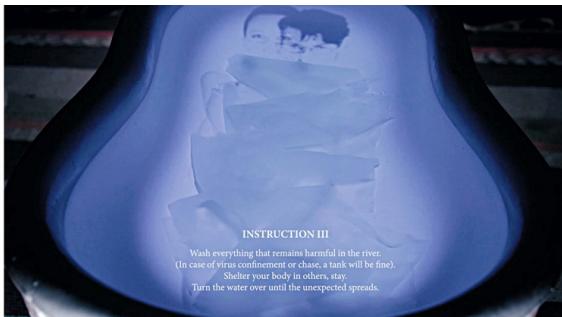Fig. 10   Preparing the moving image for video mapping projection.

Fig. 11   Initial plan of instruction III.

Thanks to the process of metacognition, we realized the possibility of reusing the image originally created for the visual identity in Instruction III. We gave a new meaning to the image created in photographic support and we made the transit to the video media for this new use.

This process also included the occurrence of indeterminacy and randomness which can be a method of creation in

themselves also. It occurred in music already, through John Cage, in the visual arts through Dadaism, and to some extent, through David Carson's deconstructivism in graphic design. When talking about the goal-oriented behaviour of the designer, it is necessary to rethink the notion of result. As Diaz (2011, p. 22) states, the transformations made within a set of parameters can be called an outcome. However, the outcome that leads to these transformations are unknown at the beginning of the work. The designer, Diaz continues, must maintain an opened attitude toward the discoveries that will come throughout the process.

That openness toward the discoveries, the indeterminate, and the random is seen in David Carson's approach: the creation of a chaotic, yet effective visual language. With a controversial and aesthetically disruptive style, Carson expanded the grey area between art and design. For Carson, visual expressiveness is more attractive and engaging to readers than the correct use of traditional readability pipelines (Meggs, 2011, p. 537). There is a readjustment of the informational hierarchy. Images are no longer support material for textual discourse. Words, in addition to serving the text, are treated as graphic elements to create a visual composition that is on the edge of readability, but with profuse visual appeal. By moving away from the rigidity of grids and traditional textual readability practices, Carson started to create authorial visual compositions that stood on the edge between information design and visual art. Subjective expressiveness overrode the need for understanding the content. In other words, Carson has a clear understanding of effective visual communication and its independence from textual readability. This expressive freedom of Carson had reverberations in the different works resulted from the residency. However, we chose to focus this reflection on Instruction I and on a book chapter that will be released in print media.

Instruction I was constructed throughout the entire process of residency. It was the most demanding in affective terms

and was the space we found to purify the sorrows that we carried since the end of the relationship. In order to find narrative material to write the instructions we did a couple dynamics. Without looking at each other, but lying next to each other, we talked for two hours. We tried to bring out the bitterness collected throughout the relationship. By listening to the recording of our conversation, we accepted the pain of the misunderstandings that happened throughout the four years of relationship. We decided to use some of the phrases in this instruction, which would symbolize the funeral of our relationship. We chose not to repeat the phrases during the video performance, but to use them as captions. So, it would not be possible to identify who said what, and we would responsible both for the end of the relationship.

In Instruction I, the subtitles that appear are corrected as they appear in the video (fig. 12). By listening once more to our audio, we identify several judgments of the other's actions during the relationship. At this point, we rewrote some words or phrases, not in order to rewrite our story, but in an acknowledgement of some aggressive postures coming from both parties. The words we considered that could be replaced were crossed out and other more appropriate word or phrase were inserted.

A similar style of typographic expressiveness reappeared in Instruction III. The subtitles appeared in free positions, not respecting any alignment, with no pre-defined line space and partially overlapping (fig. 12). In this instruction, the English subtitles had the role of translating what is spoken in Portuguese. These were phrases and loose words that we speak overlapping each other. Due to the overlapping sound of the words, there were moments when it was difficult to understand something. Similarly, the overlapping of the text reflected this difficulty in understanding. This form of visual arrangement of words functioned as a visual translation of the word's sounds we say.

Fig. 12   Typographic interventions. Instruction I (above), Instruction III (below).

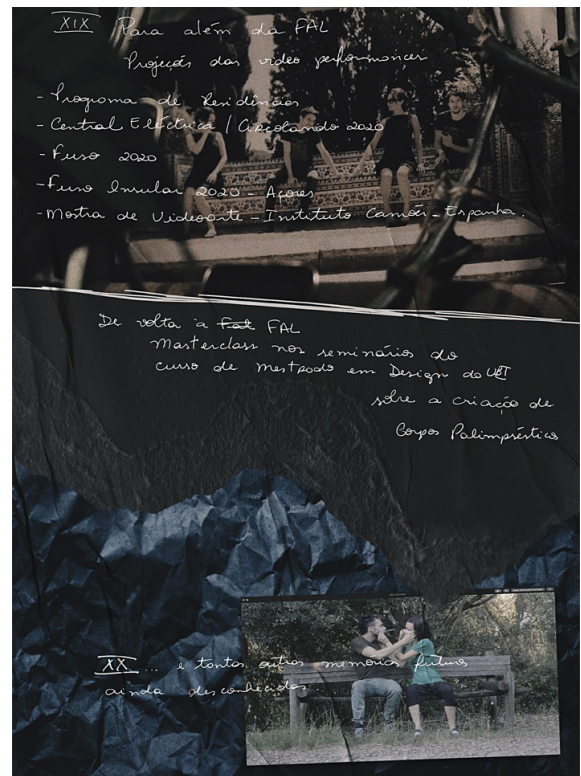This same graphic freedom can be observed in a book chapter to be released in 2021 (fig. 13).

Fig. 13   Final page of the printed publication in process.

The printed publication affirms the development of this work beyond the digital media. In all, there will be eight pages narrating in twenty sentences / movements the chronology of the work and its creation process. The texts were handwritten, and the pages were designed without the use of grids, promoting unrestricted freedom in the arrangement of information.

And finally, the Instruction IV was the first one to be created. The writing took place in a period before the beginning of the residency. Curiously, it was the last to be filmed and the most different from the four video-performances. It was born from an idea, a memory of the future, a concretisation of a hope when we will be allowed to take our protection masks off and to breathe deeply without fear. Another peculiarity is that Instruction IV is the only one filmed outdoors. It seems not to have been part of the conversation to which Jacobs refer, either from the visual proposal of the shots point of view nor the thematic point of view.

It also seems to be distant from a fundamental premise for shared film creation: to consider film texts (script, screenplay, or treatment) as mere indicatives, susceptible to be completely modified if the process needs this (Ferraz, 2018, p.88). All these specificities together did not allow this video-performance to dialog harmoniously with the whole. Even so, we chose to keep it in the work presented at the end of the artistic residency. However, later after a period of distance this instruction was suppressed for the exhibition of the video-performances in the festival "FUSO 2020".

In other words, if we were not capable to have a dialog with the work during the residency, and we kept it as idealised, the conversation proposed by Jacob occurred after the residency. This dialogue, even after the conclusion of the work, showed that the creative gesture resisted not only the virus and our breakup as a couple, but also the conventional ways of thinking about artistic production. If, commonly, objects in design or cinema once completed are not subject to alterations, this process highlighted that the practice of rethinking and redoing an artistic journey after its end is possible and desirable nowadays.

Final considerations

In this article, we show "Corpos Palimpsésticos" creation journey, made by us, Flávio Almeida and Renata Ferraz, authors of the present text. The creation process happened thanks to the junction of three conditions that occurred in March 2020: our separation as an affective couple; the State of Emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic; and the call for the Artistic Residencies "Residências em Residências Circolando / Central Elétrica 2020 – FASE 2". The interdisciplinary nature of the project involved different artistic areas but had as privileged domains the design and the filmic creation. At the time we wrote this text, the result of the residency included multiple objects which belong to the areas in which we both work. These objects are: four video-performances, which together gave origin to two short films; two videos published on YouTube, and different texts published on social media about the process. Also, a chapter in the book "FAL 20" (provisional title), an exhibition and this article. Without a single methodology, there were two approaches that most served to our creation. From design, we borrowed the term designerly way of thinking to create the term "designerly modus of wandering" and from cinema, we used the idea of the "shared film creation", that finds points in common with co-creation on documentary.

Since the 1960s there has been interest in understanding and elaborating a systematization of how designers worked to achieve creative solutions in their work. This shows that the act of methodizing and deciphering the creative process can be more complex than the act of creating itself. We understand that the attempt to unveil these processes to generate procedure manuals will not be as valuable as the

frank and deconstructive exposition that the creators make of their works.

The dissemination to the masses of "design by doing" through "design thinking" has generated benefits. By systematizing the creation process from a design point of view, non-design professionals from various fields have the opportunity to participate in the creative processes that produces real results.

However, this design thinking is a more horizontal method, with a wide scope and little critical depth. This is different from studies that deal with the problematic of design that is restricted to those who choose to investigate the designer's praxis or "designerly ways of thinking". Regardless of the approaches, both explore in different ways the inventiveness and method of working in design. We chose to expose our creative process from the perspective of this second method. There is no need for prominence in interdisciplinary projects. In "Corpos Palimpsésticos" we proposed a fading of the hierarchy between the areas of design and filmmaking which are in constant dialogue. They came together in order to create a work that demanded a joining of efforts that individual capacity could not overcome.

For this, we make use of Cross's (2006, p.7) perspective on the importance of designers developing the ability and confidence to redefine a problem that is given to them in line with the results that emerge in their minds in the process. And he completes by saying that "People who seek the certainty of externally structured, well-defined problems will never appreciate the delight of being a designer". Or, as Jones says (1970, cited in Cross, 2006, p.7): The ability to modify the problem to find a solution is the most challenging part of design.

So only after an extended period of reflections, which occurred at the beginning of the artistic residency in May 2020, and which one culminated with the final reflections of this paper, we propose the term "Designerly Modus of Wandering"

to define a set of approaches to creation in design. These approaches are based on:
- a long permanence at the exploration and development of a problem to generate proposals that will be a new starting point for further questions;
- to have refined metacognitive skills to be aware of one's own method of creation and to question it throughout the creative process;
- to engage the non-determinate and the randomness as creative attributes;
- to be more committed to the creative journey than to the outcome;
- to be confortable with the impossibility of determining a prior solution;
- and to expect the unexpected.

In resonance with such a perspective, "shared film creation" enabled us to better understand how this creation process occurs. With this approach, the film is created from the acting domain of the people filming and those portrayed, and no longer only by the filmmaker. In this kind of creative approach, filmmakers and portrayed people occupy both sides of the camera. Thus, their crafts are at the service of the same filmic construction. Here also we were observed at the same time as we observed the other, and our crafts determined the objects created. This kind of work demands a permanent listening and an extended time for the creation to emerge from interactions unthinkable in a conventional filmic production. Although concerned with technical and aesthetic rigor, "shared film creation" is more interested in the process than in the result. This happens because it is committed to experimentation and to the discovering of new ways of making films.

"Corpos Palimpsésticos" was then a laboratory of experimentations that pushed us to the limits of our creativity and personal coexistence in an unusual context. It is a work that, once it presupposes shared film creation and designerly

modus of wandering, it will never have a goal of coming to an end. It has expanded and has been expanding itself as new situations are placed before us. This article begins with a new instruction, as the instructions given to each of the four video-performances analysed here. We anticipate that other instructions will arise and this work, although it has found us as a former couple, will be able to hold us together through creation and through transformation.

References

Amadeo, P. (ed) (2020). *Sopa de Wuhan - Pensamiento contemporáneo en tiempo de pandemia.* Buenos Aires: Editorial ASPO.

Arnhein, R. (1989). *Intuição e intelecto na arte.* São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1989.

Agamben, G. (2020). *Quando a casa queima. Tradução*: Vinícius Nicastro Honesko. Available in https://www.n-1edicoes.org/textos/196.

Coccia, E. (2020a). *O Vírus é uma força Anárquica de Metamorfose*. In n-1 Edições (Eds.), *Pandemia Crítica* (https://www.n-1edicões.org/textos/54). n-1 Edições.

Coccia, E. (2020b). *Métamorphoses.* Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages.

"Corpos Palimpsésticos" (2020). *ETAPA 1. RASCUNHO PARA INSTRUÇÕES* #1. Available in https://www.instagram.com/p/CAbTKvPpzpV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link. Acesso em 6 de Março de 2021.

Cross, N. (1984). "The history of design methodology". In N. Cross (Eds), *Developments in design methodology* (pp. 303-307). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Cross, N. (2006). "Designerly Ways of Knowing". London: Springer.

Cross, N. (2010) "Design Thinking as a Form of Intelligence". In: K. Dorst, S. Stewart, I. Staudinger, B. Paton & A. Dong (Eds.), "Proceedings of the 8th Design Thinking Research Symposium" (DTRS8), (pp. 99-105).

Deleuze, Gilles (2005). *O que é o ato de criação*? In R. Duarte (org.). *O belo autônomo – textos clássicos de estética* (pp. 289-295). Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG.

Diaz, L. (2011). "By chance, randomness and indeterminacy methods in art and design". *Journal of Visual Art Practice*, 10(1), 21-33.

Escobar, A. (2006). "El palimpsesto grecolatino como fenómeno librario y textual: Una introducción". In A. Escobar (Eds.), "El palimpsesto grecolatino como fenómeno librario y textual", (pp. 11-34). Zaragoza: Institución «Fernando el Católico».

Eugênia, F. (2019). "Caixa-Livro AND". Lisboa: Fada Inflada.

Evans, E. (2011). "Transmedia television: audiences, new media, and daily life". New York: Routledge.

Ferraz, R. (2018). *Criação fílmica partilhada entre uma personagem que realiza e uma realizadora que atua: o processo de construção de Rua dos anjos*. Available in: http://repositorio.ul.pt/handle/10451/36685.

Gil, José (2020). *A Pandemia e o Capitalismo Numérico*. In: Público. Available in: https://www.publico.pt/2020/04/12/sociedade/ensaio/pandemia-capitalismo-numerico-1911986. Acesso em 20 de fevereiro de 2021.

Georgiev, G.V. (2012). "Design Thinking: An overview". In "Design Thinking - Special Issue of Japanese Society for the Science of Design", 20(1), No. 77, 70-77.

Hassi, L., & Laakso, M. (2011). "Design thinking in the management discourse: defining the elements of the concept". In "18th international product development management conference, Innovate Through Design", June 5-7, 2011Delft, the Netherlands.

Hollis, R. (2001). *Design gráfico: uma história concisa*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes

Jacobs, J. (2018). "Intersections in design thinking and art thinking: Towards interdisciplinary innovation. Creativity: Theories-Research-Applications", 5(1), 4-25. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/ctra-2018-0001

Johansson, U. & Woodilla, J. (2010) "How to avoid throwing the baby out with the bath water: An ironic perspective on design thinking". EGOS Colloquim 2010: June 30 - July 3, Lisbon, Portugal.

Jones, C. J. (1984). "A method of systematic design". In N. Cross (Eds), "Developments in design methodology" (pp. 9-31). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Kimbell, L. (2011). "Rethinking Design Thinking: Part I". "Design and Culture", 3(3), 285-306. doi: 10.2752/175470811X13071166525216.

McNiff, S. (2008). "Art-based Research". In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole (Eds), "Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues". (29-40). California: Sage.

Meggs, P. B. & Purvis, A. W.(2012). "Meggs' history of graphic design". Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Ono, Y. (1964). "Grapefruit". Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Palacio, B. G. & Vit, A. (2009). "Graphic design", referenced: A visual guide to the language, applications, and history of graphic design". Beverly: Rockport Publishers.

Park Center for Independent Media (2020). "Co-Creation in Documentary During Pandemic and Protest". Youtube. Available in: https://youtu.be/CsGYcShUyVM Acesso em: 24 de Fevereiro de 2021.

Plaza, J. (2003). *Tradução intersemiótica*. São Paulo: Perspectiva.

Zimmermann, P. R. et al. (2020). "Fifty Speculations and fifteen unresolved questions on co-creation in documentary". In: *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism*. Volume 47. Edição 1. (pp-67—71)