



Wolfgang Pannek*

Editorial

Ecoperformance and Ecopolitics of the Scene

Editorial

Ecoperformance e Ecopolíticas da Cena

Since the most remote times, the oral and written transmissions of the most diverse peoples have taught us that the proper way of life is “to live according to nature”. Regardless of their specific formulations, ethics based on this principle recognize nature as the scope of conditions that make life possible and verify the apparently obvious: ways of living that are at odds with nature are self-contradictory and incapable of incorporating and affirming “the goal of life”.¹ Contemporary ecological awareness and practices go back to a prehistory² as extensive as the succession of natural, cultural and technological events that would evolve until the current geological era: the Anthropocene.

Against this almost unfathomable background, the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2022, conceived as “a worldwide effort to confront the planet’s biggest environmental challenges”³ may seem ambivalent. It is impossible to deny the cultural, scientific and technological work carried out in the field of ecology since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm.⁴ On the other hand, the concrete eco-political effects of

¹ “The goal of life is to live in harmony with nature”, phrase formulated by the Cypriot philosopher Zeno (Cytio, 333 BC – Athens, 263 BC)

² Compare <https://www.greenpeace.org/international/story/11658/a-brief-history-of-environmentalism/>. Last access: September 1, 2023.

³ Compare <https://www.unep.org/50-years/>. Last access: September 1, 2023.

⁴ Compare <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972> . Last access: September 1, 2023.

this program remain far from current environmental demands. For traditional activist organizations such as Greenpeace, as well as recent protest movements such as Extinction Rebellion, Last Generation and Fridays for Future, the impression prevails that Agenda 21⁵, elaborated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992⁶, in Rio de Janeiro, and the principles in the Earth Charter⁷, developed as a result of this conference, did not actually get off the ground and were never taken seriously by the responsible political, economic and industrial sectors. Furthermore, numerous recent political developments, in Brazil and abroad, have caused the reversal of environmental advances already achieved.

The performing arts - discounting certain distinguished exceptions such as p. g., Laban's dance school in Monte Verità or Min Tanaka's Body Weather Laboratory in Hakushu - have gone through a process of distancing and abstraction from nature and natural environments throughout their history. However, in more recent periods and in the wake of the ecological debate, this urbanization of dance and theater underwent a certain reversal, a performative turn towards the wilderness manifested in immersions, training programs, stagings, events, and festivals held in natural landscapes.

⁵ Compare <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>. Last access: September 1, 2023.

⁶ Compare <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/rio1992>. Last access: September 1, 2023.

⁷ Compare https://earthcharter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/earthcharter_english.pdf?x25150. Last access: September 1, 2023.



This environmental turn in the performing arts - driven by bodily desires, reflections on the human situation in regards to nature and interests in interspecies co-performativity - is accompanied by a conceptual production and vocabulary proliferation - bio dance, environmental dance, ecosomatics, ecodramaturgies, ecotheatre - which also has substantial contributions originating in Brazil.

Based on the conceptual creation of Brazilian choreographer Maura Baiocchi (ecorporality, ecoperformance, eco[po]ethics), the Thematic Dossier: Ecoperformance and Ecopolitics of the Scene of the new edition of the magazine *Arte da Cena*, carried out as a cooperation between the Graduate Program in Performing Arts at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) and the Internacional Ecoperformance Film festival organized by Taanteatro Companhia, brings together articles, texts, and interviews by artists and scholars from Brazil, Germany, France, Australia, Argentina, Poland and Russia who investigate the relationships between the body and the environment in search of a paradigmatic transformation of performative creation.