

Carnavalization of a lonely man



The Project

Carnavalization of a Lonely Man is an interdisciplinary process among theater, visual art, film and new technologies to create a new project of the Brazilian group called Grupo Desvio.

The creation will be developed by Rodrigo Fischer in New York City through a series of artistic residencies during 2017/18, a postdoctoral research at NYU's Performance Studies Department supervised by Andre Lepecki and through a coproduction with three or four different countries, prioritizing one from South America, one from North America, one from Europe and one from Asia/Africa.

Inspired by the novel *Notes from Underground* by Fiodor Dostoyevsky, I propose to investigate who is currently the "underground man"? Who is the outsider, considering the social, political, cultural and psychological context they live in? How does the city can affect their behavior and how does their behavior affect the city? The backdrop is the city and the piece shows the audience their city from a different and "underground" perspective. "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."—Marcel Proust

Formally, the creation will approach the idea developed during Rodrigo Fischer's last solo performance called *Misanthrofreak*, in which the transition between cinematographic and theatrical space occurs through its interaction with technology. This concept means incorporating the lights, sound, camera and projection control into his performance.

The project has a flexible structure and narrative so that situations, scenes and images collected in the cities would become part of the performance. Therefore, the performance would change each time it is presented in a different city while maintaining its overall structure.

The performer would arrive in the city at least fifteen days before the presentation to investigate the place, to meet people immersed in the underground environment, in order to produce audio-visual content, and finally program the performance based on material collected.

The project will have two main components. The first is a stage version combined with an audiovisual installation, which the audience can visit prior to the performance. The second one is to be presented in alternative space to approach the idea of an event, combining performance and festivity. The alternative space can be an abandoned architecture, a counterculture gallery, a clandestine spot or any space which brings the idea/atmosphere of "underground". This event blurs the boundaries between performance and social gathering, where the audience can eat, drink and dance. The structure of this version is going to be developed, though it already has some ideas, such as the performer will also be the DJ and the VJ, emphasizing the ritual and the Carnival by through Brazilian and African references.

To facilitate the correlation between the project and the city and people where the project is being presented, I will focus on three approaches to consider the underground perspective: the local people and artists; the city and its architecture; and materials and objects found in loco.

There are endless possibilities to integrate the collected material and the local community into the project. For instance, two local actors or non-actors will be rehearsed to participate in the show; the objects used are going to be found on the streets and they are going to be re-signified for the performance; the audiovisual material used in the performance and in the installation will be done in a partnership with a local filmmaker; the frames used as scenarios are going to be created by an unknown local artist; one part of the dramaturgy is a rewrite affected by the performer's relation to the city/people.



Work in progress in Kingston, July 2017



The audiovisual materials and the installation

This is a vital step due to its meaning and its complexity inside the project. These audiovisual materials are going to be created during the fifteen days before the performance through an interaction by the performer Rodrigo Fischer with the city, recorded by a local filmmaker.

The filmmaker is going to be challenged to create footage with the aim to bring a different and “underground” perspective of the local people and the city they live in. These materials are going to be used in the performance, to integrate the installation and also to create, in the future, a documentary.

The installation, which is going to be exhibited before the stage version, will integrate the footage collected by the filmmaker into a composition using three simultaneous projections. The final installation version is created by both the filmmaker and by the director and performer, Rodrigo Fischer.



Doug Aikten and expanded cinema (inspiration)



Grahame Weinbren and interactivity cinema (inspiration)



Nam June Paik and the video installation (inspiration)

Artistic Residences and Creation



Work in progress (First scene)



Work in progress (Screen tests used)



Nico at Andy Warhol Screen Tests (inspiration)

Besides the research at NYU, which is going to be the philosophical and aesthetic base for the creation, the project is going to be developed in different steps largely in collaboration with artistic residencies.

1st Step: Starting the process

The first step was already done on July 2017 in Kingston through an artistic residence at Gemini Hill where the performer Rodrigo Fischer started the project, presented a work in progress and delimited the next steps to be developed. *There is a link available to watch the first step: <https://vimeo.com/230670711> (Password: underground).

2nd Step: Performance The other's shadow

The idea here is to develop the first part entitled as "The other's shadow". On the link above, from 3:30 – 18:30 min, it's possible watch this part and understand how it aims to be improved. Assuming that, as we talk about the other, we are talking about ourselves or vice-versa, this section tells stories through a performative narrative straddling the boundary between reality and fiction. The whole project assumes the truth as point of view or even, quoting Luigi Pirandello, "so It Is (If You Think So)".

Besides the idea developed during the previous step, in which the performative voice correlated with the living portrait projected multiplies the narrative's layers, the current purpose is to add one more element: object manipulation with a live camera. Images of the found objects will be correlated with the portrait and the voice to bring more analogies. Kuleshov's experiment is an important reference for this part to develop the dialectical purpose: There are others references for this part, such as Screen Tests by Andy Warhol

(cont) The idea behind these portraits is to create footage from people who are going to visit the installation and then watch the performance (the installation is explained in the next step), but in this step the footage will be done with volunteers.

There are others possibilities to be developed during the residency, such as: mixing the voice in the microphone with previous sounds/voices and/or looping the live voice; adding a microphone close to the objects to allow manipulation of sound; using a headset mic which allows more freedom on stage.

This step can be developed in galleries, theaters or any artistic residency space. The technical needs are standard in many spaces: one or two projectors to hang in the space, one soundboard, two speakers and one microphone. The remaining equipment belongs to the production.

3rd Step: The video Installation and performance The other's shadow

In this step, the idea is to have a video installation prior to the performance: The Other's Shadow. As mentioned before, it is a video installation to be made with audiovisual material shot around the city in a partnership with a local filmmaker. In New York City, the filmmaker Peter Azen (<https://vimeo.com/-peterazen>) is going to be the first guest. During the residence Peter and Rodrigo are going to explore New York City from an underground perspective. There are possibilities to explore the architecture or the unknown people from NYC or the relation by the performer Rodrigo Fischer with the city and the people or whatever Rodrigo and Peter decide together.

After having this footage material, they are going to work within a space where they can explore the possibilities correlating the three sources of projection. The starting point for the video installation is to have one couch in front of a television, one image projected on the couch's right side and another on the couch's left side, leaving the center of the couch open.



Why does Herr R. run Amok?, directed by Susanne Kennedy
(Inspiration)



Demons, directed by Thomas Ostermeier (Inspiration)



Objects by Arthur Bispo do Rosário (inspiration)



Blanket by Arthur Bispo do Rosário (inspiration)



Parangolé by Hélio Oiticica (inspiration)

(cont) One important feature of this installation is that a hidden camera on the TV will record the person's reaction sitting on the couch to catch their living portrait. Three of these will be selected and used in the performance. The idea is that the video installation would be available two hours before the performance, so Peter can select the material and give it to Rodrigo to use on the performance.

Another important action of this step is to catch lost objects during the footage and re-signifying them on the performance, trying to connect them by analogies with the living portraits.

These objects can also be used in the installation as a piece of art, reminding the idea of ready-mades, inspired in Marcel Duchamp. Another inspiration for this objects usage, it is the work of two important Brazilian artists, Arthur Bispo do Rosário and Hélio Oiticica. Their works are also going to inspire the costume and others aesthetic elements on stage.

This step can be developed in many different spaces, but it is important to have a separate room for the video installation or a dedicated space to build the room's installation.

The technical needs are one TV, four projectors (two for the performance and two for the installation), one soundboard, two speakers and one microphone. The remaining equipment belongs to the production.

4th Step: Improving the dramaturgy

This step is to develop the dramaturgy inspired on the novel Notes From Underground by Dostoevsky and connect it with the previous steps. This step aims to be developed for a theater space, but it can be adapted to galleries. It is important to emphasize the goal is more theatrical than performative.

The technical needs are two projectors, one soundboard, two speakers and one microphone. If the theater is equipped with light equipment, they can be used. The remaining equipment belongs to the production. The idea is to show two work-in-progress pieces during the residence and it can be negotiated with the space to show the first stage version, which is described on the 6th step.

5th Step: Experimentation Performance-Party

Here, the goal it is to make an experimentation combining the previous steps with the idea of festivity in an alternative space. The challenge is to develop a structure where the boundaries are blurred between performance/fiction and party/reality.

This step can be developed in galleries, pubs or any alternative or underground spaces where the idea of festivity (space to serve food/drinks and to dance) can be done. In this version the installation is not going to be set, but the audiovisual material created on the 3rd step is going to be used throughout the performance-party.

The technical needs are two projectors, one soundboard, two speakers and one microphone. The remaining equipment belongs to the production.

It can be negotiated to show the first alternative space version, which is described on the 7th step.

6th Step: The first stage version (3LD)

This step is for presenting the installation and the first stage version through a short season (between two and six shows).

The technical needs are one TV, four projectors (two for the performance and two for the installation), one soundboard, two speakers, one microphone and lighting equipment. The remaining equipment belongs to the production.

7th Step: The first alternative space version

This step is to present the first alternative space version, which combines performance and party.

The technical needs are two projectors, one soundboard, two speakers and one microphone. The remaining equipment belongs to the production.



Paradise Lost, Teatro da Vertigem (inspiration)



Acción, La Fura Dels Baus (inspiration)

COPRODUCTION

After the residencies, the project should be developed in a coproduction with three or four different countries. The goal is to immerse the coproduction in different cultures in order to intensify the performance's narrative and aesthetic, considering that the different contexts of each city that will affect and be integrated into the performance development. Furthermore, the goal it is to provide an early performance for the institutions supporting the coproduction. Others ideas could be added to the project, such as:

1. Sharing the creative process developed in New York City with the cities' artistic community or the artistic community of the institutions.
2. Providing workshops for the cities' artistic community or the artistic community of the institutions based on the investigation developed during the postdoctoral at NYU which is focused on the performer's autonomy and polyphony through the appropriation of new technologies on stage.
3. Providing a workshop called Acting between theater and film: the performativity of the instant.
4. Mentioning the institution's supporting the project as sponsors in all advertisements, interviews or others materials related to the project.
1. Inviting unknown artists from the local community to integrate the performance: two actors or non actors; one filmmaker, one visual artist and one musician.
6. Integrating cultural elements in the performance acquired during the local immersion process. Basically, the performance's result, which has a flexible structure, is going to show a foreigner's point of view of the cities' underground communities where the performance is being held.
7. Creating an audiovisual installation with the material collected.

The coproduction's estimated investment is between \$8.000,00 and \$12.000,00 plus travelling expenses for the performer and director Rodrigo Fischer (transport, lodging and food) during 15 days for the creation and for the technical responsible during the presentations. As mentioned before, it is necessary to stay these 15 days to investigate the place, to meet people immersed in the underground environment, in order to produce audio-visual content with the local filmmaker, collect objects and finally program the performance based on material collected.

CREW AND COLABORATORS

The creation will be conducted by the performer Rodrigo Fischer, but opened for different types of creative collaboration. Some of these collaborators are confirmed: André Lepecki (supervisor at New York University research) Brent Felker (video designer and technical liaison); Rogério Lionzo (Graphic Design); and Peter Azen (the invited filmmaker in NYC). It's important to emphasize the idea is to find more collaborators during the research at NYU and during the residencies. It's also important to keep in mind that the local crew is going to change from place to place because of the performance's itinerary.

ABOUT THE PERFORMER

Rodrigo Fischer is a Brazilian artist who has been working as a performer, theater director, professor and light designer in the theater for over 18 years. He develops a hybrid research on the interface film and theater, using new audiovisual language and technologies and its appropriation to the stage. His work as a theatre director and as a researcher has been presented in Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Estonia, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece and Spain. For the past fifteen years, he has directed Grupo Desvio in order to develop performances, techniques and theatre experimentation with emphasis on the actors' craft.

He has a Bachelor and Masters Degree in theater from Universidade de Brasília and Ph.D, from Universidade de Brasília/City University of New York. There he analyzed John Cassavetes' work and its relation between theatrical and cinematographic spaces, focusing on acting. Currently he is doing his post-doctoral at NYU Performance Studies Department to develop research about performance, polyphony and new technologies.

ABOUT THE GROUP

Grupo Desvio was created in 2001 in Brasília, focused on experimenting and researching set construction focusing on creative process of the actor. Created by director Rodrigo Fischer, the group has produced seven plays: Pequena Existência, uma disputa de merda (2002), Beckett às Avessas (2004), Eutro - Tequila à Luz de Velas (2007), EUTRO (2008), Freak Rehearsal (2013), Misanthrofreak (2014) e The Losers (2015). The plays were staged on main Brazilian capitals and attracted audience from nine countries: France, Argentina, USA, Spain, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Belarus and Estonia. Throughout its career, the Group received support and formed partnerships with several institutions: Fund to support culture from Distrito Federal, National Arts Foundation, Petrobras, Caixa Econômica Federal and Brazil's Ministry of Culture. Over the past four years, the cinematic appropriation of theater and performance has been researched by the group

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