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Dossier Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space

From 06 to 16 June 2019, the 14th edition of the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (PQ) took place in the capital of the Czech Republic. This is the biggest and most important event, worldwide, dedicated to studies in the scenographic area (scenography, lighting, costumes, makeup, sound, puppet theatre and all elements related to the performance design) and to theatrical architecture.

This international event started in Brazil, in 1957, under the name of “International Biennial of Visual Arts of Theater: set and costume design, theater architects and technicians”, and took place as part of the Biennial of São Paulo. In its 7th edition, in 1967, after an agreement between the Brazilian and Czech governments, it started to happen interchangeably in both countries and had its debut in Prague. In Brazil, the last edition was in 1973, the international event remaining only in Prague, every four years. Hence the official name of the event.

In view of the relevance of PQ for the performing arts, visual arts, theatrical architecture and performance design, and also because of the growing Brazilian participation in the event, the prof. Dr. Ismael Scheffler (Federal Technological University of Paraná) proposed and invited the prof. Dr. José Sávio Oliveira de Araújo (Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte) and the prof. Dr. Rosane Muniz (Belas Artes University Center), members of the Spatial, Visual and Sound Poetics of the Scene Workgroup, from the Brazilian Association of Research and Postgraduation in Performing Arts (ABRACE) to realize a thematic dossier that would bring evidence not only to the Prague Quadrennial, but to the artistic, intellectual and pedagogical productions that have been carried out in Brazil and that have been presented internationally. In this edition, Revista Cena brings the first part of the dossier, which will follow in the next issue.

The PQ is organized by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and carried out by the Prague Arts and Theater Institute (ATI), with UNESCO recognition. It is an event that expands its performance, in each edition, beyond the competitive exhibitions of countries and regions and the realization of some special exhibitions and lectures, to become an environment in which the scenography and the performance design create an integral role (and not support only), offering immersive experiences for the audience.

In 2019, PQ included the traditional competitive sessions organized by the governments of each country, who choose their curators: **Exhibition of Countries and Regions**, **Student Exhibition** and **Theater Architecture Exhibition** (now named as the **Performance Space Exhibition**). As part of this session, the **Fragments** exhibition also took place for the first time, for which each curator chose only one “iconic” scenic item to represent the memory of something or someone that inspires new generations of artists and audiences. In this last edition, which once again took place in its original space, the Vystaviste Industrial Palace, the event had the active participation of eight thousand and five professionals, students and participants, coming from 106 countries, in addition to the spontaneous public that participated in the activities that took place in the Exhibition Grounds, and an audience of more than 70 thousand people. It is worth mentioning that practically all PQ sessions with open call had Brazilians registered and selected. They were: the **Site Specific Performance Festival** (25 theater performances, dance, performance art, storytelling, costumes, sounds, installations and new technologies, taking place in various locations in the city), **Formations** (39 performing actions by artists, designers and architects in symbiotic interrelationship with the public space), **36Q°** (creations of active, sensory, and predominantly non-tangible environments, with experimentation with new technologies and focus on the new generation), **PQ Studio** (to promote work and training of young artists, professionals and art-educators, there were workshops, masterclasses, over 50 interdisciplinary works in presentation, debates around the Ubu Rei student exhibition project, and social events), **PQ Talks** (panels, roundtables, debates, lectures and artistic and academic presentations). Without the participation of Brazilian artists, there were also the sessions **The Best Publication Award** (exhibition of 20 books registered for the award that highlights the various scenographic disciplines and genres, produced in the last four years), **PQ +** (productions in the field of interdisciplinary and physical theater, dance, performances and installations, as well as exhibitions and guided tours, taking place in different locations in the city) and **PQ Youth and Family** (interactive installations and workshops for children and their families to get to know the magic behind the scenes).

In this dossier there are approaches from Brazilians participating in different sessions of PQ'19, divided here between Articles, Connections, Essay,

Interview, Memory and Review. This dossier demonstrates how the Prague Quadrennial has provoked and established relations with the Brazilian academy, by bringing texts from representatives of four Brazilian universities. The reading of this dossier presents projects participating in different PQ sessions that reveals ways in which it is possible to integrate the event's program, in addition to showing how these areas have been developed in Brazil. In this way, the knowledge traced about the event held in the Czech Republic can bring out a lot about research groups, laboratories and disciplines in undergraduate and graduate courses, which have had an experimental role in Brazilian universities. In **Articles**, we have six texts:

PQ2019 Guidelines for space and design of the contemporary scene brings a debate by Aby Cohen on the transformation trajectory of the Prague Quadrennial, considering the different artistic directions in the last four editions of the event. The Brazilian curator at PQ'19 also discusses her work for the Exhibition of Countries and Regions, whose theme was *Body as space, territory and its borders*, and the selection process for outstanding productions on the national scene.

Renato Bolelli Rebouças reflects about national exhibitions from different countries in the text *The Imaginaries of the Exhibition of Countries and Regions, PQ 2019: materiality, precariousness and performance*. Having presented his doctoral research (USP) in the PQ Talks session, he chooses to bring here a reflection on common concepts that he identified as trends in curatorial proposals from different countries participating in this edition of the PQ. Professor Desirée Bastos de Almeida (UFRJ) presents the article *Ubu Rei: a Latin American participation in PQ'19*. She starts her text by contextualizing how the training spaces during the Quadrennial have been gaining strength since 2003. In the report, she describes the process of creation and development of the Ubu Rei project, which was part of the Common Design Project exhibition in the PQ Studio section. The project by students Igor Avelino and Rafael Torres, with the guidance of the professor, was part of the select exhibition, composed of 15 universities.

In *UFMG at the Students' Exhibition of PQ19*, by Cristiano Cezarino Rodrigues, Tereza Bruzzi De Carvalho and Maria Laura de Vilhena Dias e Silva, a report is made about the teaching of scenography at this institution and how the Prague Quadrennial has influenced and reflected in teaching, research and extension. In the article, the authors (members of Barracão - Center for Re-

search and Experimentation in Scenography and other scenic-performing space practices, created in 2014) present aspects of the work of UFMG that was part of the Brazilian Student Exhibition.

José Sávio Oliveira de Araújo (UFRN) writes *Dialogues between academy and scenography: the contribution of CENOTEC UFRN to this debate at the PQ Talks of the Prague Quadrennial 2019*, and presents a reflection on his participation in the panel "What has the academy done to or for Scenography?". The work developed at the Laboratory of Scenographic Studies and Scene Technologies (CENOTEC), at UFRN, through Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (PIBID) and in partnership with public schools in the municipal and teaching network of the city of Natal (RN) gained visibility and generated international interest in the various and provocative themes in the educational, academic, artistic and social spheres of this Brazilian experience of introducing scenography teaching in elementary school, in public schools.

The widespread concepts, starting from the Prague quadrennials in congresses and publications, launch provocations to Brazilian artists and teaching researchers, even if not directly linked to the international event. This is how João Carlos Machado (UFRGS) problematizes aspects presented by researcher Aby Cohen around the concept of performance and scene design, from publications prior to PQ'19, reflecting on the teaching and artistic practice he develops in Rio Grande do Sul, and intertwining the studies of Rosalind Krauss and Josette Féral, among other authors. "Chico", as he is known in the artistic and academic ambience, ponders questions of both visual and performing arts and makes the title question of his article "When is it scenography?" more relevant to today than trying to define what scenography is.

In the **Connections** section, Sônia Maria Caldeira Paiva and Caio Sato present the article *Transdisciplinary Laboratory of Scenography (LTC): Redesigning the Brazilian Student Exhibition at PQ15*, reviewing the trajectory of the UnB Continued Action Extension Program, created in 2010. They also present the process of expanding the participation of students, teachers and universities in recent years in the PQ student exhibition. And they also take up the role of the LTC when coordinating and producing the exhibition BRAZIL: Shared LABirynths, for the Student Exhibition at PQ'15.

In the **Essays** session, professor Sônia Maria Caldeira Paiva (UnB) returns in a collaborative text, written with her students Caio Sato Schwantes,

Luana Santana Castro, Matheus MacGinity Moraes Rêgo, Carolina Guida Teixeira, Carlos Eduardo Peukert, Bruna Camurça Freitas, Julia Horta Paiva and Sarah Brochado Fialho. In *Narrative drawings: workshop of the Transdisciplinary Scenography Laboratory (LTC) at the Prague Quadrennial 2019*, they report their experience in programming the PQ Studio session, approaching the dynamics of creation and production for the workshop held in Prague, considering aspects of the participating public.

The **Interviews** section brings the updated and revised translation of *In conversation with Donatella Barbieri*, an interview conducted by Nadia Saccardi with the Italian costume designer and researcher about her book *Costume in Performance: Materiality Culture and the Body* (2017), winner of the The Best Award Publication, at the Prague Quadrennial 2019.

In the **Memory** session, Ianara Elisa Castro Silva presents the *Photographic Dossier of the 14th Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space - PQ19*. In her third consecutive participation, aware of the dynamics of the event, the artist presents an overview of PQ, by revealing its various environments and sessions. And it also produces important documentation of the assembly processes, the daily life of the event and its participants, in addition to offering a selection of images of displayed works from her perspective. This session is essential to this dossier, since the image is one of the strong elements brought by PQ.

In the **Reviews** section, Niuxa Dias Drago presents the book *The model as Performance - staging space in theater and architecture*. The book by Thea Brejzek and Lawrence Wallen, released in 2018, was on the list of the most relevant publications in the area of Performance Design and Scenography in recent years, according to the jury of the Prague Quadrennial 2019.

This section also includes the **Extradossiê Articles** section, as is usual even when the journal is set around a theme, in which Nayara Macedo Barbosa de Brito (UFBA) contributes to the article *The Forces of Figural or some Categories of Analysis for Playwrights Modern and Contemporary*, in which she investigates dramaturgies and their scenic achievements based on the concept of Figure developed by Gilles Deleuze, based on the analysis of the work of the painter Francis Bacon.

It is with great joy that we present this dossier, proud of the intense Brazilian participation each year of the event. As active participants - in the exhibitions and in the various sessions -, but also as a spontaneous audience of professionals,

students and teachers who visit the Prague Quadrennial, coming from the most diverse areas besides theater and dance, such as television, cinema and advertising. Enjoy this edition and wait, as the second part of this dossier is already in the next.

Ismael Scheffler, José Sávio Oliveira de Araújo e
Rosane Muniz, Collaborating Publishers

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