

## **Attention how a tool for building a body image in the performance “Se chover eu não virei...”**

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This paper presents a reflection on the process of building the body image of the performer for the performance “Se chover eu não virei...” using the methodology of the focus of attention.

The performance is an offshoot of our masters research, developed in the Graduate Program in Theatre at ECA / USP, realized between 2008-2009. Was contemplated by the Investment Fund Cultural of Campinas, in 2008, by the excellence of the proposal, which aims to achieve through sensory narratives persons who have visual and hearing impairments. The performance has three scenes about the humans encounters and disagreements. The scenes are freely inspired by the works White Nights by F. Dostoevsky, Ballad of the Sad Cafe by Carson McCullers and a good, good citizen of Abbas Kiarostami. The title of the performance comes from a passage of the tale White Nights, and at the same time, brings into question of the self-image and the possibility of dissolution of ourselves. This question as pointed out in the works of Dostoyevsky, Kiarostami and MacCuller. Indeed, in the performance we not design a fixed body image for the personage, as is usual in conventional spectacles. What allows the suspension of the sense of the body are exactly the procedures adopted, based on focusing attention to the creation and presentation of the scene.

The construction of the show aimed to overcome the field of representation in an attempt to achieve a "be on the scene more organic". With this, it was expected that the focus of the exogenous attention of the viewer was diverted from the plot of the narrative (in which the classical theater puts all the attention) to the physical relationships between bodies present in a space and time. We seek a more sensitive relationship, from which, through the body image of the performer, the audience enter in his own fictional universe - composed by his memory and imagination.

As theoretical background of our work, we use the definitions of Nahas & Xavier (2004) for attention, plus the specific contributions of the attention in the artistic field by Crary (2007), Lehmann (2007) and Desgranges (2008). To define the sense in which we use the term body image - referring to how the performer and the spectator to perceive the body thoughts feelings about the and experiences, generate a multifaceted process that creates an image that is updated all the time - follow the concepts of Cash and Pruzinsky (1990 as cited in Barros, 2005, p.551), seeking to use the term from the needs of our work and not delve into the discussions around the concept of " body image". When we enter in the construction processes of body images by the performer, we reveal what is beyond our conscious view because it shows us. Schilder (1999, p.18) says that "the visual images that are in our consciousness are just a small part what is really happening in the psychic sphere".

The relationship between 'body image' and 'attention' is laid from the late nineteenth century, in which both, gain a new significance with the advent of psychology, particularly experimental psychology. Discussions of attention in their subjective character that begins in the end of the nineteenth century, generate various researches during the twentieth century, in the field of cognitive science, neurobiology and in the artistic field.

In our century, the issue of attention is one of the most important for understanding the development of human perception, in continuous adapt to the speed of new technologies. These studies are widely used by marketers in order to boost sales. We brought to the field of arts the focusing attention how a tool of scenic composition that aims the quality of the relationship between people. We believe that through the study of the focusing of attention is possible to leverage the relationships that we have with our self-image and the image what we have of other bodies.

Our practical experience consisted, in a poetic field previously defined, to use the focusing of attention to make a persona. This persona consists in a personage different from the one commonly used by the theater - which attaches to a body image a personage – in which we make a projection of the body image of the performer in a fictional universe, generating another body image, different that we has in everyday life.

The result was the creation of a body image, possible in the performer, that only happens at the moment of the act of performance. For this reason, we agree with Schilder (1999, p.240) when it states that "the (body) image is social [...] because there is a continuous exchange between our own image and body image of others."

In "Se chover eu não virei..." the performer establishes a link with the viewer that transcends rationality and leaves empty spaces for the viewer to create, starting from their previous experiences and meanings for the meeting with the performer. We observed in our study, that the quality and the type of link created between performer and spectator, depends directly of the perception and experience that the public has.

In a presentation to an audience with visual impairments, for example, our own body image (as visual) becomes meaningless. We could be naked and would make no difference. At this time the performer's attention focus on his "sound body", and this open up many new possibilities for a construction of the persona. Moreover, the "image of the body-without-sound" that has the public with hearing impairments, shoot down the rational logic of the speech. It's requires the deconstruction of the rational logic of our language to a more sensory contact with this viewer. The process used in "Se chover eu não virei..." to achieve this contact was the most sensory focusing attention on the performer himself, directing the viewer's attention sometimes to the performer, sometimes for himself.

We conclude that through attention and, especially, the focus of attention, we can create access to different body images that we have in our everyday life. The access to these images enhances our artistic and human potential in a process of self-knowledge, generating new possibilities. We could perceive that despite the importance of individual experience, "our body image only acquires its possibilities and existence because our body is not isolated. A body is necessarily a body among bodies. We need others around us "(Schilder, 1999, p.311) and given the peculiarities of looking of the other we have the ability to upgrade our body image.

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