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***BETWEEN MINDS AND BODIES: SOME INSIGHTS ABOUT CREATIVITY FROM
DANCE IMPROVISATION***

Observing dance improvisation provides a unique opportunity to understand how people collaborate together while creating. It is an opportunity to consider how new ideas appear, not simply from the internal processes of a single creator but rather from the interactions between the minds, bodies and the environment acting on and between a group of improvising dancers.

In psychological discourse the creative process is mainly considered to be situated in the mind of the creator. Cognitive psychology attempts to explain mental processes underlying creativity, such as divergent and convergent thinking mostly from an individual perspective, attempting to explain, for example, how a person creates novelty. On the other hand, a more sociocultural approach describes the conditions required for creativity at the level of culture, society or group showing the positive impact of diversity over group, trust and positive climate for experimentation. Contemporary dance practice, especially dance improvisation, challenges the psychological and sociocultural perspectives outlined above. Creative process here is highly embodied, and the separation of mental processes from action, bodily expression and interactions with others render such isolation impossible. Creativity happens on the edge of the physical world, where body expression, ideas and environment collide, it is a highly social, interactive process, rather than an individual, solitary activity.

Improvisational scores served in this study as a laboratory into group creativity. Using a video-stimulated recall method, which asks dancers to reflect upon their own processes just after completing the score, I explored the interdependency

between meta-cognitive strategies such as imagery and sense awareness, group processes, the role of others in one's own creative processes, and interactions between bodies and with the environment. As a result I describe how dancers build together a common improvisational space, which allows them to co-create and share their ideas mostly in non-verbal, non-propositional ways.

Using excerpts for dancers' reports, I argue that, a group creative process is not a sum of individual creative ideas that are transformed by a group, but rather it is highly interactive practice that mostly focuses on supporting the actions of others. Therefore, the agency of such processes is shared and it is rather the process of creative collaboration, and co-creation of the work, that emerges in a shared creative space. I also discuss the medium of the body and the embodied response as central of dance improvisation practice.