

Living Arts: Definition, Controversies and Examples

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Abstract

The article reviews the concept of Living Arts in the field of the performing arts in Spain and asks about what type of artistic events could be encompassed by the term Living Arts. The relevance of this article lies in the fact that the label of Living Arts is being broadly used in Spain, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and South America. This is why it is necessary to clarify some aspects or features that may be included in the concept of Living Arts and study to what extent it is used. To this end, the author establishes a definition of the Living Arts and its applicability to the productions shown in public or private theatres of different sizes. Therefore, the definitions and examples provided in the article have been useful. Moreover, she reviews the recent controversy of one of the projects rooted in Madrid, Las Naves Matadero, to exemplify the consequences of a shift of direction in the management of public theatre. The article also addresses the possible function of the Living Arts today and examines their potential. Finally, some of the productions shown in the city of Valencia that can be considered examples of Living Arts are reviewed.

Keywords: performing arts, theatre, living arts, innovation, multidisciplinary, performativity, avant-garde, performance

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Introduction

The starting point of this article is to try to understand a concept that is used today and gaining ground: Living Arts. Is the aim to inject vitality into a dead art? Do the performing arts have a future in a dying world lacking vitality, as Danto (1985: 22) points out? Are there new ways of writing the real? What will the future forms of the performing arts look like? Recently, the critical and political character of current art and its opening, democratisation and integration into daily life have given us artistic experiences linked to other values rather than the merely artistic. These productions, which go beyond the results of each discipline in particular, are difficult to classify, but undoubtedly some of them fill the stage with latent life and their existence may predict future developments that are both new and interesting. Many of them carry out research into the body, go beyond the barriers between communities, break down those within them, explore common values and pay witness to truths that are characteristic of current events. Undoubtedly, they serve to reshape new audiences and even reassess new spaces or include new definitions of what is artistic. They may or may not be introduced under the label of Living Arts, the least important aspect. Because, along with colonising physical or psychical spaces that had previously not been considered as such by the usual institutional encodings (Foster, 1996: 21-24), or attracting citizens who were not previously theatre goers, the art of today resists the process of acculturation and accommodation. The new audiences, if they really exist and their loyalty is won, often reject the more orthodox productions because they believe that these more traditional productions are not for them, or that they are out of date. The new creators seek a transgressive artistic object but, as Foster notes (1996: 28), the question is whether these productions explore new forms of temporality, causality or narrativity. For theatre programmers and managers, the key issue is whether they fill the stage with latent life and, of course, if

they are able to also fill the stalls, because it is inadvisable to renounce either one thing or the other.

These artistic productions that fall under the common denominator of Living Arts also seek to foster collaboration between artists from different disciplines with the aim of learning from each other's languages and finding areas of fusion and exchange that can yield unexpected fruit. Their promoters try to open spaces for work and research so that the collaborations between diverse disciplines provide original results that break down the borders of what is established, attracting a new type of audience to their venues and creating new discourses. They want to conquer new territories, new audiences, new aesthetics of the experience and the event. Their objective is, therefore, for artists from unrelated fields to come together and move in the same direction. These creators seek to channel demands or protests that exist in society through living art, for instance on the inside pages of newspapers, or to unveil secret events, proposing a pedagogy that can shed light on the establishment's concealment mechanisms. In this way, they can better connect with young people or with unconventional audiences, as happens in the Festival de los 10 Sentidos, which, based on a critical and reflective spirit towards current societies, every year commits to making issues that concern the community visible, highlighting the power of art as a catalyser of social action. The objective is to foster thought and critical reflection, one of the main functions of art in its constant endeavour to communicate ideas, emotions, feelings and visions of the world that are relevant in the current cultural context. To some extent, they oblige the audience to ask new questions, to think about new realities, or to take sides and engage with specific uncomfortable issues. The productions may be provocative, eliciting surprise or indignation as they challenge the validity of the story or the values inherited. On many occasions, these creators use irony or humour, stoking ecological or social awareness, such as in the case of disabilities, old age or race as stigmas. On other occasions they use electronic music, recorded or live, the voice or phonation without articulation, painting or chromatic elements, shapes and materials of visual artists, objects from the supermarket or Chinese bazaars. The use of computers and Wi-Fi on stage is also frequent, with the aim of showing contents on the screen in real time, using the social networks or displaying websites, as in the work of the creator Cris Blanco. In any case, it is difficult to predict what the performing arts will contribute within twenty or thirty years because everything seems very open today, without a guiding or leading force, and therefore we feel incapable of formulating broadly shared ideals. What is understood by "the real" is continuously changing and consequently creators who express new realities are looking for alternative ways of reflecting on it and bringing it closer to their fellow citizens (Danto, 1985: 22). This is why it is worrying that there is no force or representative principles of the different trends; rather, we need to explain their variety of approaches to venture the future possibilities of the performing arts.

In order to achieve this objective, i.e. to understand the concept of Living Arts, we will next try to venture a definition. Once we have limited their

field, we will be able to better assess their potential in terms of the development of the arts.

I will briefly summarise the controversy caused by the new appointment of the director of Las Naves Madrid and, finally, I will look at some of the productions that could be seen in Valencia in recent years and that, in my view, might fit the label of Living Arts. The purpose of these examples is to analyse and explain the impact of concrete objects from the performative panorama and try to show the profound interdependence between current theatre/performative practice and the society in which we live. This art-society relationship becomes clear not only in the task of performing arts criticism, today an almost token part of theatre life, but in how the audience responds to the shows available as well as some of their themes.

Finally, a highly relevant aspect, but which falls outside the purpose of this article, is that of assessing the task of public and private theatre programmers. This involves great responsibility and makes a difference. The cultural manager/programmer or director of a venue selects the productions and the artists that the auditorium or auditoria they programme will host. By assessing the type of productions to be programmed and the companies that will be supported, these professionals sanction the proposals they receive for productions. In the case of artistic residencies, the directors of these venues commit to projects, to those groups of artists who will benefit from the subsidies. Thus, those that deserve to be supported until they are staged are separated from those that are left in office drawers waiting to be shredded once the season ends. Hence the need for them to answer to society and not only the institution that has appointed them. But this question would be the object of a separate reflection.

Definition of Living Arts

There are not many definitions of the concept of Living Arts. On the website of the Festivalde lahoja we find one that would be useful to begin this section: “The concept of Living Arts expresses the direct live contact between audience and artists. Within the Living Arts we find theatre, dance, clown, mime, theatre circus and other performing arts” (Festivalde lahoja, 2016). According to the same website, academically, Living Arts refers to:

[...] the category resulting from multiple combinations of the performing arts with other disciplines such as the visual arts, music, cinema, architecture, design, anthropology, literature and philosophy, among others, and those whose main element is the “social body” and that produce living events, revealing the gesture, writing, performativities, theatricalities, training in art and other expressions that generally draw and blur, express and contradict, affirm and question the traditional paradigms and differences, which convey, recycle, challenge, translate information into poetic experiences and aesthetic events and that permanently re-invent and re-define the field of the living arts; in this field, the objects produced are tactical, tactile and symbolic, the conveyors of effects and translators of experience.

Thus, the concept of Living Arts designates performative arts events that have some of the following characteristics:

- a. direct artist-audience contact
- b. multidisciplinary nature
- c. social target
- d. value of the experience over contemplative observation
- e. questioning of the concept of art
- f. multi-sensorial nature
- g. innovation
- h. research
- i. unconventional venues
- j. exploration of the limits of theatre.

In a recent article, “Arte raro”, Rubén Ramos talks about “Artes Vivas” or “Artes en Vivo” to refer to labels that are gradually taking hold to describe a type of creation ignored by the establishment (magazine *Ajoblanco*, 2017). Moreover, this author suggests the term “Artes Raras”, comparing these arts to the queer movement to indicate that they go beyond what has been established, the rule, and that they occupy an unspoiled territory.

Similarly, the journal *Acotaciones* (January-June 2017) includes three articles on the controversy that has erupted in Madrid following the programme of Las Naves in which many have seen an attempt to supplant the text-based drama by removing from it the privileges it has enjoyed thus far. Specifically, the playwright Ignacio García May (2017: 261-264) emphasises the term “Artes en Directo”, which is a translation of the English Live Arts, although the director of this municipal venue, Mateo Feijóo, in an interview with Mónica Zas Marcos (2017) points out that the term comes from the French Arts Vivants. I have learnt that in the United States, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, etc., there is a master’s degree called *Teatro y Artes Vivas*, and in Warwick University there is a master’s degree in Theatre and Performance Research. In other words, in Spanish, Portuguese or French-speaking countries the term could equal that of Performing Arts, seemingly the term preferred in the Anglo-Saxon world, and that would be used to encompass a broader field than that limited by “theatre”, i.e., “hybrid creation”. In any case, the truth is that under the umbrella of Performing Arts or Performative Arts there is a broader terrain.

The controversy of Las Naves Matadero

After exemplary work since Las Naves Matadero opened under the direction of Mario Gas ten years ago and in which the venue has achieved a loyal audience, the new project presented by the recently appointed director Mateo Feijóo and the former Councillor of Culture Celia Mayer caused great controversy, which was followed by signatures in protest, rectifications and the resignation of the councillor herself over how the matter had been managed: first, because of the decision to suppress the names of Max Aub and Fernando

Arrabal from the respective auditoria and later for excluding a large part of the profession from the new project. Feijóo's project, which won the tender, sought to move on and show that he knew what he was talking about. The new era should have replaced a tedious text-based theatre and attract new audiences and artists to the Naves II and III. In other words, "with a particular focus on new performing arts languages and on transversality." This, according to its director, would not be possible without a change of names (Feijóo, 2017).

A space where the performing arts, visual arts, literature, philosophy, film, music and transmedia activities are interconnected in an interdisciplinary programme. [...] A new era lies before us. We aspire to lead a new way of promoting creative processes, causing the abilities of participating groups to surface, fostering the appearance of new interpretations of reality, researching in order to ensure the emergence of THE NEW, understood not as an absolute term that rejects the PRESENT but as a LEGITIMATE artistic and creative aspiration to serve as an outlet for new perspectives and new ways of acting and being in a globalised world.

Focusing on new performing languages was, in the 1980s, the objective of the Centro Nacional de Nuevas Tendencias Escénicas, which housed the innovative project launched by Guillermo Heras to change the image of a brand new emerging country under Felipe González's government. Are we, therefore, dealing with a renewed version of this project? The idea of paying attention to cross-over territories, in other words, events related to different fields or disciplines, to a mutual mixing and influence, is not new. Theatre has done this since its origins, through collaboration between visual artists, musicians and performing arts creators, strictly speaking. The theatre is the characteristic place of what is transversal because it incorporates everything alien or remote and adopts it. Some emerging artists "wish to establish the mixing of several territories to make up a multifaceted object that generates stories," as happens with the Carmen//Shakespeare project (*Teatr-on*).

Feijóo's text published on the website of Las Naves Matadero has a tone that may anger some but this is not the place to analyse it in detail. The new manager cannot forget that research and the search for new languages forms part of the creative processes of 20th century performing arts by great renowned creators such as Stanislavski, Artaud, Peter Brook and Eugenio Barba. Stanislavski created a method based on his rejection of the performing style of his time, which he considered antiquated, repetitive and far from the living and organic, lacking in spirit and soul. For Peter Brook, theatre must be "vital", in keeping with society, to challenge its values rather than celebrate them. "The theatre needs its perpetual revolution" (Brook, 1968: 108). The British director had always followed in the steps of Artaud, for whom naturalism was dead, antiquated, lifeless and, consequently, theatre had to be reborn thanks to the physical attack on the senses because only in this way would it be possible to achieve the desired impact on the audience and transform them psychologically (Innes and Shevstova, 2013: 155).

Angry about the aforementioned events, provoked by the presentation of the new project, seven hundred creators signed a manifesto in which they called for theatre not to be excluded from the new project of Las Naves Matadero (Prado Campos, 2017):

We cannot undress one saint to dress another. Las Naves had its audience and we all know what ending it with a stroke of the pen means. It is very easy. What takes years to gain is lost in a moment. We must be sensitive to this aspect and be responsible for the consequences that such decisions that show political inexperience may have. [...] The new artistic director of the venue has designed a season based on interdisciplinary creation with urban dance, performance, electronic music and internationalisation as the spearheads. And theatre? This season, which starts on 10 March, is relegated to two days (6 and 7 July) with a production by Milo Rau.

The controversy is assured, as shown by Ruth Toledano (2017) and Raquel Valdés (2017), because the facts speak for themselves. Toledano cites La Ribot, who argues that it is the only institutional contemporary project promoted in Madrid since they “smashed” the Centro Nacional de Nuevas Tendencias in the Sala Olimpia in the neighbourhood of Lavapiés in 1994, which lasted barely 10 years. Raquel Valdés shares her view and speaks for those who signed the letter of support for a project that embodies “the performing arts of the present.” How will Feijóo develop his project from now on given the adverse context in which he moves? The most sensible thing would undoubtedly be to rectify and prepare a more inclusive programme and thus deactivate the discordant voices. Álvaro Holgado analyses the situation in a recent article (Holgado, 2017). After taking sides with Rodrigo García and many other creators, he considers it necessary to support the most daring and experimental creators, not just the most conservative. First, the commitment to contemporaneity must be maintained to avoid missing the train of modernity, as García points out (2017). In Spain, we always arrive late to modernity. And it is true that perhaps we lose some members of the audience but we probably also win over many others.

To end this section, it would be opportune to recall the article by Ignacio García May. Not because he radically positions himself against the thoughtlessness of doing away with a loyal audience, an aspect mentioned above, but two other aspects that the playwright highlights in his text. The first refers to “the confusion between art and culture, and between art and art industries, and the other to the difficulty of maintaining projects in this country in which the artistic and cultural areas often fall into incompetent and ignorant hands” (García May, 2017). Without assessing these unfortunate events that occurred in Madrid, which reveal how delicate cultural management can be and how sensitive the consequences of the decisions made are, it is reasonable to think that, in terms of auditoria and audience policy, it is worth adopting a prudent and objective stance. It is true that the social spectrum of those attending performing arts productions must be expanded to reach all sectors but it is no less true that we have to look after the audience and gain their

loyalty to the theatre and try not to abandon the venues that currently exist. In Valencia we have extensive experience in this respect because some venues have closed or have changed location without taking into account the social consequences of these decisions. We have just lost a unique venue with an exemplary story: the building of the Teatre Escalante in Landerer Street, Valencia, owned by the archbishopric of Valencia, which from the start of democracy had been rented by the Provincial Council. A venue aimed at a family and children's audience that would have required an investment of millions to continue its work.

In short, new artistic events must find a place in regular theatre programmes. To bring new audiences to the theatre does not necessarily mean that the audience of today or yesterday will be ostracised. Opening to new trends, of course, giving opportunities to risky creations that explore new fields of the performing arts without being limited to labels but without eschewing proposals in which the dramatic text is the structuring element of the *mise-en-scène*. We need an in-depth reflection on the place of theatre in our society, on the redefinition of theatre today, so that the new performative forms that are emerging strongly based on choreographers, dancers, musicians, body technologies, circus and so on are not excluded. We need to open the venues to cooperation and influence between disciplines, which José Sanchis Sinisterra already anticipated with his Teatro Fronterizo. A strong theatre never gets stuck in a groove. On the contrary, it is always ready to jump and conquer new fields to reflect on human beings and their dynamic condition. A theatre that does not target new audiences and new sensitivities, that does not investigate in *terra ignota*, is a dead theatre.

An approach to the Living Arts today

In this section I will focus on some of the productions that could be classified under the label of Living Arts, which I have written about in a weekly publication in Valencia, *Cartelera Turia*. The common thread of the productions discussed is that they break down the barriers of conventional theatre and the audience's expectations with respect to how theatre is traditionally seen. Many of them break the fourth wall, are multidisciplinary, have an explicitly social or political purpose, prioritise the experience of the audience over narrating a fictional story, challenge the concept of theatre, or are aimed at several senses at the same time, sometimes including taste; they are innovative and come from experimentation, research into the body and space, the gesture, and so on; they risk, question, resist and destabilise conceptions of the performative language of their predecessors and even use unconventional exhibition spaces. The analyses have been guided by different assessment criteria, although for reasons of length I have not delved into the historical context of the productions cited (Pavis, 2003).

I will talk about the following productions: *A los pies de Europa*, by the artists Henar Fuentetaja and Miguel Tornero; *Les solidàries*, by the creator Clara Chillida; *La capilla de los niños*, by Javier Sahuquillo; *Calypso*, by Fernando Epelde; *Allegro ma non troppo*, by Zero en conducta; *Deriva, naufragio*,

apáñatelas, by Cambaleo Teatro; *Cova*, by Amparo Urrieta and Anna Gomà; *Canturia Cantada*, by Carles Santos; *El eco de Antígona*, by Anaïs Duperrain and Miquel Carbonell; and *No soy yo*, by Sandra Gómez. They were reviewed in their day in a weekly Valencian publication *Cartelera Turia* (Garín, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017). Then I venture a reflection on the future of the Living Arts and, to conclude, I point out some considerations on possible paths through which the new performativities and the most avant-garde and unclassifiable creations could evolve.

A los pies de Europa

Cocinando Danza, Compañía Improvisada.

Espacio Inestable

This ambitious theatre-dance multidisciplinary project, by the choreographers Henar Fuentetaja and Miguel Tornero, “interacts with the audience using video, words and dance to give it form” (cocinandodanza.com). The show aims to reflect on the old continent with reference to its feet: the shoes shown on stage as a metonymy that suggests the diversity of cultures and identities that define us, as well as the limits of walking with the other’s feet, of wearing his or her shoes. Premiered on 10 March 2016, the project formed part of the residency programme “Graneros de Creación” of Espacio Inestable. Its inclusion within the Living Arts is due to the fact that it is a complex production in which the audience is urged to enter with their mobile phones on, connect to Wi-Fi and change places. With the parallax, the change of perspective, the audience take on an active position during the show, going onto the stage and leaving the seats to the actors to perform a pantomime. They are invited to get out of their seats and stick stars on the stage wall. With respect to the work with the image, the perimeter of shoes with which the show opens refers to a wide range of identities that are combined in the European crucible and that gives way to the choreographies is the most striking of *A los pies de Europa*. Choreographies by four dancers alternate with explanations about the meaning of Europe, its constitution and ideals, today challenged by a reality that highlights the contradictions of a project that is not evolving with the pace of the times. While the texts are screened, the actress and dancer Anaïs Duperrain, leader of the show, performs an autobiographical scene in the form of a monologue. Her transnational and bilingual experience is individual and collective. Her story is an example of transnational European citizens, racially mixed, made up of fluid identities. As a whole we are dealing with a representation of a socio-political criticism of a Europe that emphasises the fact that the EC is a grey enigma, because the dream of the union seems today more frustrated than ever. *Cocinando Danza* invites us to a multidisciplinary collective experience in which the audience’s dramaturgy joins the theatre’s dramaturgy, where their historical relations are inverted. Thus the audience forms part of the show both as an agent and observer. The dramatic space is the real space, the performers look at the audience; instead of fiction and reality materialising, they are confused. Europe is exposed in its vulnerability. It needs to question the forms of its feasibility as an inclusive ideal project.

This would be the message conveyed by the company. Among the memorable scenes, we highlight the pantomime of MPs seated behind their work tables or when they occupy the stalls. Sara Escribano Maenza, Anaïs Duperrein, Henar Fuentetaja and Miguel Tornero give an excellent performance and are the core of the show, with a control of gesture that takes on another semiotic dimension in its superimposition onto the choreographic work and music, thus eliciting multisensory experience. It is an innovative show that surprises because of the combination of signs of different origins and because it challenges the concept of theatre. A production that is the result of spatial research that calls for the spaces and roles consolidated by tradition to be re-signified, making the audience reflect on the aesthetic relationship established between actors and audience, the venue and the stalls. However, the result would achieve greater emotional impact on the audience if it were based on a more tight-fit dramaturgy, which could rearrange all of its elements by better articulating and breathing greater fluidity into the whole. Sometimes the dependency on technology is a risk that innovative productions must irremediably run, as I noted in its day.

Les solidàries

A Tiro Hecho, with texts by Patricia Pardo.

2nd Festival Tercera Semana

The latest production of A Tiro Hecho, the group led by the creator Carla Chillida, premiered in the Festival Tercera Semana (June 2017). Four performers breathe life into *Les solidàries*, a name that refers to a group of women anarchists who confronted communism in 1936 Barcelona. Margarida Mateos, Paula Romero, Yarima Osuna, Isabel Martí, Isabel Ruiz and Patricia Pardo, also the author of the text, and Chillida herself conceive a radical feminist fiction, accompanied by two instruments, the guitar and the keyboard, with songs by La Otra and Violeta Parra, adapted by Chicho S. Ferlosio. Margarida Mateos, Yarima Osuna, Paula Romera and Chillida are superb performers with boundless energy. *Les solidàries* works in the opposite direction to *La secció*, the previous show by Chillida premiered at TEM (Teatre El Musical de València) and which is now also included in the broad and ambitious programme of this festival. While in *La secció* (2017) they spoke of the “Sección Femenina” and its role in the 1930s, now it is the time for anarchist women. In this last production we can see resonances and echoes of the previous creations *Donde las papas quemán* (2014) and *El mercado es más libre que tú* (2015). And it is no surprise as this young company, now in its sixth year, has been forging a personal language in which the graphic image, body, piercing and ferocious words complement each other without the need for one to prevail over the other, despite the powerful images. The provocation caused in the first scene about who commits the rape and who is the victim, the dance on soapy water, the illuminated bare back of Chillida, whose muscles are activated in spasmodic shakes, the continuous rapes with the bursting balloons, etc., are very potent images. The result is a truly striking language, very powerful and provocative, clearly aimed at political criticisms while being educational and informative. We could argue that it updates the

1960s agitprop, which it reinvigorates, thanks to its musical, visual and choreographic component. In contrast to her previous creations, Isabel Ruiz is responsible for developing the graphic image, both of the programme and the stage. It is full of posters with stylised portraits of the anarchist-feminist group *Mujeres Libres*, the organisation formed in the framework of Spanish anarco-syndicalism and which was active from April 1936 to February 1939. A group that was founded based on the need to have a specific women's organisation that could fully develop its capacities and its political struggle. In this great show, we can distinguish two parts. "The first attempts to analyse some issues that feminism seeks to deconstruct, such as 'what happens with our bodies or why we need a male figure to validate us' [...]" (Chillida, 2018). It is based on the personal world of the creators Margarida Mateos, Yarima Osuna, Paula Romero and Carla Chillida. The second block deals with historical characters, "mainly anarco-syndicalists of the 1920s, who make women feel proud to be women," as Chillida also points out (2018). The abundant material they handle is so rich and relevant that the six months of the rehearsal process is barely enough to polish up the redundancies and speed up the flow of the show.

La capilla de los niños

Javier Sahuquillo. *Mar d'Amura* (former Cabanyal school).
7th Festival Cabanyal Íntim. Valencia

The Valencia director and playwright Javier Sahuquillo (Perros Daneses), recent winner of the Valencia Critics' Award, has just presented *La capilla de los niños* in a venue that could not be more appropriate: Mar d'Amura, a hall that still has the original architectural and decorative features, which contribute to the enjoyment of this exceptional creation performed by Laura Sanchis and Juan de Vera. Officially premiered at the Teatre Rialto in Valencia in 2017 within the Festival Tercera Semana, *La capilla de los niños* is a descent into the infernos of Javier Sahuquillo (Laura Sanchis), a playwright about to throw in the towel, who is invited to present a writing project based on a piece of news. During his sojourn in the city of Palermo, which hosts the meeting, he will meet the young Natale (Juan de Vera) who recalls Ninetto Davoli, the young actor discovered by Pier Paolo Pasolini and who performed many roles in his films. Thus the search for the theme and the relationship with the young man will be gradually interwoven, revealing the complexity of the writing process, with its echoes and its comings and goings, from the personal to the media: the Alcásser girls' crime, the inquiry's shortcomings, the social repercussions of the horrendous crime. With many references to the writing context (subsidies for writers, expectations aroused by the writers), the inquiry leads the writer to his own destruction. An investigator hunted by his own discovery, incapable of assimilating the horror of it all, finally delves into his own obsessions in the most sterile insanity. The fact that the director gave the main male character to Laura Sanchis was a great decision, because Sanchis not only played the writer brilliantly but, in the extraordinary setting in which the show was presented, she also acted as narrator. Self-fiction that places the subject in a slippery field between the

real and the imaginary, producing fragmentary and unstable effects, related to questioning identity. Juan de Vera, in his role as a silent youth and object of desire (even with full frontal nudity) completely fits the role of the socially outcast lover and the writer's erotic piece. Sanchis and De Vera, actors of great skill, masterfully offer a fascinating account that speaks both of the limits of theatre and narration and the fragile borders that separate life from fiction and how there is a constant and underground transfer between them. A risky and courageous production, with the right tone and that is not only heard and seen but also smelt and touched, although the smoke of tobacco, due to the closeness of the audience, may be quite unpleasant, not to speak of the smell of garlic and onion of the pasta that is cooked and eaten during the show.

Calypso

Fernando Epelde. Carme Teatre

Fernando Epelde (Ourense, 1980) is a multifaceted creator, musician (Agentes del Orden, Modulok) and playwright, who has received several awards (SGAE, Marqués de Bradomín and Tirso de Molina) for *Estado de gracia*, *Drone*, *Usted no está aquí* and *Art Sinfony*. His plays show a committed and critical concern faced with the world and especially culture and art. *Calypso*, by the company Voadora (2007), with which he usually works, formed by its director and actress as well as visual artist Marta Pazos, alongside José Díaz and Hugo Torres, is based on a strong and powerful sound component, which opens and closes with music from Mozart's Requiem, a melody set against Spanish rock lyrics. The productions "are characterised by a significant musical, aesthetic, surprising and evocative component. Based on live music, imagination, irony and movement, Voadora builds a very personal language that flees the storyline to show us that there is a weft of sensations, spaces and emotions." Its mixed language and poetics dispense with the plotline, psychological character and development of the dramatic situation to communicate through image, gesture and movement. There is an external power that we do not control, the product of fragmentation, the superimposition of languages and the poetics of ambiguity. *Calypso*, a play that manages to provoke thanks to a forceful and energetic text, which is heard off stage and screened before the audience, seems to tell us that artistic creation can only be reached through the destruction of everything that exists, destabilising the inherited concepts and the forms established by the historical avant-gardes and the neo-avant-gardes. The visual images strengthen the contradictions in the audience's response. They create repulsion and entertainment: for instance, the parody of the performer Maria Abramović in *The Artist Is Present* (when she finds her ex-partner on the other side of the table) reflects the irreverence of someone who dares to end the myths of contemporary art to show herself with more strength in a day to day that is repeated with too much monotony. Undoubtedly, it is a show with talent, although the text — in keeping with postdramatic theatre (Lehmann, 2000; Fischer-Lichte, 2004) — is not easy to assess because it twists, turns and winds. However, Pazos's staging is not fully convincing

because its elements clash irremissibly with each other. An over-accumulation of objects takes place. The languages cancel each other. However, the values, which it undoubtedly has, fall more on the side of the visual arts, installations, than the dramatic as a conflict, with the exception of the ironic segments of Epelde's speech that shape some powerful scenes. In the end, humour does not clearly reach the stalls. In any case, this is a playwright and a company to be taken into account within the line of multidisciplinary and the challenging of the concept of art it advocates, as well as for its research on the limits of theatre.

Allegro ma non troppo

Zero en conducta. Teatro Círculo

Zero en conducta features two creators, the Mexican Julieta Gastón Roque (director, puppeteer and dancer) and the Valencia-born Putxa, trained at the Institut del Teatre in Barcelona. They usually work in the Casa-Taller de Marionetas of Pepe Ortal, in Barcelona, but have just toured Europe and Asia with this wonderful production in which they use the technique of Jaques Copeau's disciple, Etienne Decroux. *Allegro ma non troppo* is a charming fifty-minute show, which premiered at the Ateneu Popular de Nou Barris (Barcelona, 2014). Made with honesty and simplicity, it has an excellent command of gesture and mime. Seeing Putxa's hands and feet move is pure pleasure because of the skill they reveal, always at the service of a disturbing story whose common denominator is the couple's love and the difficulties encountered. The range of gestural resources, mime and dance could not be more open. Playing with silence and with a good selection of music, the scenes follow one after another as if we were in a magic show: the audience leaves the venue entranced. The scene of the door frame, built with only two hands and a hat, is memorable, as are those when they dance with a mask, the flexor turned into a writer, the two bodies merged into one, or the brilliant scene of the dummy made with four fingers, like a puppy made flesh with its own brain. This is a rare and fantastic show that combines multidisciplinary, multisensoriality, performative research and poetic ambiguity.

Deriva, naufragio, apáñatelas

Cambaleo Teatro. Espacio Inestable

Cambaleo Teatro (1985) is the resident company in La Nave de Aranjuez, where they have programmed and premiered many shows in its long career. In this one, *Deriva, naufragio, apáñatelas*, it has the fruitful collaboration of the creator Carmen Werner (2007 National Dance Award). *Deriva, naufragio, apáñatelas* makes us reflect on life, death, our own experience and the current times from a very original perspective that sometimes recalls the company Esteve y Ponce, because it moves between the absurd and the surreal. The ironic viewpoint of Antonio Sarrió, the author of the texts, is punctuated by interesting rhythms that give each segment a unique value, always surprising and original. This creator often manages to elicit laughter or a smile from the audience because irony and humour define him. The three, the Sarrió brothers and Werner, achieve some powerful images, such

as that of the four hands. Moreover, they achieve compositions that awaken several degrees of intensity and emotion with which it is not difficult to connect. There are also references to some politicians who frustrate our life. In short, suggestive scenes in motion, which reveal the talent of this successful collaboration. There is no logical narrative that supports the ideas but rather more or less abstract and unusual situations that follow each other fluently under the smoke of the cigarette. “As a child they didn’t allow me to smoke,” notes the choreographer and dancer. Dancing the autobiography. The figures of the two men and this woman lying on the floor, holding the ankle of one of them, makes up a memorable image. There is a common denominator that links the whole: showing the value of theatre creation, its processes, some of its limits, the potentiality of its scope, and thus opening the possibilities to this territory of fruitful dialogue between the two disciplines: text-based theatre and contemporary dance. Some truths that hurt — “I am an actor because I like to be looked at” — serve as a colophon for this innovative interdisciplinary collaborative show. Or “in this dangerous world the only safe place is the stage, so I don’t go into the street. I spend the day rehearsing.”

Cova

Humus Sapiens. Carme Teatre

Humus Sapiens is a multidisciplinary group that builds bridges between different artistic disciplines, with special interest in opera. It is a quite cryptic experimentation for those who are not familiar with the subject because *Cova* does not have a narrative thread that leads the audience. The show is based on a great performer: the Catalan soprano and actress Anna Gomà (1984) and a director who profoundly understands the material with which she works, the professor and researcher Amparo Urrieta (*La Follia* and *12no13*). And with a superb visual artist in charge of the stage area and lighting, David Laínez. *Cova* is neither a play nor a piece of performance art, but takes elements from both disciplines to shape an abstract biographical path full of emotion, which addresses the issue of death in the first part, where darkness and despair prevail. The repertoire includes “Song to the moon”, from the opera *Rusalka* by Dvorak; “Odi tu come fremono i cupi”, the trio from *Un ballo in Maschera*, by Verdi; “Caldo Sangue”, Scarlati’s aria, and “Lascia la spina”, Handel’s aria; and *Come scoglio*, from the opera *Così fan tutte* by Mozart, in which the actress and performer finally find joy. A real journey that like “an ecology of life experiences” enables us to leave behind what prevents us from moving on and find ourselves again. *Cova* is described by its creators as “a piece torn apart, a forbidden creation that sees the light through the voice, a voice rooted in primitive survival. *Cova* is also a collection of lost arias, censored in their time because they spoke of feelings, love, sensuality...” Nevertheless, we are faced with a multidisciplinary production that challenges the concept of theatre by broadening its borders towards opera and the visual arts and performance art. Thus, multisensorial, innovative, the product of performative research with the sound space and the 3D space. Finally, it can be read as a provocation of bourgeois opera conventions

to enter the demonic spirit that inspired its creative geniuses. In short, the show has features from a piece of performance art, as we have mentioned, because of the use of the space, the painting on the performer's body and the ritual; because of the well-measured and articulated visual, musical and performing resources, with many superb moments, such as Anna Gomà playing the double bass. It is therefore a suggestive and stimulating show that puts a great voice at the service of new performing languages and in which it is worth emphasising, as I said before, the need for a text or context that could build a bridge between the *signifiers* (Ubersfeld, 1978 and 1979) expressed and the audience. In any case, a great voice and a visual bewitchment that subjugates.

Canturia Cantada

Carles Santos. Festival Sagunt a Escena

Canturia Cantada, a selection of passages from pieces created for 37 voices and a clarinet, brings together fragments from seven productions created between 1981 and 2010, such as *Voice Tracks* (1981), *Tramuntana Tremens* (1989), *Chicha Montenegro Gallery* (2010), *L'adéu de Lucrècia Borgia* (2001), *Homenatge a Josep Guinovart* (2008) and *La Pantera Imperial* (1997), together with two wonderful pieces from the great 17th century composer of polyphonic music Tomás Luis de Victoria (*Caligaverunt oculi mei* and *Tradiderunt me*). These two delighted many spectators, although the most popular, such as *Ki-ki-ri-ki*, from *La meua filla sóc jo* (2005), received the warmest ovations in a packed Roman Theatre. *Canturia Cantada* was premiered at the Festival Grec 2012, on that occasion with a Catalan choir that has now been replaced by the Choir of the Generalitat Valenciana, equally as worthy. The virtues of the artistic and multidisciplinary work of Carles Santos are renowned (Ruvira, 2008). Humour permeates the work of this artist from Castelló and, of course, the whole show. In *Canturia Cantada* Santos makes us look at the music from the appropriation of the space of the Roman coliseum by the bodies of the singers, the clarinet player (Inmaculada Burriel) and Dolors Ricart herself, giving free reign to choreographic imagination, the spontaneity of the gesture and to everything that happens among the corporeal performing presences. The performative-musical show, apart from sparkling sound, is very well lit and an impressive aesthetic experience. Of special note are Bonifaci Carrillo (bass), whose voice gives you the shivers, and Carmen Avivar (soprano), who skilfully plays with each note: both are examples of the most innovative contemporary music. Santos shows again his mastery in the articulation of languages to offer a direct and playful performative event, full of interesting contrasts, managing to embody music to extract from it the essence and colour of each of the notes, thus revealing unexpected accents and nuances. Looking at the music to hear the movement and opening all the senses to enjoy them. A measured musical production, purposeful, dynamic, which plays with each one of the elements, such as gesture, tones, vocal intensity or erasing of the voice, to dramatise the qualities of the voice and the physical presence of the singers, with which it makes a very real and material impression on the audience.

El eco de Antígona**Taninna Teatre. Teatro Círculo**

Anaïs Duperein and Miquel Carbonell make up a very talented artistic couple: she provides the body, voice and performance with great passion; he adds the virtuosity of his piano playing. Taninna Teatre already made an impression with *Embarazadas*, a half-hour entertainment that premiered at the Festival Russafa Escènica 2013, where we could also enjoy the show we are reviewing today (2014). The step from one to the other has been massive. She is magnificent, and the piano accompaniment is superb, because it takes us to another more magical and solemn dimension, putting us at a safer distance in the final moments. When both artists come together, as in the case of this show or the previous one, the successful combination yields surprising achievements. The text adapted and directed by Miquel Carbonell is powerful, neither lacking nor excessive, and perfect in its balance. Duperein shows her command both of the comic (*Embarazadas*) and tragic (*El eco de Antígona*) aspects, and she works equally well in a contemporary play (*Equus*) or when embodying a character with the strength and classical power of Antigone, an emblem of the rebellion against autocratic power. It is an emblem whose echoes bounce and reverberate until today, or perhaps yesterday, when the city, the capital, was in the hands of a single woman, as if it belonged to her, when the established powers seemed unchangeable, eternal. Now we know that Sophocles was right, that the worst evil in the world is irreflexion, inertia, the belief that things are like this and no one can change them. This is the real bridle that immobilises. But, moreover, in the monologue of *El eco de Antígona*, Duperein plays around ten characters, including Creon, Tiresias, Ismene, etc., with the same forcefulness and genius. The myth created by Sophocles is alive in this version by José Wuatanabe. The version and mise-en-scène of Taninna Teatre is simple and brilliant, along with preserving the power of the energy of the message of the original play, because it speaks with sincerity and honesty to audiences of all ages: it deals with the fear of the tyrant, his arrogance, the danger of falling into arbitrariness, into arrogance, into blunt hard rationalism, but also of the duty of being merciful with the poor wretches of the earth, who now more than ever take the foreground.

No soy yo**Sandra Gómez. Espacio Inestable**

Sandra Gómez (Valencia, 1975) is a creator, educator and researcher as well as a performer of some consequence, sober, profound, moving and impressive in each step or pirouette. *The Love Thing Piece* (2013), *Tentativa* (2012) and *Borrón#8* (2010) are the past shows that reflect her talent. In *No soy yo* (2016) she continues to investigate autobiography and memory, the topic of her doctoral thesis, showing a range of different approaches to dance, collective memory and the body's memory. Dancing is a way of being and relating to the world, one of the ways to embody the abstract of the most personal ideas and feelings thanks to the knowledge produced by the perception of

the body in motion that calls on both the brain and the heart. It is impossible to create everything from scratch but it is possible to take a new approach to it, to make another reading of the material addressed, working with what we have at hand and with the most personal experiences of the artist. Sandra Gómez's solos alternate with the recorded and screened interviews, without any music accompanying the movement. The second part, this time with music but without video, is achieved through a change in lighting that focuses on the dancer, who, in this way, re-appropriates the space through interesting changes of rhythm and speed, composing and decomposing the choreographies of Ivon Rainer, Simone Forti, Lucinda Childs and Trisha Brown. The interviews with several people from the world of dance in the Community of Valencia (women choreographers, dancers and educators, such as Cristina Andreu, Maite Bacete, Amparo Ferrer, Carmen Giménez Morte and Gema Gisbert) help launch a political message of protest and rebellion and to report the structures of a system that treats contemporary dance unfairly. In this way, Gómez contextualises the state of dance creation in our country and reveals the areas in which it founders. Support for art is not enough. Dance is the poor sister of the arts. Along with the aforementioned women dancers and choreographers, three voice-overs without image are introduced from three renowned European women choreographers that provide their own views on the function of dance in society and its role in the growth and evolution of individuals. Through elements from minimalism and deconstruction, and thanks to the extreme detailed performance, Gómez recalls a legacy while making it her own based on today's experience (ironic sports gear), considering the areas of resistance and destabilisation which, in the end, generate meaning.

The Future of the Living Arts

The ten productions reviewed have several features in common that point at the present and future of the Living Arts. In this article, I have attempted to look at productions that prioritise innovation and research. The analysis of a small sample of the premieres in the last few seasons shows the impossibility of establishing a single perspective or hegemonic trend. On the contrary, by changing what has been the focus so far, text-based theatre, in which the hegemony of the text prevails over the other visual, sound or digital elements, the peripheral is gaining ground. And, along with the peripheral, the multiple and contradictory perspectives (Pavis, 2006: 294) are reconciled and gain autonomy. The playwright who writes in his or her home gives way to the so-called devised theatre or theatre created on the stage during the creators' work, performance as research, as a larger number of companies that go into the rehearsal room with little more than a script already do. Moreover, we can argue that the character as a psychological or moral entity has disappeared in the different expressions of the Living Arts. In its place we have performative presences, performers of material actions, embodied bodies, not beings who enact another but rather exhibited masks, very concrete abstractions that generate very real energies, actors who express themselves

through mime, puppets that look like human beings or human beings that move like puppets, performers who sing, singers who paint their bodies like canvases, dancers who speak, actors who through the choreography or gesture suggest or could suggest sensations or provoke visual, sound and kinesthetic experiences, sometimes without the need to penetrate a fictional world. As Ubersfeld notes in *L'école du spectateur, lire le théâtre 2* (1996: 237), “the actor is in the eye of the audience and in their desire.”

Another aspect in the field of the Living Arts is research into autobiography, such as in the case of Sandra Gómez in *No soy yo* or the company El Pont Flotant in many of its productions (such as *El fill que vull tindre*). Moreover, the use of technologies, not as an accessory to the show, which had been done since the 1990s, but as a central part of it, extends to so many performing experiences that it is impossible to include them all here. The hegemonic and innovative use of technologies, such as in *A House in Asia* by Agrupación Señor Serrano (2014 Barcelona Critics' Award), manages in the hands of these great creators to develop an innovative language based on models, video screenings and video editing in real time. Thus, a performing western is developed in which reality and its copies mix by drawing a pop portrait of the decade following 9/11. In the dramaturgy of *A House in Asia*, as the company points out, “the stories of the house of Abbottabad [of Osama Bin Laden] and all its copies with references to Moby Dick and the western are intertwined. All to create a new tale proposed as another layer in the network of shams of the real. A network that is, in fact, the only possible reality” (Agrupación Señor Serrano, 2017). The show puts a scale model of Osama's house on the stage. The performers handle it, unfolding its walls. The action is captured on video, edited in real time and shown on a large screen. Along with live video, the audiovisual dramaturgy develops with sampling of fragments of films and other pre-recorded resources. In the show there is also a notable presence of video games, and Smartphones and tablets. Thus, “the show features elements that work on three levels. The micro element is the world in miniature of the house and its interior models. The intermediate level is the performers who play at being demiurges of the narration. And, finally, the screenings of this world in miniature make up the macro element” (Agrupación Sr. Serrano, 2017).

Similarly, multidisciplinary (*El eco de Antígona; Cova; Deriva, naufragio, apañatelas*, etc.) has come to stay because there are increasingly more shows that research multidisciplinary interaction given the multiple opportunities it provides to creators to explore new territories and achieve unusual products, explore ideas, emotions or feelings and build a personal vision of the world.

Moreover, the company El Pollo Campero with its production *Las actrices siempre mienten* (Gloria March Chulvi and Cris Celada), although it is also a small format show, also surpasses the limits of theatre in a much simpler way. Through a portable computer and screenings of classic films dubbed with dialogues of their own, they manage to cheer up the audience through a very intelligent play of humoristic dubbing. The actresses play themselves but the fiction comes from the dubbing of dialogues

superimposed on the scenes reproduced from some classic black and white films. The achievements possess an admirable poetics, full of good humour and lots of talent. Through their show, which is the result of research, the company seeks to open a reflection “on the theatre event and the conventional theatre elements, blurring the line that separates the real from the fictional and prioritising their own text by producing fictional texts based on autobiographical pretexts and combining the language of cabaret with contemporary theatre languages (dance, theatre, performance)” (Compañía el Pollo Campero, 2017).

Moreover, it is worth mentioning another aspect of current arts: the interest in creating group events with the audience (*El fill que vull tindre*, by El Pont Flotant (2016), *I tornarem a sopar al carrer*, by Begoña Tena and Xavier Puchades and *Historias de Usera*, by Kubik Fabrik). This type of community theatre is taking on greater importance today because it makes citizens participate not only in the performance but also in the stories it tells. Their contribution to the development of the Living Arts is worthy of special attention. It is a different way of understanding the performing arts from a social perspective, involving the people, making them joint participants with full rights, thus showing their ethical commitment to the people of the local communities in which they work. Again, the idea is to continue exploring the limits of theatre, opening it up to other participants, because the residents form part of the company in a project of close cooperation, which in practical terms means that, for instance, the company El Pont Flotant offered to buy the show with or without workshop to train future participants. It is a way of breathing life into the show, reinvigorating it. The production conceived by Kubik Fabrik (Lazonakubikfabrik, 2017) is the result of the real stories in the neighbourhood of Usera (Madrid), with the participation of playwrights who, through their fictions, have given a voice to the residents of the neighbourhood. As we have mentioned, the artistic team and cast is formed by professionals and residents. Community theatre could be classified as popular in the sense that it is not elitist and is aimed at broad, even unspoilt, audiences who do not necessarily need to have training in the performing arts. Its value lies not so much in the product as in the process, hence these productions cannot be measured with the same criterion as the other projects made exclusively by professionals and with the support of a solid production. Community theatre has an enormous potential in the cohesion of neighbourhoods and its importance in the current development of the Living Arts must be taken into account because it manages to become rooted locally and addresses issues with which residents can identify, bringing the language and the situations closer to their daily problems and opening their eyes to specific injustices. In contrast, assessed from a purely aesthetic point of view, possibly they cannot compete with other more technologically speaking complex products or with performances by big and experienced professionals with an extensive background.

In the future, interdisciplinary projects with a virtual, electronic, visual or choreographic component will probably gain ground from other projects focused on a single discipline because the multimodal projects are widely

accepted by the new audiences, and programmers and the press see them with different eyes. It could be argued that they have already conquered their own space or that they are on the way. As noted, experimentation with new technologies, new dramaturgies and body policies, the dramaturgies of “the real”, the dramaturgies of sound and the inclusion of opera or singing in theatre or performative productions will possibly take root in this decade thanks to their more frequent programming in venues in which these types of productions did not fit or due to the opening of new unconventional venues, or even their programming in squares and streets. In fact, research into performing languages from body disciplines, such as dance, circus or juggling, has helped reinvigorate theatre and make it advance towards more physical fields in which human energy has a key role. It can be argued that the experience of the event prevails in them, the event itself, rather than the separation between actor-audience, stage-stalls. These dichotomies have been demolished by 20th century directors, such as Augusto Boal (1979: 117-120), who in his Teatro Foro made the audience perform characters in situations of oppression. Nobody questions that there is a specific hungry audience that demands these new modalities. As pointed out by Guillermo Arazo, previous director of Espai Mutant, Las Naves (Valencia): “collaborative work has always been and will continue to be one of the assets of the performing arts and performance that will enter the productions through the back door or the next door” (Arazo, 2017).

Conclusions

The Living Arts are shaping the new trends, different viewpoints, the risky, the different, the unique, the new, because they represent society. They may have tangent areas with the world of performance or unorthodox expressions of the performing arts, especially in what they share with the visual or musical arts, or the technologies of the human body. Some of their expressions seek to have a direct impact on the social context from which they emerge, emphasising a shortcoming that should be corrected, such as in the case of the Jardines en movimiento, by the group Serpiente de dos cabezas, formed by Domingo Mestre and the Brazilian Janice Martins and presented in the Festival Intramurs 2016 in Valencia. On other occasions, they denounce reprehensible business practices, as happens in *Zapaturgias*, an artistic action of public denunciation with four artists (Centre Cultural La Beneficència - Cultura Diputació de València) in which the infringement of human or labour rights of women and men working in the shoemaking industry on a global scale is highlighted to the surprised looks of passers-by.

These examples, most of them of a performative nature, have a component that is more or less close to the theatrical and orality but featuring characteristics typical of the happening or the living installation. An illustrative case is that of *La Biblioteca de Cuerdas y Nudos* by José A. Portillo, performed at the Teatre El Musical in Valencia last season, in which we were invited to enter a small circular wooden structure located in the theatre foyer. It held unpublished manuscripts, texts, scores, designs and objects found in

the rubbish, all of them placed in cylinders full of messages hanging from ropes and knots. These manuscripts, along with small objects, allowed the interaction between the audience and the artist. Out of this communication within this curious living space, diverse anecdotes that mixed the experiences of different people may emerge. Beyond theatre as performance, theatre as experience. The contemplative experience as a step to awaken the subjectivity and exchange of subjectivities as a social fabric conveyed here and now conveyed by a device conceived by the artist.

These productions, and many others that it is impossible to bring together here, offer alternative images of “the real”, often using non-theatre venues to conquer new territories and achieve an immediate impact on the social and geographic environment. The aim of stressing the subjective character and lived experience of some productions, as well as the integration of art into daily life, turn artists themselves into objects of aesthetic reflection.

Moreover, we can argue that the critical and political character of current art defines our era. Hence there is an element of transgression, an appropriation of “the real” to rename it or to take it to a field that overcomes previous conceptions of what theatre was or could embrace. Moreover, “the real” can be approached from another angle, so why might it not perhaps be the first step to changing it? But perhaps not, maybe it would just be about strengthening the estrangement of the real objects, cooling them, re-signifying them, as Rodrigo García does in 4 when he puts cocks wearing sports shoes on stage (Prado Campos, 2017).

The synergies around the Living Arts have their crucible in the coordination meetings of the directors of the Mercat de les Flors (Barcelona), Las Naves Matadero (Madrid), Espai Mutant (Valencia), Sala Petita Teatre Principal (Palma de Mallorca) and Teatro Circo (Murcia), and other directors of venues that join the initiative. The object is to coordinate programmes, lines of action and processes of creation with the companies that they co-produce as well as sharing the expenses of the travelling companies, especially international ones. Guillermo Arazo (Las Naves, Valencia) highlights the need to carry out a policy of audience training, a laboratory for the training of new audiences. He mentions the case of the creator Cris Blanco with *Bad Translation*, a show that should be seen this season in Valencia, when the Espai Mutant opens again, a venue that has been closed for months. In *Bad Translation*, co-produced within a residency programme, Cris Blanco puts on stage what happens on the Internet. Another production that symbolises the new line of these programmers is *Grand Applause*, by Jorge Dutor and Guillem Mont de Palol, an experimental piece that proposes the transfer of an exhibition format into a performative format. It is a curatorial project, a choreography that, following a virtual architecture based on the fiction of the opera *Carmen* by Bizet, establishes a dialogue between the work of three artists and performers: Norberto Llopis, in the role of Carmen, Luis Úrculo, in the role of Don José and Bernhard Wilhelm, as the bullfighter Escamillo. Arazo emphasises that risk will be a key element in the programming of the aforementioned venues, as originally was the programming of the Festival Veo (Valencia), Festival SÂLMON in Barcelona, Sala Hisroshima in Barcelona, La Casa

Encendida in Madrid, BAD in Bilbao, or the Espacio Inestable in Valencia (which receives European funds but is private) and so many others throughout Spain. The aim is to give a voice to the emerging companies and attract a new audience that can understand art from more open and surprising perspectives. This is also the purpose of La joven compañía, created in 2012 by David R. Peralto and José Luís Arellano. Its mission is “to contribute to the creation of future artistic and technical professionals by fostering dramatic research and seeking the incorporation of young audiences into theatre through an educational project” (La Joven Compañía, 2017).

All these productions and the paths that are opening with them challenge the audience, question the limits of what we know so far and welcome the exploration of the possibilities yet to be discovered. These initiatives that are still taking the first steps reveal the trends in bringing new creators and audiences close to the theatre practices, as well as to open the traditional venues to emerging creators and their innovative ideas, breaking moulds, taking risks, discovering new ways of doing, which are also new ways of thinking and interpreting truth. Whether postdramatic, postmodern or posthumanist, the objective is to explain these initiatives, supervise them if needed, and commit to approaches that broaden the frontiers of the theatre and the performative so that art can breathe and oxygenate in freedom for the present to be known and elucidated from other aesthetic viewpoints. But, first, it is necessary to reduce the precariousness of the creators, achieving working conditions that enable divergent trajectories to explore new territories, and offer better opportunities to all so that fewer of them fall by the wayside, and for the creative processes to be undertaken rigorously and efficiently, maximising the financial and talent investments.

Through this article in which I have sought elements that serve to define the concept of Living Arts used today and after placing the controversy of Las Naves Matadero in its context I have presented an analysis of ten productions that I saw in Valencia in the last few seasons and that, in my view, somehow fulfil the expectations of this new performativity that is conquering the stages in order to outline the future paths of non-conventional performing arts. Therefore I hope I have been able to outline an inclusive panorama although, naturally, my viewpoint does not seek to and cannot embrace everything. I hope I can be excused for the partiality of the field on which I have focused as well as the subjective nature of my assessments with which logically not all readers will agree.



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