

## When the body sings



## Spontaneous, collective music

*Spontaneous music and dance invite us to enter into an ancestral experiential language where art is transformed into a means of encounter for the now.*

**By Leonardo Vidoni\***

Translated by Guy Simpson

We live in an age in which the popular imagination is beginning to adopt the notion of *being with others*, instead of representing individuals as isolated, complete, autonomous entities. There is a tendency towards contemplating both human beings and nature in general as members of various systems and subsystems, in constant and indivisible interaction. This approach invites us to consider the idea of a thinking in network, or synchronized coordination, that has greater capacity and resources to deal with complex challenges than individual genius. By means of the expression of spontaneous sound and movement, it is possible to connect creatively to this network of thought, since music and dance generate bridges in communication, and re-establish those that have been lost in the isolation and multiplicity of the different and incompatible languages in our “Tower of Babel”. To do so, they use the ancestral language of body and emotion. Our institutional education legitimizes only a few of us for the task of “composition”. It makes of us the inheritors of an extraordinary wealth of music which, while continually added to, remains an artistic capital that we preserve and pass on without ever leaving a personal imprint, without lending it new variations of our own invention.

Most of us attend or reproduce completed works, and rarely have the opportunity to experiment with our own creativity, our own music and dance. The invitation to a collective creation, on the other hand, in which all may participate, following the model of Jakob Moreno – pioneer in psychological group therapies – creates a new stage on which spontaneity and creativity form the natural, adaptive response of man to his environment. In this way, creativity becomes a quality inherent in that which lives, and is not the property of the genius. From this point of view, the collective creation of music and dance becomes a powerful vehicle for expression, promoting new ways for people to relate to each other. This can take place in group encounters centring on very simple, basic principles, for example: an extremely subtle degree of listening,

the intention to include and validate every sound and movement that the participants make, together with the proposal to influence each other mutually. By simply allowing our voice to sound, observing how it echoes in our body, and the effect it has on us, each of us can learn to establish a high degree of connection with our own sound. The next step is to listen to others and compose with them, thereby creating a free-flowing network, which reveals the group body in an audible form. The same mechanism can be applied to the display of movements which arise from the very necessity of making them, and can express a corporeal music which invents its own dance steps, producing spontaneous and collective choreographies. Expression through the medium of song brings to light a degree of interrelation between the individuals taking part and permits a kind of fine-tuning to the group dynamic. This adjustment is related to the achievement of homogeneity in the sound frequency – the common definition of “tuning” – and also to coordination, but its operation has far-reaching implications that go well beyond this. Every mood, every unique and unrepeatable situation, can give rise to a song which has yet to be written and which we allow to take shape, while simultaneously listening to and discovering ourselves in it. In this way, collective song and movement become an analogical model of communication that proposes participation in a free-flowing work of art, one that is inclusive of our diversities, and open to adaptation to contexts in constant transformation.

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