

REPORT

DIGITAL STORYTELLING

among Women Artists
Resisting Violence in Maré,
Rio de Janeiro:

Building a Memory
Collection for the Museum
of the Person

2022

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The project "Resisting violence, creating dignity: negotiating Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) through community history-making in Rio de Janeiro" is a multidisciplinary research project that seeks to map the formal and informal, individual and collective ways that women residents of peripheral urban communities, specifically the favelas of Maré, find to resist gender-based violence.

The research is led by King's College London (Department of Geography) and Redes da Maré, in partnership with the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, People's Palace Projects, Queen Mary University of London and Museu da Pessoa, with funding from the British Academy, through the GCRF-Global Challenges Research Fund (Heritage, Dignity and Violence programme).

For more on the research, go to: <https://transnationalviolenceagainstwomen.org>

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1. Introduction

This report presents key findings of a digital storytelling experience recording in video and text form the oral memories of ten women from Maré who, throughout their lives and in different ways, made art into a tool to confront gendered urban violence and injustices. This experience was developed within the scope of the multimethod research project *Resisting violence, creating dignity: negotiating Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) through community history-making in Rio de Janeiro* which builds on various creative and arts-based methods to capture the construction of dignity and resistance by women in relation to gendered violence in the favelas of Maré in Rio de Janeiro (McIlwaine et al. 2022).¹

The digital storytelling experience was co-produced in partnership with the Museum of the Person [*Museu da Pessoa*]² adopting its own methodological framework of Social Memory Technology for the digital preservation and dissemination of life stories far and wide (Worcman and Garde-Hansen, 2016). The partnership with the Museu da Pessoa was structured around methodological transference, capacity building in Maré, and co-creation of research design. The creative outcome of this international and intersectoral collaboration is a digital archive, of which summary videos were created and then displayed in the Museu da Pessoa's 2022 virtual exhibition focusing 'Feminine Lives'.³

However, in addition to being a digital oral history initiative, this was also an arts-based research methodology. Its aim was to explore the intricate, emotional and subjective uses of the arts to creatively challenge and effectively combat long-standing dynamics of violence against women in Maré. Building on findings from other creative methods adopted in this project – particularly in terms of how women have been increasingly identified as protagonists in many of the community's historical struggles for better living conditions (see McIlwaine et al., 2022) – the digital storytelling approach was also intended to revisit the community history of Maré as a territory built by women, collating lived experiences of these ten women who develop artistic and collective engagement initiatives to improve the lives of Maré's residents of all genders. This is the focus of this report.

2. Methodology

Transforming a person's life story into a 'performance of an intangible heritage' capable of travelling as social rather than individual memory is the primary task of the Social Memory Technology frameworks (Worcman and Garde-Hansen, 2016: 1). To reconstitute a social history from heritages that multiple life stories unfold and to preserve these memories as archives in a museum, respecting its personal value at the same time that it is made available to the world. It is a difficult task but also a vital one for ordinary people to take ownership of their collective narratives in times of cultural massification that increasingly obliterates local existences and modes of living.

¹ An international collaboration between King's College London, Redes da Maré/Casa das Mulheres da Maré, the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and People's Palace Project and Queen Mary University of London, with funding from the British Academy, through the GCRF-Global Challenges Research Fund (Heritage, Dignity and Violence programme). For more information and publications about this project, visit:

<https://transnationalviolenceagainstwomen.org>

² Museu da Pessoa is a virtual and collaborative museum that documents around 20,000 life stories with photographs, documents and videos. Visit the museum at: <https://acervo.museudapessoa.org/>

³ Visit the digital exhibition at: <https://vidasfemininas.museudapessoa.org/>

Memorializing the ‘smallest of objects and the most intimate personal memories’ became an important goal of the project *Resisting violence, creating dignity*. It is both an end in itself as well as a means to investigate more about the nuances of how women resist gender-based violence in urban margins that are so deeply affected by inequality, state neglect and urban conflicts. For this, partnering with Museu da Pessoa was crucial.

The partnership was structured around methodological transference, capacity building in Maré, and co-creation of research the design among all partners. Four initial training workshops were designed to engage ten female researchers in Maré, which were recruited by Redes da Maré to be trained and participate in the entire curatorial process. The process itself was then co-designed with these participants. The workshops were planned to cover a wide range of practice-oriented methodological discussions for the conducting of in-depth biographic interviews; curation of interviewees for the formation of the digital archive; the production of summary videos to be displayed in the virtual exhibition ‘Feminine Lives’.

As an expert partner institution who originally created the methodology of Social Memory Technology, the team at Museu da Pessoa facilitated the workshops. However, following the fundamental principles of Social Memory Technology, in terms of fostering autonomy and ownership among the subjects whose memories are recorded, the workshops and the methodological adaptations were developed through co-creation with the partner institutions. This involved close communication between teams based both in Brazil and the UK, which initially took place exclusively online in times of COVID-19.

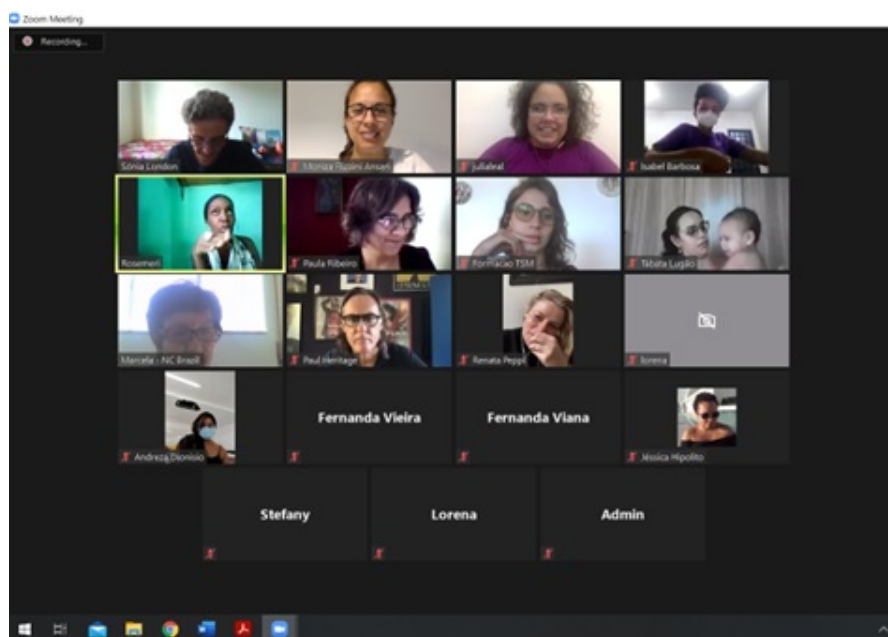


Figure 1: Online workshop 1, May 2021

The first workshop took place on May 14, 2021 with the aim of getting participants to experience sharing their own stories and building of a sense belonging to a working group. The work plan was presented by the Museu da Pessoa: i. presentation of the registers of life stories; ii. selection of the ten women to be interviewed; iii. methodological transference of the Social Technology of Memory; iv. presentation of the methodology of oral history; v. process of organization of the archives. In this meeting, two digital participatory tools were presented as a basis for the work ahead. The first was

directed to collectivize the group's understanding about its scope and goals and the second d to the participatory curation of the women to be interviewed and incorporated into the digital archive. These digital tools ensured that the process was a collective endeavour of co-creation, being made available for permanent editing by all.

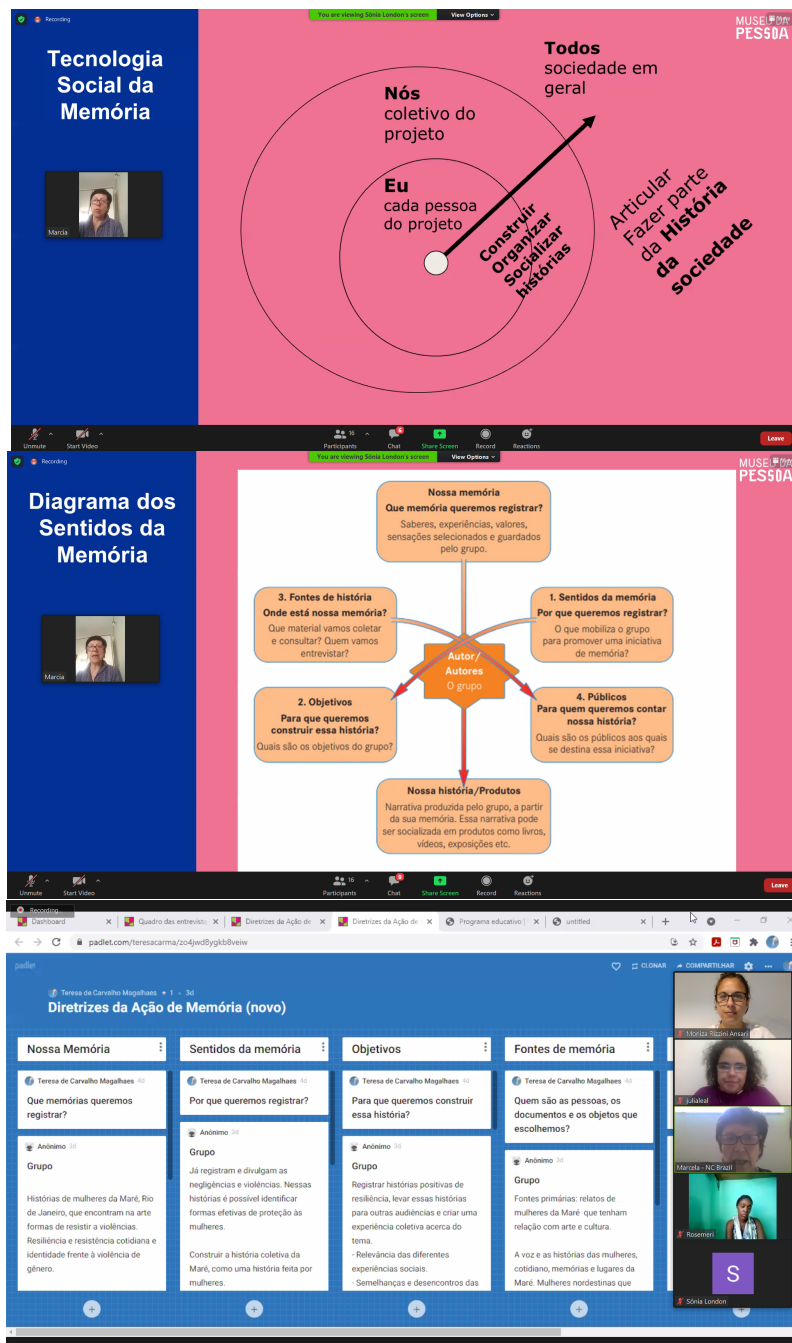


Figure 2: Online workshop 2, May 2021

On 21 May 2021, the second workshop was held to discuss collectively both the digital participatory tools and the guidelines for the anticipated construction of social memory by women in Maré. It was jointly established that the aim would be to record the life stories of women in Maré who found ways of resisting gendered violence through various artistic expressions and, simultaneously, to retrace the community history of Maré as a territory built by women. Also in this workshop, important aspects

were defined such as criteria for the curation of participants to secure representation of key profiles of women in Maré, in terms of racial backgrounds, sexuality, family migration history (namely migrants from the Northeast of Brazil), and the diversity of forms of engagements with art and with community-building struggles in Maré.

During the third workshop, held on May 28, 2021, it was decided that each of the women involved in training would participate in one of the 10 interviews along with the Museu da Pessoa team, as a form of offering first hand guidance and experience. The criteria for selecting the women to be interviewed were continuously revised, as was the script for the interviews with questions about the women's engagement with art, their trajectory in Maré and their experiences of confronting gendered violence. Methodological strategies were also discussed in terms of the interviewer's role and specific guidelines on the formulation of questions during the interviews, preventing sensitive emotional triggers or excessive directing of the testimonies.

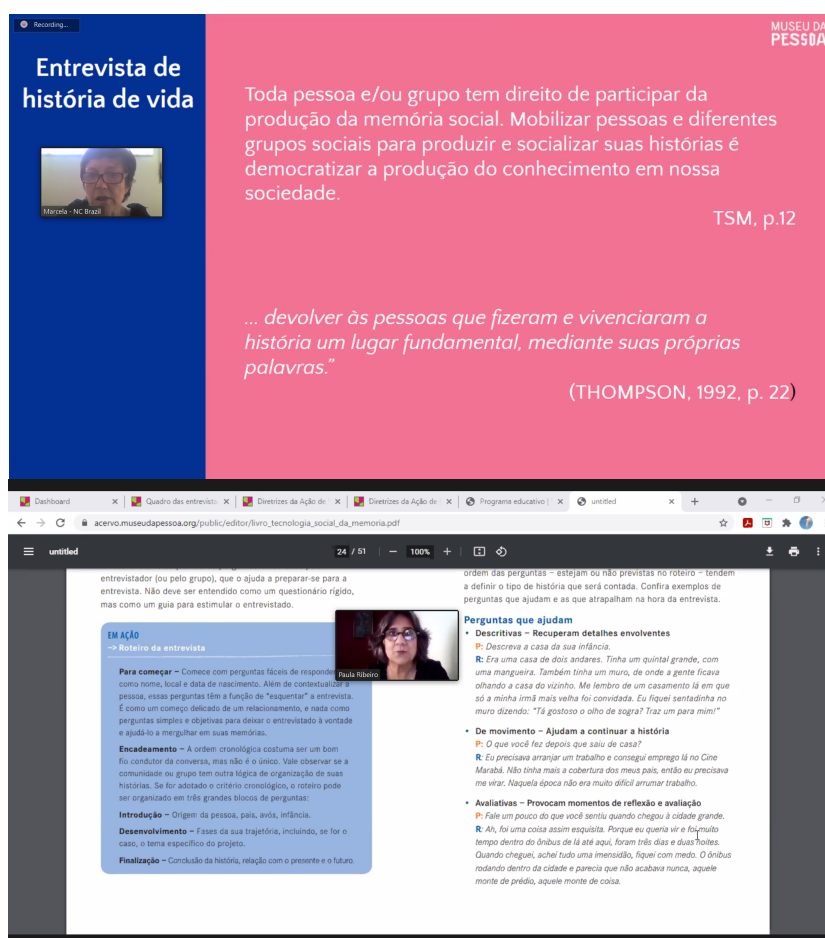


Figure 3: Online workshop 3, May 2021

The fourth workshop took place on June 11, 2021, at which time the final list of participants and the interview script was consolidated. The participants were encouraged to think about the nuances of the interviewing practice, the choice of words and ways to encourage detailed testimonies, without pressuring or influencing the women. In this workshop, techniques of digital archiving and audio-video production were also covered.

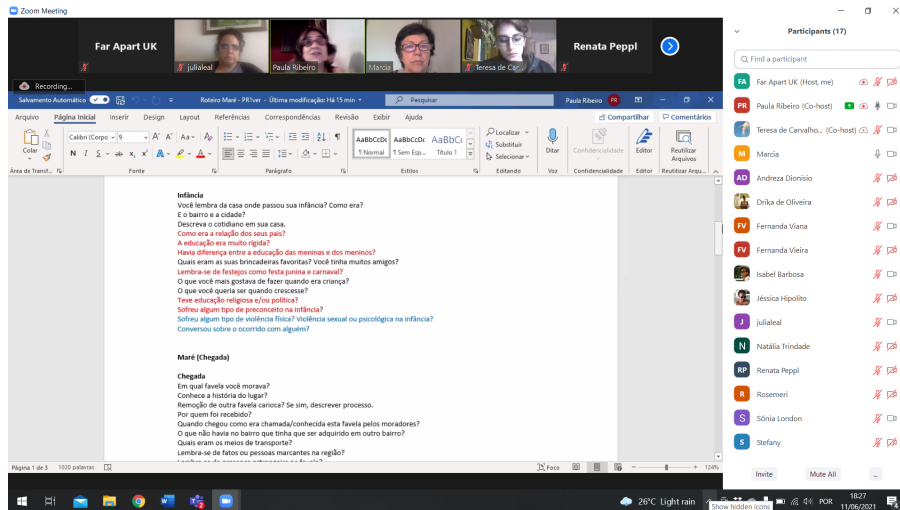


Figure 4: Online workshop 4, June 2021

The actual interviews were conducted in July and August 2021, in Maré. At each of the 10 sessions of recording, there was a researcher from Museu da Pessoa, one from Redes da Maré as well as audio-visual producers in charge of the technical aspects of recording the interviews. Scheduled for a period of lower rates of COVID-19 dissemination risk in Rio de Janeiro, everyone involved was tested prior to attending each session, with Redes da Maré having established a pioneering free testing centre in Maré. Other safety measures were also observed following all government guidelines, such as ventilation, sanitizing and wearing masks. The long duration of the interviews, designed to cover biographic details of each participant, made this a long and intense process but also extremely rich for both the professionals involved and the participants themselves, as will be discussed in Section 5 in this report.

After the interviews, a collaborative curatorial process was organised for transcripts reviews and definition of cuts for the editing of the final outputs. Each trained researcher was involved in curating the interviews which they co-conducted, providing a beginning-to-end research experience. The editing process also involved participation from the interviewees themselves, in terms of revising the material and being able to request changes to the cuts and selections. All 10 participants approved the final version of their videos before they were launched in the virtual exhibition ‘Feminine Lives’, in February 2022.

In Sections 3 and 4 we explore the ten life stories collected through this experience of digital story telling. We begin with the broad picture of Maré as a community built by women, focusing on their collective narratives – that we extract from reading the ten stories transversally – of how women in Maré use art as resistance to gendered urban violence. Subsequently, we examine each individual story highlighting the personal memories shared by each participant of how they found their way of combating violence and injustice through art.

Table 1: Profile of participants: women artists in Maré

	Age	Race	Favela Maré	in	Artistic engagements and work background
Rafaela Otaviano Feitosa	41	Parda/ Afroindígena	Parque União		Artisan and entrepreneur. Producer of sustainable fashion, seamstress and freelance artisan, produces in her studio "By Rafa". Creator of the brand @gastronomiaafetivabymaré and "Made in Maré".
Lenice Viegas Silva	26	Preta	Parque União		Dancer and founder of the BalleTransforma project. Student of dance at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Professional make-up artist and author of the e-book "A step-by-step guide to self make-up". Teacher of the Zouk dance style at an academy in Maré.
Jurema Onofre de Souza	75	Preta	Nova Holanda		Seamstress and hairdresser. She participated in the construction of and was a member of the Unidos de Nova Holanda carnival block, later transformed into the Gato de Bonsucesso Samba School.
Luana da Silva Bezerra	36	Preta	Baixa Sapateiro	do	Ballet dancer and instructor. Creator of the Arts Lab at Casa das Mulheres da Maré. Graduated with a degree in dance and integrated within the Lia Rodrigues Dance Company. She created the shows "A body was found" (2018) and the video-performance "Sobre-Viventes" (Women of the World WOW Festival - 2020).
Juliana Oliveira Junqueira de Aguiar	24	Preta	Fogo Cruzado		Violinist and teacher. She currently teaches music at the headquarters of the Maré do Amanhã Orchestra project and at public schools in Maré.
Beatriz Virgínia Gomes Belmiro	24	Preta	Conjunto Esperança		Slam singer and poet. Historian, Masters student at COC-Fiocruz, teacher at CEASM, volunteer in the 'Frente Maré'.
Iraci Rosa da Lima	81	Preta/ Afroindígena	Nova Holanda		Popular singer and songwriter registered with the Order of Musicians of Brazil. Writes about love, God and the Rio favela.
Priscilla Monteiro de Andrade	35	Preta/ Afroindígena	Morro Timbau	do	Actress and psychologist. Co-founder of the theatre company "Cia Marginal" and part of the organization "Espaço Casulo". She plays tamborim in the carnival group "Bloco Se Benze Que Dá".
Jaqueline Souza de Andrade	36	Preta	Nova Holanda		Actress and social worker at the organisation Conexão G. Member of Cia Marginal. Social worker at the Centre for the Promotion of LGBTI Citizenship in Maré (Rio without LGBTIphobia Programme).
Roseni Lima de Oliveira	64	Preta	Nova Holanda		Carnival designer in the "Bloco Mataram Meu Gato" and author, among others, of the themes "O Mundo Encantado da Criança" and "O Gato conta e encanta com a Estrela". Community health agent.

3. Art as resistance to gendered urban violence: conceptual reflections

While elsewhere we have conceptualised resistance practices among women facing gendered urban violence in the favelas of Maré in Rio de Janeiro (McIlwaine et al., 2022a), we suggest that it is also important to explicitly assess how the creative arts play a role in such mechanisms. Engagements with art forms as a form of resistance has a long history from Rancière's (2004) work on aesthetics and politics to more recent forms of art activism or 'artivism' found across the world, some of which are grassroots-based and others which focus on more traditional creative forms (Serafini, 2018). Artistic expression as a political tool has been especially potent in Latin America throughout the twentieth century (and indeed before) until the present day (Scheper-Hughes and Dalla Déa, 2012). In Brazil in particular, the work of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal have provided firm foundations for how alternative forms of education, theatre and poetry can lead to social transformation (Boal, 2006; Heritage, 1994). Indeed, the work of People's Palace Projects has been key to highlighting the role of the arts in social transformation in Brazil and sharing this with a global audience (Heritage and Steffen, 2022).

The work of People's Palace Projects and others throughout Brazil, Latin America and beyond has also highlighted the importance of working with art in marginalised communities especially in the context of resisting the multiple forms of violence experienced there. In the case of Casa Kolacho in Medellín, Colombia, for example, shows how community-based urban art developed by young people can create resistance to violence and challenge segregation (Torres, 2021). Similarly in Rio de Janeiro, the potential of the arts to help residents living in peripheries to cope and to resist as Heritage (2018: 14) notes with regards to Mare: 'Art can enable them [young people] to begin to express their fears, which are always subjective. We need to create places which express the irrational. We need moments that are about what we are feeling. It is another way of dealing with this context'. The creation of art in the peripheries is also about challenging prevailing perceptions of what art entails and who normally produce it as well as ensuring visibility for residents of these spaces who are so often ignored. Such processes also confront intersectional privilege and allow peripheral subjects ensure agency (Moura and Cerdeira, 2021).

In relation to how women (cis and trans) produce art as resistance to gendered urban violence, it is important to note that feminist art activism has also been burgeoning in Latin America alongside various protest and wider social movements, especially those challenging the multiple forms of violence perpetrated against women in the region. Indeed, the notion of 'Artivismo Feminista (Feminist Artivism)' has been coined to reflect this artistic response to intensifying intersectional inequalities which has 'evolved into a medium of normative contestation, political provocation, and radical rejection of a *machista* (sexist) pattern of social relations (Shymko et al., 2021: 6 with reference to feminist visual arts in Brazil). Using public murals to challenge femicides have become especially important in Latin America (Castañeda Salgado, 2016 on Mexico) as part of wider feminist approaches to collective memorialisation and resistance in the face of gendered violence (Bold, Knowles, and Leach 2002; also Boesten and Scanlon [eds], 2021). Here, it is important to distinguish responses to gender-based violence through more formal forms of artistic expression such as examining the impact of an art exhibition on violence against women and girls (Corcoran and Lane, 2018), and more direct forms whether by artists interpreting experiences of women survivors (McIlwaine, 2021), or women survivors creating the art themselves as a form of resistance (McIlwaine, 2022).

The current project focuses on revealing the ways in which artists from the peripheries of Maré in Rio de Janeiro use a range of creative forms to develop resistance to gendered urban violence. They do this through developing their unique stories allowing us to identify potent uses of the arts to creatively challenge and effectively combat long-standing dynamics of violence against women in Maré, beyond their own individual lived experiences.

We begin by outlining how violence, art and resistance are understood in the context of this research. Gendered urban violence is understood as a multidimensional phenomenon which is not restricted to violence in the private, intimate and domestic spheres but also encompasses the public, urban and institutional dimensions of violence. In fact, contexts of tolerated gendered violence in the public sphere often lead to further perpetration of direct violence against women and girls in the private sphere, in terms of supporting its impunity and indeed normalisation. A key dimension of this relates to how indirect structural violence connected to poverty and inequality underpins 'gendered urban violence' and processes of gendered exclusion from urban infrastructures which, in turn, deepen women's marginalisation in the city. More recent work by feminist scholars has begun to address this, highlighting how lack of access to safe urban infrastructure is not only a form of violence in itself, but can also lead to further perpetration of direct violence against women which is further mediated by other social identities (Datta & Ahmed, 2020; McIlwaine and Evans, 2022; McIlwaine et al, 2021; McIlwaine et al., 2022a).

Moreover, gendered urban violence is intimately affected by other intersectional burdens such as race, class, sexual orientation and identities, religion, among other socially constructed categories, which influence not only the experience of violence, but also the possibilities of access to care and protection networks. Thus, the various forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, patrimonial) and the contexts of its manifestations (domestic, urban, institutional) stem from factors which have their origin in a patriarchal, colonial and slave-based society, and which currently materialize in racist, socially excluding, sexist, misogynist, homophobic and transphobic practices. It is based on these premises that we often refer to gendered violence in the plural. Violence against women, trans women and girls cannot be understood solely from a linear and interpersonal dynamic (where only two poles are placed: aggressor and victim). It needs to be construed as a structural and institutional phenomenon: an urban phenomenon, historically constructed, marked by social disparities and sanctioned by the State, if not directly caused by State intervention.

Turning to how we have conceptualised art in the current project, the artistic experience is here broadly construed in terms of aesthetic and creative interactions with the world, which are capable of producing collective and affective engagements, and are materialized through the most diverse forms of expression. This is how dance, theatre, sewing, music, cooking, make-up and hair styling, literature, poetry, samba, slamming among other forms of experiencing and sensitively intervening in the world, reveal themselves as artistic engagements. Women in Maré develop key artistic engagements which are motivated by a perceived need to 'do something' in order to both cope and create change in the community.

In turn, drawing on other aspects of the research we name as resistance, practices developed by women to counter and combat the different types of violence they suffered throughout their life course as well as others in their community (see McIlwaine et al., 2022a, 2022b; Lopes-Heimer et al. 2022). Research in a wide range of contexts has shown how state services for women survivors of gendered violence often fail them (Brickell 2015). Indeed, informal disclosure and inventive tactics to

respond to situations of violence are generally more common than more formal reporting in Maré (McIlwaine et al., 2022a). Recognising these pathways to combat violence as valid and, in fact, effective within the contexts of state neglect and armed urban conflict in Maré, is to acknowledge the potency and agency of women. This also provides a useful perspective to capture the experiences of women survivors of direct and indirect gendered violence in ways that move beyond analyses of women's individual failure to report or seek help which can often amount to 'victim-blaming'.

With the aim to demonstrate a collective narrative, we turn to how the ten artistic women interviewed in Maré established powerful connections between their various artistic engagements, developed throughout their lives, and combatting multiple forms of gendered urban violence they faced and witnessed in their lives. Exploring the ten stories transversally allows us to underscore these themes in a collective weaving of their testimonies. Before we turn to examine the women's stories in-depth where we focus on each woman in turn, we outline some of the key themes that emerge from them.

4. Women artists resisting gendered urban violence: collectively weaving their testimonies

Forms of violence experienced

Regarding experiences of gendered urban violence, multiple forms emerged in their narratives involving social and structural dimensions rather than individualised phenomena. The main forms of violence were associated with: financial and social vulnerability; exploitation and precariousness of women's work; evictions and favela removals; precarious sanitation infrastructure and basic conditions for housing or lack of access to housing; restrictions in circulation and violence against women within the city; armed violence; domestic violence; racism; machismo and homophobia; as well as the harmful effects on women's physical and mental health from their experiences of direct and indirect violence.

In terms of financial and social vulnerabilities, women artists referred to the hardships of informal work, precarious and stressful jobs as well as the overload of work that women take for the livelihood of their families. It is evident that families in Maré face poverty. The 2013 Census of Maré indicated high levels of poverty, inequality and public insecurity, with many residents working in informal or self-employment (Redes da Maré, 2013). Yet, the women's testimonies offered much deeper understanding of how poverty and social vulnerability have been part of their family histories and shaped their worldviews and motivations in life. Many of these women recounted how their parents' or grandparents' migration to Maré decades ago determined their lives and of descending generations. It was not uncommon for mothers and grandmothers to have been responsible for this family move, creating a strong reference figure for women. Many families migrated from other regions of Brazil, mainly the Northeast, to Rio de Janeiro in search of better living conditions and ended up settling in favelas resulting in an expressive North-eastern culture in Maré (Redes da Maré, 2013). However, women recounted that their upbringing was marked by the absence of parents at home as parents tried to work their way out of poverty, as well as by their own premature initiations in work experiences as children which consequently led many to interrupt their studies at early age.

Many other women shared a family history of forced migration from other favelas of Rio de Janeiro and eventual resettlement in Maré. This was associated with processes of favela removals – or slum clearances – as a historical and ongoing urban development policy in Rio de Janeiro which evicted

families from their homes and communities to be resettled further away from the city centre. Maré's urban formation is intimately linked to such State interventions of removals and resettlements in the city. Women whose families were subjected to it, recounted how their childhood memories are marked by family losses and the inadequacy of sanitary conditions for housing. They often addressed the resulting legacy of forgetting and a history of erasure of entire communities, making important associations with historical deletions of black history in Brazil in the context of centuries of slavery and racist oppression. The retention of memories, on the other hand, was a key motivator of many of these women's involvement with the arts and their uses of art as a form of resistance, i.e., of remembering, recording and disseminating community history in Maré.

Related to this, racism was also a form of violence repeatedly mentioned by the participants, as a structural expression of violence with gendered intersections. This emerged across all the shared stories, whether in childhood and school memories; in their points of contact with spaces for artistic training; in their interactions with other students and parents; in accessing university and work domains; in their experiences in cultural spaces outside Maré; in the distrust and delegitimization of people regarding their artistic work; and in their relationships with their own bodies through the social imposition of racially-charged body standards.

Also connected to this are the themes of police violence, constant fear, childhood vulnerability, home invasions, rights violations and the significant physical and mental health impacts resulting from the permanent exposure to state violence and armed group violence in Maré. These were important dimensions highlighted by the women in their testimonies and reflect a distinctive exposure to violent environments which residents in favelas and urban peripheries face every day (see also McIlwaine et al., 2022a). As a result, the terror of imminent violence and the embodiment of fear are important elements of structural and symbolic violence affecting women in Maré and often dominate their memories and narratives.

Forms of resistance developed

Facing these painful experiences and their traumatic effects, women in Maré develop various inventive practices to cope and resist gendered violence, both individually and collectively as previous stages of this research showed (McIlwaine et al., 2022a; Lopes-Heimer et al., 2022). Also in previous stages, many of these practices had been found to involve engaging with creative initiatives and associating entrepreneurship with artistic skills. In the digital storytelling experience, the fragments of the participants' memories reveal a more direct relationship between artistic engagements and coping with difficult situations. These included the following: a song composed after a difficult separation which led to other songs and unfolded into a trajectory of compositions; engagement in a samba school, created in the territory of Maré, after the rupture of a relationship marked by domestic violence; the search for arts-based social projects as a way to deal with the absence of parents at home; turning to music in school to evade situations of bullying and racism; a poem that surfaced after becoming conscious of forgetting ancestral origins; initiating dance classes to deal with the emotional effects of a family rupture; finding ways to deal with financial vulnerability through artistic labour.

With art being broadly understood – in terms of an aesthetic appropriation of the world and as the power to create modes of living from a relationship with the collective – the memories shared by these women reveal a clear relationship between the experiences of violence, engagement with art as a way to deal with it, even if unconsciously at first, and the creation of modes of resisting violence and caring

for other women by sharing their creative strategies. Composing songs, singing, creating samba entrances, dancing, playing instruments, acting and producing plays, sewing and creating clothing designs, doing other women's hair and make-up, creating poetry, slamming in street events... these are manifestations of art as potency and of the commitment of these women with the struggle for social transformation. Therefore, with regard to resistance, we found that that this can be effectively shaped and disseminated in the conjunction between the engagement with art and the change in life trajectories, with increasingly new forms of dealing with violence and experiencing the collectivization of life and struggles.

In light of this, we argue that processes of resistance are constituted in the relationship with art through developing new paths of existence, new modes of living, new capabilities and forms of work; relationships of abuse and oppression are broken; contact with other people, groups, realities and with other forms of connection with the world are experienced; the formation of new networks and collectivities is made possible; critical reflections on lived experiences emerge; a relationship is reinvented with the commonly shared territory and with its oral history.

These women's life stories show, in different ways, the processes of struggle and resistance built from their artistic engagements, regardless of whether such processes are consciously experienced as ways of confronting violence or not. Among the main points that stand out in their testimonies, it is noticeable that the engagements they built with different artistic expressions made it possible for them to deal with experiences of pain, to elaborate losses, to mourn, to break with dynamics of family violence, to confront prejudice and racism experienced both structurally and in specific situations. The artistic engagement is also presented as a means of subsistence, being for some of these women their main work and the way in which they built independence and financial autonomy.

In the context of favelas, it is particularly relevant how social projects offered by NGOs in Maré and involving arts-based activities and skills training were responsible for the unfolding of turning points in women's lives, often at a very young age. For many, it was also in such projects that they first came across critical discussions about social inequality, racism and gendered violences. These debates ended up shaping their perceptions of Maré, worldviews and, ultimately, their desire to transform their community, thus enabling them to experience protagonism and operating as a seed for the creation of their own future projects in the territory and the construction of autonomous work in the field of the arts.

These women have spoken about the power of art as a tool for confronting the historical oblivion to which black people are subjected, the erasure of their memories and those of their families. Through their artistic work they reveal that they find - and create - bridges with their ancestry, as well as express these narratives to the world. Many of their creative works reveal this dimension, having as an intended direction to tell and reformulate their stories and the stories of the community where they live. One can see in each individual story the construction of various levels of direct critical political engagement through art. If art is captured as a tool of resistance producing life changes by destabilizing enduring effects of violence, in many cases it also reveals a direct and explicit micropolitical struggles built from the artistic engagement.

In this engagement women construct effective counter-narratives that confront the structural racism and sexism that subject their struggles to oblivion and erasure. Through art, they speak of the potencies of Maré and produce new forms of collective perception of this community, calling into

question an established division between the 'inside' of Maré and the 'outside' consisting of the rest of the city of Rio de Janeiro. They critique the social acceptance of segregation of favela territories in relation to what is considered 'the city'. Through art, the tension of the conflictive relationship between favela and city is also a form of struggle against historical forgetting and the construction of collective memories.

Their artistic engagements also produce the desire to invest in the community and many women shared their desire to show to residents of Maré that it is possible to build other life paths. This desire determined their professional choices through the creation of new social projects and, in many cases, led to their ascendance to role models for younger generations. Thus, their artistic work contributes to questioning and confronting the cultural exclusion to which favelas and urban peripheries are subjected, either by the lack of investment in local skills or by the barriers of accessing cultural spaces outside of Maré.

Moreover, their trajectory with art has also produced effects on their educational path, including the pursuit of university education which, for some, has become an investment in themselves as artists. Art also brings into question the insidious educational exclusion for women in favelas and the historical inequality of access to spaces for education, especially higher education. Their artistic engagements also produce new possibilities of self-perception and value. Through art, they say they perceive themselves as stronger, more capable, braver and more determined. Hence, art becomes a tool for the empowerment of women in the recognition of their strengths as favela women and the joy found in art is also a dimension of resistance.

Finally, the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic were also present in these women's storytelling. For some, art enabled key ways of evading the harmful subjective effects of confinement and social isolation, of losses and widespread sadness. Furthermore, for some women, the continuity of their artistic work and of their creative transformation enabled their financial subsistence during the socioeconomic crisis derived from the pandemic.

Confirming previous findings within this research project (McIlwaine et al. 2022b), the central roles of women as providing community foundations for struggle, strength, support and presence stand out. These roles are striking in the memories shared: grandmothers, mothers, sisters, cousins, neighbours, teachers, schoolmates and friends are protagonists in the trajectories of these artistic women combatting gendered violence. The community network of women thus emerges as a collective fabric of resistance.

5. Ten stories of women's resistance to gendered urban violence through art in Maré

In this section, excerpts from the life stories of the women are presented, focusing on the construction of their relations with art and on the processes of resistance to gendered urban violence. The women's narratives reveal the diversity from which the artistic experience is understood – through sewing, samba, rhyme and slam poetry, dance in its most diverse styles, theatre, music. It is through their narratives that individual experiences are woven into a collective testimony, where memories about a living territory, about violence and about struggles create a common history.

Rafaela Otaviano Feitosa

Producer of sustainable fashion, seamstress and freelance artisan, produces in her studio "By Rafa". Creator of the brand @gastronomiaafetivabymaré and of "Made in Maré".

“ We've created a logo (Made in Maré), to name the products made within the favela, made by someone from the favela, someone who was raised in Maré and that really wants Maré to be known for what it really is.

RAFAELA FEITOSA



Rafaela Otaviano Feitosa, daughter of Maria Otaviano de Carvalho and Francisco Saraiva Feitosa, both born in the state of Ceará, was born on May 15, 1980. She speaks fondly of her paternal grandmother, who was indigenous, and says she is the one from whom "she got the colour and the features". Both her father and her mother migrated to Rio de Janeiro in search of work. In the 1970s, she and her siblings joined them they went to live in Maré in a street that was still a dirt track.

Rafaela says she suffered strong emotional impacts with the death of her father, which occurred when she was still a child. She developed speech problems and different episodes of illness. Her mother decided, then, to go to Maré, a city in the interior of Rio de Janeiro, where she had relatives, to be able to support her two daughters. Later they returned to Maré and lived for over twenty years in the same house on Rua da Paz.

Remembering [my father], I don't remember. But what my mother talks about him, he was a perfectionist, he was a painter, sometimes he was a foreman that commanded the staff, and when he got to the bar he was very well known, he was always very popular, he bought beer for everyone.

Her mother was a seamstress and worked on Teixeira Ribeiro Street, where there was a clothing factory. Rafaela stated that when she was a child, she really wanted to learn how to sew, but her mother would not let her because she said it was a very exhausting and painful job.

...in large part she raised us with a homemade machine, I think it was my father who gave it to us [...]. Then when she got up from the machine, the time she went to the bathroom, like there was only one side to sew, my feet could barely reach the pedal [...] When she returned, she found it strange, and my sister didn't say anything, until the day she saw it and said: ah, I'll teach you properly. [...]

And every now and then I remember [the first piece I made], which was for the sister-in-law of my sister, she was still a very young girl, she didn't have the caipira dress to go to school [...] So I spliced a bunch of scraps, fringed them, made a little waist, I got some leftover lace and put it on the hem of the dress. I asked my mother to help me make that fluffy sleeve, I put a ribbon to tie the waist, and a pretty little neck. It was the first outfit I ever made. I was about thirteen years old.

At school Rafaela took an embroidery workshop that was offered to students and says that her mother, seeing what she had done and without ever having taught her how to embroider, said that she had rescued the skills of her aunts from Ceará. "My mother, when she saw it, said I looked like her aunts, it's in the blood, there's no way, it's what you know how to do."

Rafaela's first job was looking after two children whose mother worked outside the home. She served lunch, washed dishes, got the children ready for school and cleaned the house. At sixteen she became the mother of Carlos Eduardo Feitosa da Silva and decided to interrupt her studies during pregnancy, because she did not want to be judged at school. She says that her mother always supported her so that she did not have to work during Carlos' first year of life.

My mother gave me what I needed, I did not ask him [the child's father] for anything, although he always said that if I needed I should ask. But as I was raised by a woman who didn't ask for anything from anyone, my mother also hoped that I wouldn't ask either, she would provide it herself.

She recounts that her first formal job was as a saleswoman in the factory where her mother had worked and where only women were employed and she soon got her registration as a seamstress. After five years, when she was 22 years old, she left and bought a sewing machine.

A seamstress has never earned very much, it's always a job that is very exploited in the factory, too much so, what's most valuable to us is when the piece is ready, that's what counts. [...]

And then when I left that factory [...] I bought a new machine at the shop, an industrial machine, I already had a second-hand one, but I bought a new one, zero motor, everything new [...] I decided I was going to work at home.

Rafaela recollected that she put a sign on the door of her house announcing her repairs service. A girl she did not know passed by and said that her boss was looking for someone to work in her fashion studio. Rafaela said that this was a vote of confidence so she went to the studio, and although she had no experience in producing pieces, she began working there.

[...] when this [first] year had passed I was already making the pieces that were going to the Fashion Week show and they were pieces of big brands, even internationally. [...] I remember one that Gisele Bündchen wore at Fashion Week. I don't remember the year either, but I think it was after a year of working there for her [the owner of the studio], she already felt confidence in my work. She said: - we don't have a modeler anymore, can you do it, Rafa? Me: - yeah, we can try. I always say, we can try, and then the surprise at the end.

[...]

It got to a point where I did the piece that was chosen to do the commercials, to do the photos. When we went to the mall, I would say, you see that shirt in the picture Luigi Baricelli is wearing, I made it myself.

After a ten-year period working in that studio, she felt her health was being damaged by the excessive workload. This was the stimulus for her to start thinking about making her own pieces, instead of 'giving her life' working for other people.

I started making bags, practical day-to-day bags and cases.

[My sister] helped me with the first name, By Rapha, which is 'Made by Rapha', which will read in any language. She helped me a lot in the beginning, she always supported me in everything.

One day, after having already developed her brand, Rafaela recalls she was sitting on a bus and saw a container where "Made in France" was written and she got thinking that there should be something to mark what is made in Maré. That would show how Maré is not what the media says, it is not only violence, it is also power. Born and raised in Maré, she saw the whole process of growth of its territory and the struggle for change. She said that violence exists, but that it was not "my Maré, [it] is not here. Violence enters here".

She started to develop other actions along with her projects to help people who were going through vulnerable situations. Inspired by a childhood memory of her mother making patchwork blankets for the cold when she could not afford to buy them ready-made, she developed blankets from jeans to distribute to homeless people. She used Facebook to spread the word and ask for donations of material and received so many that she also created bags to replace the use of plastic shopping bags. She continues to make monthly distributions of clothes and food to homeless people.

During the pandemic, Rafaela decided to contribute with the production of cloth masks. For every two that were sold, she donated a mask. Afterwards, projects that financed the production of masks for donation began to appear. This helped to sustain her during critical periods of restricted activities.

Her experience with Redes da Maré was through a project which offered yoga classes. She has been participating in this project for six years as a student and plans to become an instructor in the future. From this project she was invited to participate in others, such as ballroom dancing, percussion workshops, among others. During the gastronomy course she took at the Casa das Mulheres, she produced capes, shirts and aprons for the other members.

It was through the Casa das Mulheres that she was invited to participate in the WOW Women of the World Festival,⁴ where she was able to widely disseminate her work. She also participated in a training process of cultural production for forty young people selected within Maré and which was part of the Building the Barricades initiative.⁵

Lenice Silva Viegas

Dancer and founder of the BalleTransforma project. Student of dance at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Professional make-up artist and author of the e-book "A step-by-step guide to self make-up". Teacher of the Zouk dance style at an academy in Maré.

“Dance has made me strong in ways that, if I’ve never done it before, I wouldn’t have the courage to accomplish other things, I wouldn’t have the courage to go beyond, you know?”

LENICE VIEGAS



Lenice Silva Viegas was born on 20 December 1994, the daughter of Damiana Silva Viegas and Janor Viegas Figueiredo. Her mother is from Rio de Janeiro and works as a seamstress and her father is from Bahia and works as a bricklayer and electrician. She has a sister, ten years older, called Jeane Viegas Silva.

During her interview, she said that her mother was the eldest of eight siblings and that she stopped studying before finishing primary school, because she started working as a rubbish collector to help

⁴ <http://www.festivalmulheresdomundo.com.br/>

⁵ <https://peoplespalaceprojects.org.uk/en/projects/building-the-barricades/>

support the household and with the upbringing of her siblings. Her paternal grandfather was a violent man, but her mother told her little about her family history. Lenice perceived this silence as a form of resistance to pain.

Lenice remembered that her grandparents were part of the construction of Maré, that after her parents' marriage the family moved to Queimados, but that they returned when her older sister was little. She said she still remembers the houses on stilts, wooden houses that stood over the water and how the houses often flooded when the tide was high. When she was eleven years old, her parents separated after family relations at home became conflictual.

Lenice had had her first contact with music and dance at the age of five, at the Parque União Baptist Church. There she participated in plays, dance, sang in the choir, and played the violin and the flute. With the divorce, her mother got depressed and her older sister had to take care of her. They decided to enrol her (Lenice) in a ballet class at the Maré Olympic Village: "It was through pain that ballet came into my life". During her account she spoke of the importance of her sister for her entry into the world of arts.

My sister played the drums, she was a theatre leader, a choreography leader, one of the people responsible for introducing me to this side of things. My sister has a degree in theatre, she has various specialisations, so she was one of the people who led me to this more artistic side.

After a short period in the Olympic Village, Lenice got a scholarship at the Slava Goulenko⁶ dance school on Ilha do Governador, where she stayed for eight years.

In classical ballet we have a history of structure. To become a professional ballet dancer you need to start young and go through various stages within classical ballet to reach the advanced class. So, I arrived half way through [...] without any technical basis, knowing only the dance that I learnt from life, the fun dance at home, the dance inside the church [...] I came in and threw myself into it, started to train a lot, and advanced very quickly [...] and the opportunity arose to join the advanced class. [...] My teachers saw a light in me that even I didn't see, they believed in me in such a way that I didn't really believe that I could be capable.

She remembers episodes of prejudice she suffered in dance school for being a scholarship student and for being from the favela. She says that there was a distance between her and the other students and that her mother and sister heard the parents of the students complaining to the teachers that a scholarship student was participating in choreographies that their daughters were not. She also remembers the financial difficulties they went through with the costs of equipment and participation in competitions and festivals. With her father absent and without financial support, her mother and sister started to produce products to sell during the festivals.

My biggest supporters were my mother and my sister. You asked if my mother supported this. My mother is a supporter, you have already seen that I am in love with this woman, but it's because she is, always, since childhood, she always encouraged us to try everything, she said that whatever we liked to do, she would support it.

⁶ <https://www.slavagoulenko.com.br/>

The episodes of prejudice from parents and students made Lenice decide to leave the school in 2012. She recalled that she began to doubt her ability and potential as a result of what she heard.

I didn't have money to pay for my whole outfit, I didn't have money to pay for the whole monthly fee, this influenced my friendships, it was no wonder that I became very friendly with the people who were dancers there and were from the favela of Ilha do Governador, because they also felt that way.

She recalls that when she was fifteen years old, she went to a public school in Copacabana, a turning point in her understanding as a woman, because that was when she realized that there was specific violence against women in the world especially on transport.

[I started to go through situations where I felt afraid that my friends did not. [...] I had to make this route every day in the morning, and I went through situations of being stopped by a guy and I was afraid to pass and I would have to go back and change the route [...]. But in truth the one who was feeling afraid was me to be able to go to school, I went and came back by bus, I went alone and came back with my friends who lived here to Maré too [...]. But that's when I started to feel more of a woman in the world, more of a woman in these issues of violence against us.

She also remembered her parents' difficulties during this period:

[...] My parents couldn't afford to buy many uniforms for me. So, the little that we had, we tried to preserve, socks sometimes had holes in them and we pretended that it was a style, that we didn't care about those torn socks. Trainers were sometimes 3 years old, but they lasted longer than that, if the sole was stuck together, we used them...

After leaving dance school in 2012, she decided to try other types of dances and explore being a teacher. The decision to leave was marked by a period of distrust about her own capacity and in the following years she experienced a process of reconnection with her power. She said that this was a period when she realized how dance and encounters with inspiring teachers changed her life trajectory showed her the possibility of impacting the lives of other people.

I think that this period gave me the courage to start a social project. This period was for me to rediscover myself and rediscover my potential [...] I left school because I doubted my talent, doubted my courage [...] So, this period made me develop the teacher side of Lenice Viegas that was not yet present. [...] I started to teach ballet, I started to work in public schools [...] it was then that I saw that I liked something that I was running away from, because I used to say that I was never going to be a dance teacher because I wanted to be a ballerina. My dream was to be a ballerina, but I saw myself on another side [...] which is to be a dance teacher.

During this period, Lenice worked at the Ballet Manguinhos and recalled moments when they had to teach on the floor, run away with the children, have their space invaded by the police or even all take refuge in the bathroom during shootouts. This produced many reflections on the violations they suffered for living in favelas and the positive impact that projects in the field of art could produce in the lives of children.

Lenice created the BalleTransforma project in 2017, and perceived it as a turning point in her life, a point of courage. She subsequently entered the dance degree course at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), with the desire to study further the relationship between dance and education.

I started [the project] when I was twenty-one and I opened it when I was twenty-two [...] a child that had just left adolescence, a lot of things, to be able to take on a responsibility like this, and be a reference within the favela for other children, for other women [...] So, I am the founder of the BalleTransforma project, that's how it started with courage, with much fear and much trepidation.

[...] Today we have already helped more than 150 students from Maré. [In the beginning of the project, I learned and met a new Lenice, a braver woman and a woman who could go beyond. Dance formed me in a way that if I hadn't gone through it, if I hadn't gone through the project I wouldn't have the courage to do other things, I wouldn't have the courage to go beyond, you know?

So, what was supposed to end in a month, we are now in 2021 [...] something that was supposed to last thirty days is still here today, and I see that my objective is being concluded. [...]

I think that what we learn in dance we take with us to life. So in my classes I value this, so that each student that comes in there develops technically and also has the autonomy to be an individual.

Lenice also spoke of the importance of another turning point in her trajectory, another point of courage. In dance performances, as she could not afford a professional make-up artist, she started doing make-up herself. She graduated as a makeup artist in 2016, but with the demands of the project and college, she only resumed this activity in 2019, when she became a professional makeup artist.

With the onset of the pandemic, it was art that kept her going. She danced alone at home and makeup became her means of financial support.

Make-up kept me going, dancing kept me alive. I danced alone, I gave classes to my students, and I began to practice more makeup and enter the world of the Internet professionally [...] I started to record videos because I am a little bit shameless, my mother says I have no shame, I took advantage of this to make a positive point.

In the first year of the pandemic, she trained more than 90 women in a course on self-make-up. She said that for this entry into the world of digital entrepreneurship, she used many lessons learned during the construction of her ballet project. She also highlighted the scarcity of products and professionals specializing in black skin.

Most of my students in these make-up courses are black women and one of the difficulties is that the foundation turns grey in the skin. So, we started to study [...] the colorimetry within the makeup that was little talked about. [...] So the [foreign] foundations are not made, specific for us, with Brazilian black skin tones. Bruna Tavares is a makeup brand [...] one of the references today on foundation shades. She has developed more than 70 shades [...] where she has included shades for black skin, it is the only brand that has such a complete shade and has covered so much.

She tells us about her own racialisation process and how art, through make-up, played an important role in it.

For a long time I was very confused about what I could consider myself, since I'm brown on my birth certificate, right? And then it starts with that: "you're too light to be black, but you're also too dark to be white". So, what are we? [And for a long time I didn't know what to consider myself, so I said I was brown. Today I consider myself black, perhaps because of the history of make-up that made me study the different shades and tones of skin that exist, including black skin tones, so today I consider myself black, I consider myself black.

Jurema Onofre de Souza

Seamstress and hairdresser. She participated in the construction of and was a member of the Unidos de Nova Holanda carnival block, later transformed into the Gato de Bonsucesso Samba School.

“ It was pure joy, as we didn't have any means to go outside the favela to go to the movies, go somewhere else...The samba here gave us joy, a lot of joy to many people, and they still say to this day: we miss the Gato de Bonsucesso - the local carnival block party.

JUREMA DE SOUZA



Jurema Onofre de Souza was born on 23 November 1952, the daughter of Jacy Sales and Mauricio Onofre. Her mother was a domestic worker and her father a civil servant. She is the mother of Carlos Edelson Onofre de Souza, Elisa Onofre de Souza, Carmen Lúcia Onofre de Souza, Paulo César de Souza Freitas, Ana de Souza Freitas and Wagner de Souza de Oliveira. Jurema spoke of how her paternal grandmother came from Africa, was an umbandista and a healer.

As a child she lived in the Favela do Esqueleto, located in the current Rio de Janeiro State University, in Maracanã. The place was so called because it was an occupation that was structured around the unfinished construction of the hospital of the National Social Security Institute, which had been interrupted in the 1930s. In the 1960s, during the Carlos Lacerda government, the people who lived in the Esqueleto favela were removed to different peripheral spaces in the city, one of them being Maré.

They put a cloth over the side [where there should have been walls] so that the wind wouldn't blow in, so that nothing could get in, they put pieces of wood, and there are people who used to live in there.

Jurema said they arrived in Maré to live in Nova Holanda and that she remembers the transformations that the place went through little by little, with the arrival of asphalt and electricity. She spoke of how before there were shacks on wood, called *palafitas*, and that it was common for people to sell the fish they caught right there. She also remembered that her grandmother looked after her and her siblings while her mother worked as a maid in residences in the southern part of the city.

A lot of mud, a lot of fleas, because red clay gives you fleas. At the time I was a young girl, there were dances, I would go to the dance and leave with my leg all swollen from so many fleas.

[...]

We didn't have any light, we did things with a lamp. I would wake up in the morning with my nostrils all black, so much smoke [...] Then the electricity came, they put up poles, but when we first came here there was no electricity.

She also recalled that there was no adequate water supply in the region and they had to go to Avenida Brasil to fetch water, with the help of a barrell called a roller.

We had to get water by hand on the rola-rola there on Avenida Brasil. [...] It was a wooden barrel, on the side we made a hole so that water could enter, we put a bolt, we took that iron chest, put it on the sides to roll it around, we fetched water on Avenida Brasil.

Jurema stated that even with the difficulty of accessing water, her mother also worked washing clothes for other people to supplement her income. She would collect the clothes, wash them in a basin, iron them and then deliver them back to the houses. When the clothes were very dirty she remembered that she had a specific way of washing.

A wood fire, she took a twenty [litre] can of water, put the clothes in, put the soap in, let it boil so that the oil stains could get out, and we ironed a lot with charcoal [...] we had no [electric] energy, and to iron the clothes of others, we took a charcoal stove, put the ember on [...] sparks went off in every corner. That's how she ironed clothes.

Jurema told of how she and her brothers started working from an early age. After the separation of her parents, at the age of 12, she interrupted her studies and went to work in a family home as a domestic worker. She took care of two children, went to work on Mondays and only returned home on Fridays. She also said that she always liked sewing and that she learned to be a hairdresser from her cousin. In the 1980s and 1990s, young women queued up at her house to have their hair

straightened by her, a straightening method done with an iron, a hot comb and marcel (a type of scissor).

I always liked to sew, since I was young, since I was a little girl. I used to go to Bonsucesso [...] I used to buy fabric there and make my own clothes. I even made clothes for my mother [...] I made them by hand myself, I made some little dresses later for my children. Yes, I learned [to sew] by making dolls' clothes. Until today everyone comes to my house asking me to do hems, asks me to do pencils [...] everything by hand and it does not come loose, it is like a machine.

[...]

Ah, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, the others all wanted to go partying, my house was full, it was very crowded, sometimes there were even fights over turns. People came from down town to get their hair done, people from Parque União came to my house. [...] It was hot iron, hot comb and marcel which is the scissors [...] The person asked [...] on the side or all the way back, and the little marcel scissors that did the curls, curled the bob, applied henna, paint.

Jurema was also a member of the carnival group Unidos de Nova Holanda, where she joined the section of the Baianas. She participated in the transition of the group to the Gato de Bonsucesso samba school, where she contributed with the arrangement of the group, the preparation of the food for the events and the preparation of the hair of the school members during the parades.

Jurema spoke of the difficulties with the violence of the armed confrontations, the effects on her health, and the concern for her children. She also remembered the support network that had always existed among neighbours, and how her mother and grandmother helped those who were more vulnerable.

When a neighbour needed help, they would share a little bit for each one, my mother was always like that [...] my grandmother also helped, if others passed by asking for a little bit of rice, a little bit of beans [...] she would share and give.

Jurema was very pleased to tell her story:

It is because there are many young people now that did not know Nova Holanda, it is good to give this interview for them to know how it was, how it was not, right? [...] The generation that is now about fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years old, did not know the past back there, did not know what the person went through.

Luana da Silva Bezerra

Dancer and dance teacher. Graduated with a degree in dance and integrated within the Lia Rodrigues Dance Company. Among other works, she created the shows "A body was found" (2018) and the video-performance "Sobre-Viventes" (Women of the World WOW Festival - 2020).

“ It is so beautiful what art can accomplish, how a dance class can change someone’s life, someone who has mobility issues, breathing issues. This is really special, to be able to mediate these experiences, I consider it a privilege.

LUANA BEZERRA



Luana da Silva Bezerra, born on May 7, 1985, daughter of Adriana da Silva Police and Paulo Cesar da Silva Bezerra. She identifies Maré as a territory of memories about her relationship with her grandparents. Her paternal grandfather went to Maré during the construction of Avenida Brasil.

I think my memory with them is directly linked to this space, the community of Nova Holanda, where we are now, which is where I come from. [...] They lived first on the 3rd street, which I think is right behind here, then they started to live on J street, Marcelo Machado street, which is this street in front of where we are. That is where I lived the first seven years of my life, in fact my first memories are linked to this space and these people.

When she turned seven years old she moved with her parents to the Paciência neighbourhood, in the west zone of Rio de Janeiro, and her grandparents continued to live in Maré, a space to which she always returned.

Every weekend, by law, it was certain that on Friday I would pack my bag, spend the weekend here, or I would stay with my maternal grandmother, or I would stay with my paternal grandmother, so I would make these trips.

She said that her grandmother gave her the nickname *bandoleira* which today is important for her to think of herself as an artist. One of the meanings of the term *bandoleira* is of a person who looks good anywhere, who has a good sense of humour.

When she was already living in Paciência, a girl from the school where she studied invited her to take a street dance class in a project in Campo Grande: "And that is how art came into my life". She also remembers that in the two schools where she studied, she had teachers and professionals who initiated artistic activities, and there were always dances, presentations and competitions.

It was an NGO called CAMPO, Centro de Apoio ao Movimento Popular da Zona Oeste, and it was there that everything started, so there were classes of screen printing, graffiti, break, street dance [...] pre-vestibular. It was a group [...] that was very engaged in politics, and they were the first steps in understanding social injustice, inequality, understanding my place in the world as a woman, as a black woman, or racialized woman at the time, I think the thing of understanding myself as black came later, but there was something very strong in starting to understand myself in a place in the world.

When Luana joined the project, she realized that she was able to do the dance classes because she was in a space that offered this activity for free, but that she would not be able to afford to occupy paid spaces. She became aware of the inequalities to which she and her colleagues were subjected. Later she got a scholarship to take tap dance classes at the Carlinhos de Jesus Dance House, and from this first scholarship, she fought and obtained others.

My life was basically breaking walls, breaking difficulties, understanding that this is not for me and yet I want to do it. [Do you have to go to the Secretary to ask for a scholarship? Okay, I go there, I used to go myself, when I was thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, eighteen, even today I ask for scholarships, even today I can't pay for some courses, it is a work of breaking down walls all the time, breaking down difficulties, going through this all the time.

In her discussion, Luana told how the first professional dance show in which she participated was in a company called Arquitetura do Movimento, directed by Andrea Jabor. She was one of seven dancers chosen from more than 150 people who participated in the audition. The show was called 'Living Room: the Five Skins of Samba' and was a project dedicated to researching the fundamentals of samba in Rio de Janeiro.

Later, she got a scholarship to integrate the Deborah Colker Dance School,⁷ a space that she considers to have been her greatest learning experience giving her the possibility of being open to perform works outside Brazil. Luana was also part of the Lia Rodrigues Dance Company.

I arrived in Brazil like this: "Where do I want to dance? I think that a bit by intuition, or in a force, a power and a great desire, the only company that interested me and always interested me in Rio, other than the one I used to work for, was Lia Rodrigues⁸ [...] it's a very established and well-known company. [...] Then I said: "I'll send her an e-mail [...]. In the same week she sent me an email: "I would like to invite you to do a performance with us, at

⁷ <https://www.cmdc.art.br/>

⁸ <http://www.liarodrigues.com/>

Casa França Brasil, about 'Hora da Estrela', by Clarice Lispector. [... Afterwards] I did two shows with her, two artistic creations with Lia. The first 'Pindorama' and then 'Para que o Céu não Caia', which was the last play I did with them. I worked in the company for four years.

During her work in the Lia Rodrigues Dance Company she also taught training classes for dance professionals from Maré itself. When she joined the company, only four (and later three) of the eleven members were from Maré. She realised that it was also an investment by Lia Rodrigues that there should be training for people from Maré, so that in the future they could join the group. "To understand that a dance company is in the place where I grew up is very powerful, it's very strong".

Luana spoke with emotion about how incredible it was to be able to perform these shows at Centro de Artes da Maré and to be able to take her grandmother, people from her family, to watch and be able to dialogue with them about art and about her work. This shows how people from favelas and the peripheries do not feel allowed to frequent other spaces in the city and face difficulties ranging from the price of transport to experiences of racism. She also remembered the processes she had to go through in order to study dance at university. She got a 50% scholarship and paid the rest with the money she earned working as a waitress, giving dance classes and asking her father for support. In college she studied artistic creation, the place of the body and the scene in dance.

With the beginning of the pandemic, Luana decided that it was necessary to move even with all the difficulty imposed by the collective health crisis.

I'm going to move, I'm going to put on a camera and I'm going to dance. And that is when Survivors appeared. [...] It is a personal project, it is an initiative, it is my creation, it was from this place of the impossibility of existence itself, of how to manage to have the desire to move [...] I kept this video, five minutes long at first, I decided to post it on Instagram [...] Until the people from Redes invited me to be part of a day, a program that had several videos of women from the community [Women of the World Festival - WOW].

She became the facilitator of a group called Coletiva Maré de Nós, a women's group that unfolded from the experience of the WOW Festival. The Collective developed work on the history of women of Maré, their families, their ancestors on the basis of dance.

So we worked on this, in the practical part, I think my idea was always to sensitize the girls to dance, only one of them had already danced, the others were not dancers specifically, so it was something new for them, a very fragile and difficult place for them to give themselves in to, but it also happened very fast, soon the girls were already adoring it, they were already lying here, we could talk, we could dance, we touched each other a lot, which for me has a lot to do with my personal process, of contouring, of having contour, of having integrity.

In her narrative, Luana reflected on the power of art in the processes of transformation, change and resistance as noted in the introductory quotation.

Juliana Oliveira Junqueira de Aguiar

Violinist and teacher. She currently teaches music at the headquarters of the Maré do Amanhã Orchestra project and at public schools in Maré.

“ *I feel that music is healing me, it's taking away all the hurt. My path is starting to be revealed and I will follow it, I'm gonna walk my own walk.*

JULIANA AGUIAR



Juliana Oliveira Junqueira de Aguiar was born on 5th March 1998, daughter of Luiz Cláudio Junqueira de Aguiar and Cássia Fonseca de Oliveira. Her mother works as a homemaker and her father is a federal civil servant. Her father is visually impaired and her mother has a physical disability; both lost their parents when they were still children. Her parents love dance and they met at a Charme Ball. They moved together to Maré and have lived in the same place for almost thirty years. "I was brought up in this place and they have lived together for almost 30 years, they brought up three children in the same place, they have roots there".

Juliana said that she suffered a lot of bullying and racism at school as a result of her parents' disability and her hair. Her parents always affirmed her blackness and her mother fixed her hair with braids and *miojinho* (ringlets). She said that at that time she was the only one like that in her school.

I just wanted people to see me as someone normal, not as someone who has disabled parents. I was already wearing braids, my mother used to braid my hair, so I was that very black child [...] making our blackness clear. [At school I heard a lot of things from friends like: 'Why are your parents like this? Why do you wear this hair? Is this hair real? Does it wash?]

She says that, despite the often-difficult effects, she always admired her parents for affirming their blackness, their culture, for never having tried to whiten their traditions. She says that her parents

liked to dance hip hop and that when they realized that she liked it too, they took her to the street dance class that was offered at Maré Museum.

Anyway, I remember that I used the living room as my dancing space. And I danced, and my parents realized that I liked dancing [...] And then they said 'There is the Maré Museum, there is dancing there, there is street dance, you could do it. Go and see, let's go and see if you're interested'. And I really liked it, I fell in love with it.

After this first encounter with dance, she remembered that other projects started to appear and she started participating in everything. This helped her at school, going from "weird to popular". When she was twelve years old, Carlos dos Prazeres started a musical project at her school.⁹ Her friends encouraged her to participate too and after a while she decided to go. She said that the choice of the violin was random, her friends told her to choose the cello, but when she got there, she ended up choosing the violin.

We used to have classes in the school, it became an extracurricular activity and the project began to have autonomy, began to grow with this first generation, and I started to be part of the Orchestra [Maré do Amanhã] which was a part of the school [...] Then the bullying began to stop, the prejudice, people wanted to imitate my hair, they wanted to know who did it [...] Then it began to have a different look. [When he [Carlos dos Prazeres] arrived there I was very young, I was interested, I was drawn to the violin [...] I even say that I was saved by the project, in fact I was saved.

Over the years, the orchestra experience grew, and through it she met people, new places, had new experiences. She said that she felt great emotion when she saw that there was a queue of people to attend the orchestra. They even went to Rome with the orchestra to perform for the Pope.

Then we went out, we knew other cultures, we toured, the Orchestra started to grow, then we started to know other states, we started to know theatres, we started to play in these spaces. The Orchestra of Maré playing in the Municipal Theatre and having a line of people to assist us. That was beautiful!

She says that Carlos dos Prazeres managed to fight so that the students of the Orchestra had scholarships for public school to do high school. In 2017, after returning from Rome, they played with Anita,¹⁰ with Gilberto Gil,¹¹ and performed at the Municipal Theatre, among others.

Juliana stated that playing in different places and spaces made her realize differences in receptions from audiences related to prejudice and racism. She spoke of how she often did not feel worthy of playing the violin, as she had no references to black women playing.

In Barra [da Tijuca],¹² for example, we are not well received. Just yesterday in the Caravana [of the Maré do Amanhã Orchestra] the people from the building asked us to stop playing in the neighbourhood, they asked us to leave. In Barra we always have a little problem, they say go play in Madureira, go play in Caxias... And I started to have this feeling of belonging and this

⁹ <https://maredoamanha.org/quem-somos/>

¹⁰ <https://anitta.com.br/>

¹¹ <https://gilbertogil.com.br/>

¹² A middle/upper-class neighbourhood situated in the West of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

started to change me a little, to know where I want to go, what I really want to do here in Maré, and it also helped me to discover who I am.

From this, Juliana related how she realised that she would like to work inside Maré. "My focus was never outside, it was never outside, my focus is here, I started here and I want to finish here". She considered that it is very important that the children in Maré have a reference of someone from their own territory who could learn to play, grow, do concerts outside, have a career with art and music. Juliana currently teaches music at the Maré do Amanhã Orchestra and at schools in Maré: "I don't want to do it just for doing it, I want this to leave a history, I want something nice, I want to feel useful here [...] I want people to see me, I want people to feel me."

Currently Juliana was in a college of music and in addition to graduating as a teacher, she planned to start a degree and specialize in music therapy which she thought was badly needed in Maré.

I was able to understand this now, after years. [...] I not only play the violin, I teach, I am also a psychologist for children without being trained, do you understand? Because here in Maré to be a teacher you also have to be a psychologist because the children come with many problems.

Juliana spoke of her long journey to get where she was. A journey that was not only the activities she has been developing, but also a search for her origins, for the history of her family, so that through these memories she could understand a little of who she is, of her own history.

I need to know who I am, I need to go back to my origins [...] Then I looked for my aunts, who were my father's grandmothers, who are still alive, beautiful [...] How did they get there, who was my grandmother, she liked classical music. [...] So, all this made me say, wow, that's cool! I play a classical instrument, my grandmother listened to it. And then I saw her, she is very similar to me. Recently I have been searching for my own family history, to be able to understand myself, because it is very difficult, I had many processes to get here today and be able to talk about ancestry.

Beatriz Virgínia Gomes Belmiro

Slam singer and poet. Member of the collective "Buzina de artistas periféricos". Master's student in History at COC/Fiocruz, teacher at CEASM, volunteer in the 'Frente Maré'.

“...with Slam it's different, because apart from being the moment I can scream what I'm feeling, not only my accomplishments, but also my pain, I feel supported by the people around me, I can reach a lot of people.

BEATRIZ VIRGINIA



Beatriz Virgínia Gomes Belmiro was born on 10 January 1998. Her mother was born in Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, and her father is from Rio de Janeiro and was born in Maré. Her mother always valued their origins and culture of the North-East and Beatriz reported a very close relationship with her maternal grandparents. From six to eight years old she lived with them and her mother in Natal. Her grandfather is a fisherman and hunter and her grandmother worked as a lunch lady and on plantations. Her mother was a teacher in the Northeast, was strongly active in the student movement, and came to Maré in the 1990s. Having always lived in Maré, her father witnessed the whole process of landfill of the region.

My mother, she came here at the time when she was approximately nineteen years old, she came here because of the opportunity [...] In the countryside things are very complicated. She ended up working for a long time in family homes, cleaning, cooking, earning nothing, earning food and staying in the same place.

[...]

She found some people who lived in her city and came to live here in Maré, that is when they took her in, in the Northeast we have a lot of this, it is a very indigenous culture, to say that everyone is related. [...] On her arrival she also

met my father. When she came to Maré, she started working at the Centre and doing other things.

Beatriz spoke of how Maré is populated by migrants from the Northeast and how she grew up with the very important notion that she was born in Rio de Janeiro, but that she was also from the Northeast. Her family went through financial difficulties in her childhood, which impacted on their diet. She recalled the important place of corn couscous - a traditional food from the Northeast - which can be prepared in different ways and was cheap. In her life, couscous continues to be sacred.

Beatriz lived for a long time in an occupied area in Maré called Kinder Ovo, which was demolished during the Sérgio Cabral government. This area had that name because it was composed of very small dwellings, with shared bathrooms, and inadequate hygiene conditions. It was after this removal, when they were left without a house to live in, that they went to spend some time living with their maternal grandparents in Natal. On their return, her mother was one of the protagonists of the struggle for housing.

Her family managed to get a house in Vila do Pinheiro, still unfinished, which is where they started living. She spent her childhood with her younger brother and the support of their neighbours, as her parents worked outside all day. However, she also recalled the permanent feeling of fear of police operations as a mark in her life.

I grew up with my brother, it was always me and him for everything, because my parents always worked a lot. Even though it was very dangerous, because I started to stay with him when I was six years old [...] whatever happened, the neighbours would support us, if there was an operation the neighbours would come to the house [...] and say: "Look, there are two children here and we're going to go in with you. [...] I say in my poetry that the favela is an 'Urban Quilombo', because the organisation that we have today is very much in this way.

Beatriz spoke about the importance of one of the teachers she had at the CIEP Brizolão,¹³ with whom she is still in touch today, and who talked to her mother about encouraging her artistic talent. She and her brother had always participated in many projects, as a way of not being alone at home. She started taking part in dance projects when she was six years old. At the age of 12 she joined a project called Usina da Cidadania, at the Manguinhos Refinery, where she did dance, music, theatre and wrestling. Later she worked in the project as an educator and to this day is part of a branch of the project.

So I did a lot of things to occupy my time, since my parents didn't stay at home, I had this way out and my brother went into sports, he spent all his time in football, in fighting, and I did dance, music, finding myself. [I did music for a while, then theatre, then jazz. I think that one of the best moments for me, apart from the stage, is the backstage, because everybody is there helping each other, we change clothes in front of each other and nobody worries about anything [...]] So, I also learned a lot about sharing things, about surviving in community, also in theatre.

Beatriz remembered the difficulties she experienced during high school, with the long commutes to the Copacabana neighbourhood and the teachers' lack of understanding of the reality of those who lived far away in more peripheral areas. She also remembered the difficulties of studying at home, the

¹³ https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centros_Integrados_de_Educa%C3%A7%C3%A3o_P%C3%ABlica

noise and the lack of access to a computer. At school, she was the target of homophobia and told of how in the theatre the environment was different, welcoming and free.

That is why I liked to be in the NGOs, in the projects, because in the projects, I learned that one day I was supposed to be a co-worker, which I am today, today I work in a project in which I was a student. So it was in the projects that I learned that I could be a teacher, that is why I preferred to finish school and go straight to the project, because I couldn't stand it any longer.

At the age of fourteen Beatriz left the Usina da Cidadania project to do a preparatory course for high school at CEASM.¹⁴ During high school, she joined Fiocruz, through a scholarship from the Scientific Education Programme, to join the History Laboratory and study the History of Health. She told of how at Fiocruz she understood that she was not white, and not because she was disrespected, but because the structure of the space, the majority presence of white and non-peripheral people was explicit. There she began to have thoughts like, "I need to straighten my hair to get in here, I have to buy new clothes to get in here."

Beatriz remembered how important her father's influence with literature was. She always loved reading and her father worked in a print shop. He would take home the books that ended up with some mistakes and he would buy others in a bookshop, and so she grew up surrounded by books. She spoke of how it was her father who taught her to read. She got into the habit of writing a lot and when she entered the preparatory school, she had contact with teachers who presented works, such as Carolina Maria de Jesus', bringing literature even closer to her. During this period, she had already started to write songs and at the age of fifteen he started a rock band in Maré.

I sang in bars, I sang in rhyme circles, I sang at skateboarding events, with my compositions. It was really cool, because people were already learning, it was a really cool moment in my life, to have these lyrics out on the street, unleashed.

She recalled that it was when she entered the CEASM that she learned to use art as a power, realizing her place as a woman from the favela with a Northeastern heritage. "In CEASM I learn what the favela is, why I don't have to be ashamed to speak the word favela, why I have to reclaim the history of the favela".

Beatriz always attended the Rap scene, and when she was still under twenty, she encountered Slam and started attending freestyle rhyme circles. In 2016, she also took the pre-vestibular course at CEASM and became a history educator. There she began to build the idea of a sarau (soiree) with the students.

To bring the students together, to call them, it doesn't need to be a sarau with everyone in silence with poetry, because our bodies are not like that. It can be a sarau, but with various types of art, then I started to work with a group of people, who were also artists, and we managed to organize the first sarau, which today is called Sarrau. Everyone knows the Sarrau of the Centro de Estudos e Ações Solidárias da Maré.

¹⁴ Centro de Estudos e Ações Solidárias da Maré. <https://www.ceasm.org.br/>

It was in Sarau, also attended by other artists of Maré, that the Slam of the Mines began to happen, made up of women who became important reference points for Beatriz.

And then there was a day, in a conversation with a friend, who asked me a question that left me very intrigued, she asked what was the name of my great-grandmother, my great-grandmothers, I was like, what is the name of my great-grandmother? [...] I knew only a little of my history, and I didn't know about my great-grandfathers, there was a gap, I spent some time thinking about it, researching, pursuing it. [...] Then, one day, I was on a crowded bus, coming back from college, coming back from UERJ [...] I spent a long time looking at the window and various memories began to come back, various reflections. It was my first poem that I said: "Look at this portrait Beatriz, you can put it in a frame and see the history of your ancestors". It's Slam that brings me this possibility to rewrite my story, to tell a narrative of mine [...] It's telling the narrative to my crowd [...] I bring this narrative, to talk about my grandmother, to talk about my mother, to talk about the stories of pain, the joys, the achievements. I bring a lot of this to Slam, I say that it gives me this voice, to rewrite my story.

[...]

Even when we speak of love and victory, it's still resistance, so it's always connected to this question. And the favela inspires me in various ways.

Beatriz remembers the first time she recited her poetry at a Black July event at the Maré Museum. She recited a poem she wrote inspired by her name and she felt welcomed. At this event there were several mothers of victims of state violence who spoke with her and were very happy to hear her poetry. She noted that it was there that she decided: "I want to do Slam, I want to recite poetry".

Below is one of Beatriz's Slam poems.

Alto da Pipa (High Kite)

And there, in the sky, many kites, on the ground many lives
Boys and girls, flying dreams and cutting traps
In their hands, various lines, or even a reel, so that the chances are endless
The smallest looks at the kite, and there he is, right on top
That's how I want to see my little ones
Flying high, without fear of stray bullets
A life where the skull is no alternative
And that the operation only happens in the operating theatre
In my hands the certainty of a minor who survived a racist country
Amen my mother would say
Axé the ancestry cries out
Because the favela is the Quilombo of those condemned by necropolitics

Politics of death, if you didn't know
It's the state of exception decided by our lives
2019 in Maré was more than 21 days that had no young people flying kites
And no child in school but
There's still some suckers that talk to me about meritocracy
I've no patience for the bourgeoisie
They get a place in college, but we're always asking the college for the quota
When they don't ask us to buy drugs and take them to the track
Oh yeah, I'm gonna fall for your leftist cirandist [type of music] talk
Where my agenda only fits, if it's to make the media
Enough with the black population representing 75% of the homicide victims, in the newspapers and
magazines
I want to invite you with my poetry
Promise me that every time you see a child out flying a kite, you'll look at his hands loosening the
thread
A thread that means the construction of a life
And up there, at the top of the kite, are You, Me, and the Child
Contrary to statistics
And I wanna see, slum-dwellers in power
And I wanna see, my people win.

Iraci Rosa de Lima

Popular singer and songwriter registered with the Order of Musicians of Brazil. Writes about love, God and the Rio favela.

“ *In the favela, many musicians, singers and writers were born to show people that in the favela people also have value. They say in the favelas there are only bad ones, but I've had many friends. And it was in the favela that I've discovered myself. Today I'm not the same anymore.* ”

IRACI ROSA



Iraci Rosa de Lima was born in Minas Gerais in 1941. Daughter of Geralda Rosa de Oliveira. Her maternal grandmother, they say, was an Indian and Iraci is the name of a cabocla (Indigenous). She was an only child and when she was two years old her mother came from Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro in search of work, returning to get her two years later. When she arrived in Rio, she lived for about five years in the Chapéu Mangueira slum, in the Leme neighbourhood, with her mother and stepfather. Later, when her mother separated, they went to live in the Macedo Sobrinho favela. This location was one of the spaces affected by the removal processes in the 1960s, in the Carlos Lacerda government, when part of the population were relocated to Maré.

Iraci started working when she was six years old, taking care of the six-month-old son of the family that her mother worked for as a domestic worker. Later she worked in other people's houses taking care of children. She said that her mother always worked and life was very hard, so she always helped.

[My mother] worked in the house of Dona Alice, Sergio was six months old. When I turned six years old, I went to take care of Sergio, I stayed in the square down there [...] I took care of the boy, and he was heavy, but I never let him fall. In other words, I started working when I was six years old.

At the age of twenty she got married in the Santa Margarida Church, in the Lagoa neighbourhood. She had children and continued living with her husband on Macedo Sobrinho Hill until the forced removal, when they all went, together with her mother, to live in Nova Holanda, in Maré.

We used to live there [in Macedo Sobrinho] and there was no water, when they put water in the favela, we were removed. We had to leave and we came to Nova Holanda. In Nova Holanda there were already a few shacks made of boards, and there was no water either.

Iraci recalled that she did not work for ten years when she had her children. Her husband drank and used all the money they had, leaving enough money only for the basic needs of food, so she had to start collecting recyclable rubbish to increase the family income. She experienced domestic violence and remembered episodes in which her partner also assaulted her children. They separated after twenty-five years on their silver wedding anniversary.

I told my partner: 'I'm going to have a silver wedding anniversary'. He said: "Like a clown, twenty-five years of beatings and poverty, do you have anything to celebrate? Then my castle collapsed, I sought separation.

On her relationship with music and composition, Iraci recalled that the first lyric she wrote was called Dona Candinha, but the first song she wrote was called A Fofqueira and was inspired by when she broke off an engagement. She liked the singer Emilinha Borba¹⁵ a lot and when she was very young she went to Rádio Nacional¹⁶ and showed them her music, who praised the composition. She also met Carmen Costa¹⁷ and said that the choice of her stage name was a tribute to her, who was black like her. In this meeting, she told her that an artistic career was a lot of struggle. "I understood and went off to fight alone". In the 1960s, she participated in the film "Das nuvens para baixo",¹⁸ inspired by the diaries of Maria Carolina de Jesus.¹⁹

One of Iraci's daughters started to compose some songs when she was thirteen, and this inspired her to create more songs herself: "She inspired me, when I realized one came a song on top of another". About this artistic process, she stated:

Sometimes I think of something and the whole song comes, but sometimes I think first and the song comes, but the rest of the song is left bubbling in my head. When I see the rhyming, I think of myself and put it in. There are songs when sometimes it is difficult to find the rhyme. [Things come in thoughts and sometimes they come in dreams].

Iraci said she felt an immense joy when singing, that she liked happy music. That even when the music was sad, when she was singing, she did not show sadness. She shared that she was now writing a book about her story. "I am going to make a book, and it is my story, a story of a poor person and it is all true, I don't like lies, everything I speak is true." She also spoke about currently living in the Cosmo neighbourhood and how she missed Nova Holanda. Here are some of Iraci's songs:

¹⁵ https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emilinha_Borba

¹⁶ <https://www.camara.leg.br/radio/programas/315147-a-historia-da-radio-nacional-um-dos-principais-icone-da-radiofonia-brasileira-1404/>

¹⁷ https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carmen_Costa

¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GyRhazy7cE> e apresentação de Iraci Costa:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQfzmbNkmAQ>

¹⁹ https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolina_Maria_de_Jesus

Path of Glory

I like to sing to cheer myself up, I like to sing to cheer myself up.
That's why I'm enjoying my new inspiration, Go Iraci the path of glory appeared to you.
Go Iraci the path to glory appeared to you.
Friends said I'm gonna win, so I'm excited about what's gonna happen.
I'm holding my head up high, go ahead my dear.
It's beautiful you'll see, I'm rooting for you.

The Favela

Favela, ô favela, I still remember the time when I was in the favela.
Favela, ô favela, I still remember the time when I lived in the favela.
Sambistas were born there, singers and composers were born there.
To show that in the favela there are valuable people.
They say that there are only bad people there, but I had friends yes, I had friends yes.
And it was in the favela that I discovered myself, today I'm someone else and not that person
anymore.

Priscila Monteiro de Andrade

Actress and psychologist. Co-founder of the theatre company 'Cia Marginal' and part of the organization 'Espaço Casulo'. She plays tamborim in the carnival group 'Bloco Se Benze Que Dá'.

“ Art brings an opportunity for me to look deep within myself... To look deep within me and also look at those around me. I'm able to speak, to touch other people, to reach places few people manage to go...it's a place made of affection. Art is a place of love.

PRISCILA MONTEIRO



Priscila Monteiro de Andrade is afro-indigenous and was born in the city of São João do Meriti, on August 29th 1984. She is the daughter of Adalgiza de Jesus Monteiro and José Anchieta de Andrade. Her mother was born in Belém do Pará and her father is from Pernambuco. Her maternal grandmother is indigenous and her maternal grandfather is unknown. Her paternal grandmother is indigenous and her grandfather afro-indigenous.

When she was born, her parents lived in Nova Brasília in the Complexo do Alemão, where she lived until she was four years old. After her parents' separation, she and her siblings went to live with her mother in Belém do Pará.

I remember that we lived on the street, my grandmother had a small farm house, and we stayed at the fruit orchards all day, we ate, I don't know, I had a loaf of bread, a cup of coffee and stayed the whole day on the street [...] at the fruit orchards, mango orchards. [I have a vague memory of my grandmother, of her making flour, and she had a giant pot].

[...]

Recently, a couple of years ago more or less, I was with my mother and I was already involved in my religion, the candomblé, and I have a little altar where

I like to light a candle, pray, put incense, I'm kind of a candomblé person, but I also end up referring to other things too [...] and there was a moment when she passed in front of my table and said "you are like your grandmother".

[...]

When I arrived there [in a Kaiapó village], [...] the sensation I got was that I was not going to visit, the sensation I got was that I belonged to that place, it was as if I had come back, that was the sensation I had, I get goose bumps talking, that was the sensation I got, it was as if I had come back. [...] They were eight very intense days, and in many moments there I remembered my grandmother.

Priscila's father went there to try to restore the marriage and on their return they went to live in Vigário Geral, where she lived from the age of six to eight. Her parents, however, ended up separating permanently. When her mother married her step-father, Priscila decided to live with her father who had remained in Maré because of her difficult relationship with the former.

Priscila recalled her adolescent visits to her paternal grandmother in Pernambuco and the abundant food she always offered, with a lot of couscous and cassava. Her father worked for Varig (an old Brazilian airline) operating the cars that carried passengers' bags to the plane, so they could get discounted tickets to visit their grandparents. At the age of thirteen she made her first trip to see him.

The person I remember most is my grandmother on my father's side, because we went to Recife a few times, I remember when we arrived at her house [...] at six o'clock in the afternoon, she would set a table, there was a lot of food, and it was like lunch and dinner. We used to eat yellow couscous, with dried meat, with cheese that she put inside, cassava, fish with coconut [...].

She recalled how in her childhood she was called by racist nicknames, such as "horse's mouth" and that despite the discomfort she felt, many times it was only possible to perceive such things as racism when she is older when she understood everything that happens in white environments. Priscila said that she only effectively perceived racism when she went to study at university at PUC-Rio, because she was different from most people in that space and felt how uncomfortable her presence was.

When we are children within this black universe, we don't understand [the nicknames], we get upset, but we don't understand that this is racism. When we grow up, when we go to a white environment, we realize how much we are denied, how much our presence bothers them in that environment.

Around 2001, Priscila joined a theatre project of the Municipal Health Secretariat of the Rio de Janeiro City Hall. It was a project that valued the protagonism of young people and the construction of relationships and work among them. She started as a facilitator, became a monitor and then a teacher. When she joined the project, she had already trained as a nursing technician and began to understand the relationship between art and health.

After the conclusion of the City Hall project, around 2007, the theatre group that had been formed decided that it wanted to continue the activities that were being developed. The teachers sought other support, such as from Redes da Maré, and the group was consolidated. They even went on tour through Maré with a work which problematised the place of the black body in the city, how the favela was perceived, and the issues of violence, of State violence. The work was called "You Are Part of a War".

It was a very intense work of research, because it was a project about identity, and at the same time a territorial research [...] So, we did this street work, and we thought that it would be a great opportunity, including having a repertoire so that we could think about a possible edict [...] for us to achieve this moment of consolidation. And it was when we consolidated the company that we got the public notice for the production of a show, and we produced our first show called 'Qual é a nossa cara? [What is our face?] which is my favourite, my baby.

The name Cia Marginal²⁰ represents a work which is on the margin, which is marginalised. The will to consolidate this artistic space came from the perception of the importance of being able to see oneself and that people from one's own territory could see themselves in this work. It came from the desire to also take it outside. To be able to say:

Oh, we exist, we are also a city, we also occupy the city, we are part of the city, we are Rio de Janeiro, we are Brazil, all this here makes up this place, and we also want to be seen, to be spoken about and to be heard.

[...]

Our work has this mark of this internal research, of this body that occupies this place, this territory, who this territory is, what this territory has to say, and also understanding that this territory is part of a city.

Priscila related how there was mistrust among the people who went to watch the plays about the work developed and how this was related to the bodies of the actors, and how these bodies were occupying the visibility space normally reserved for white bodies.

And then, we realized why, which bodies, which people are in which places, because when black people from the favelas are occupying this place of visibility as authors of something, how this is so delegitimised [...] Just because he is a middle-class, white, bourgeois person, he already has all the space open to him. And we see this all the time in the projection places, when we watch television, when we watch films, we understand why for some groups it is very difficult to see oneself and to think that one is beautiful and that one belongs to that place.

Priscila started her graduation course in Psychology at PUC-Rio university, and spoke of how one of her inspirations for this choice, besides the relationship between health and art, were the psychologists who worked in the City Hall project where she started her career in theatre. She recalled that when she entered PUC-Rio, she had the feeling that at any moment the director would enter the room to say that a mistake had been made.

I saw myself very much in this space of acting as a psychologist. And I said, well, then I'll go to PUC, arriving there it was just like that, it was funny because when I entered the room, the feeling I had was that at any moment the director was going to knock on the door and say it was a mistake. Because I couldn't believe that I had really passed. I think that because of this process

²⁰Cia Marginal is a Theatre Company created through the partnership between Redes da Maré and a group of young residents of the Maré Favelas, creating innovative and contemporary performances led by director Isabel Penoni, marked by the political commitment to taking favela art to the rest of the city, the country and internationally. <http://ciamarginalmare.blogspot.com/>

of who occupies such spaces, of who occupies the academic space [...] After the first test I said good, I'm doing it, so that's it people, I'm here.

She also recounted episodes of racism that she experienced during the course. She remembered when a teacher showed disgust when her hair touched her and how she could challenge that, returning the discomfort to the teacher. She realized that this strength of confrontation came from her background, from her training in health and in art.

I had this contribution, I think because of my training, of the baggage of the world that I brought, of coping. So, I dealt [at PUC] with daily racism, with social issues too, because there was also this thing of 'ah, you're from the favela...', so the two things went together in that way.

At the time when Priscila was graduating, she was receiving a lot of news of people close to her going through situations of violence and she began to wonder about the territory of Maré and how it could welcome women going through experiences of violence.

How can this person who is going through this violence actually be welcomed? And we see that people don't feel safe to report a complaint, or to arrive at the health centre injured [...] And we began to think that maybe it would be interesting to have a space that could welcome us women, a space that was much more than just thinking about the illness itself, but to think about the potentials. What power does this woman carry? How can we strengthen this so that she can strengthen herself and go out into the world [...] so the [Space] Casulo²¹ comes from this place of you having this place of meeting, of security, of being among your own, of exchanging, of sharing, of sharing your experience of being a woman, from your perspective, because each woman is one.

[...]

And our theme is women's health, and when we think about health, we think in a broader way, you have a cultural, artistic health, you can be the owner of your body.

After several years of work, they obtained financial support through a grant from Fiocruz for the development of a project with doulas, called the Pregnant Women's Circle. This is because many women go through a lot of obstetric violence. "And when it is a favela and black woman, the violence is much greater."

Art is a very special place, very profound, it is a tool and an opportunity to enter this profoundness, not only mine, but also other's. [...]

I am not a mother yet, but I intend to be one day, I just created other things, I gave birth to other things, I gave birth to a company, I gave birth to a space for women, I am also very proud of these children.

²¹ <https://www.anf.org.br/casulo-o-espaco-da-mulher-mareense/>

Jaqueline Souza de Andrade

Member of Cia Marginal. Social Worker at the Centre for the Promotion of LGBTI Citizenship in Maré (Rio without LGBTIphobia Programme).

“ *Art is not a privilege. It's a right, as is access to health, education and social support. Art is a basic right that every single person needs to have access to, they deserve to have access to.* ”

JAQUELINE ANDRADE



Jaqueline Souza de Andrade, was born on March 16th 1986, daughter of Marcília Souza de Andrade and Sérgio de Andrade. Her parents met in Maré and lived together for thirty-eight years, until her father passed away in 2021. Her maternal grandmother came from Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro when she was fifteen years old to work as a domestic worker. She did not remember details of the history of the arrival of her grandmother and her family, but she thought that they came to live in the Favela do Esqueleto.

Inclusive, this is very common in the history of black people, we have a lot of difficulty to affirm our origins because we have a lot of difficulty to access it [...] I go on talking without being able to affirm many things, because really everything is very complex memories [...] memories that are crossed by other information and sometimes there is not even the memory itself. [...]

When Jaqueline was little she lived with her maternal grandparents and two uncles, brothers of her mother, in Vila do Pinheiro, also in Maré. When she was older, she went to live with her parents in Nova Holanda when she started doing her secondary education, because it was closer to the school. She said that adapting was difficult, because her father wanted things to happen his way. She recalled

moments when they went through financial difficulties and the essential role that the women of the family played in dealing with these.

So, even though I had difficulties in my childhood, I never needed, I was never at the point of not having anything to eat [...] This has a lot to do with other women, my grandmother, my mother [...] They are very important, they are very strong, I am shaped by them, without them I would not be the person that I am, the woman that I am.

Jaqueline related how she had always been a target of racism, bringing memories of school and stating that she always knew she was black: "Nobody ever let her forget that".

There is something for me that I always, since I was a little girl I knew I was black. I never had doubts about it, confusion about it. Nobody ever let me forget that, even at school. You asked, "did you have a nickname? Because that I considered a nickname, the rest was a curse. You say, "was there a nickname? Yes. They called me 'broom', 'hair of firebrush' [...] Which were things that hurt me a lot when I was a child, and school is a space of violence, for black children it's much more so.

[...]

I have marks, I have a mark here from a hot comb which is a steel comb that you put on the cooker and run through your hair [...] Once it stuck to the back of my neck and took a piece of flesh, that I have a scar, there is a physical mark of how racism is.

When Jaqueline moved to her parents' house to attend high school, she felt a strangeness because she did not know her father well. She looked for activities to occupy her time and signed up for the hip hop class offered at Redes da Maré. When a theatre course was also opened, she decided she would sign up, thinking it might be good for dealing with her shyness. She started in theatre when she was sixteen.

I was shy [...] after a while you realize that as a black woman, a black girl, you have to understand what shyness is and what racism is, you know? What shyness is and what racism imposes. And many things that I thought were shyness, were just racism imposing itself on me. It was just racism devastating me, making me ashamed to put myself in the world.

Later on, another project started, called Adolescentro, linked to the Rio de Janeiro City Hall, aimed at promoting young health agents, and which offered different activities, among them a theatre group. Jaqueline said that in this workshop a cohesive group was formed over time consisting of two different projects Quero Viver com Arte and Adolescentro. When the projects ended, the group remained and was gradually consolidating a core that wanted to continue the work in an organised way and with more consistency. Thus, the formation of Cia Marginal began.

Our first show, although not [directly] [...] is a homage to Nova Holanda. So how does this territory speak to us? Here is a place completely cut off by all kinds of people. Here there are a lot of people, here there is a lot of life, Maré has a lot of life.

[...]

[The show] "Our Face" [speaks] of this place in a context that was not only of the violence of this place, that the favelas are always placed in the spaces of violence, of deprivation, of misery. [...] [Here is] a place that has history, that has people doing things you can't imagine, that has love stories happening, and that is very beautiful to look at, so we wanted to tell this story from this point of view, from the point of view of these residents who love this place and that is why they built it.

Cia Marginal has been working for sixteen years and has produced five major shows, always based on issues of territory, of memory, of experiences that are lived in the bodies of marginalized people.

I live racism. When I arrive at the door of the building where I live, the person doesn't say good morning to me, they say good job, because they think I'm going to work in that house, and I'm not. I suffer from lesbophobia [...] these things are in my flesh. So, we put this on stage because we live this all the time. And we have a desire to be artists that talk about the experience itself, talk about life, about what happens in life and especially in this place in Maré.

After the construction of "A Nossa Cara", "Ó Lili", "Em Trânsito", "Eles não Usam Tênis Nike" and "Hoje não saio Daqui" were produced.

We have a piece of audience building, whenever we are going to make a show, we appreciate that people from Maré are present in this show [...] This is very important because it is part of our mission, which is the democratization of art, to understand that art is for everyone, not just for a few.

Jaqueline also commented on how the work of Cia Marginal was often received with mistrust in spaces outside Maré.

People who deal with artistic theatre groups from the favelas always think that their work will be done in any way, and we really value high quality work, [...] the annoying thing is that people are surprised, right? This is annoying, because people are surprised because they are already assuming that it is not going to be good, and when they are surprised, it is kind of embarrassing [...].

Jaqueline graduated in Social Work and reported that doing a college degree was something she had always wanted. The work of the social workers who worked in the Adolescentro and the impact they had on her life was what made her choose her career. She talked about the difficulties of taking a degree course while reconciling it with her work, the tiredness, the risks of studying at night as a woman. She is currently a social worker at the LGBT Citizenship Centre of Maré.

I am as a social worker, I started working at the LGBT Citizenship Centre of Maré. I think it is very important for me to return to work in social work, I think it is very important to be in Maré, because this is my place, this is my refuge, this is where my mother still lives, this is where my brother lives, my grandmother lives, my cousins live here. It is here that I want to give back the best that I believe I have. In theatre we always want to perform here, when we open abroad, we need to perform here.

Roseni Lima de Oliveira

Carnival designer and author, among others, of the themes "O Mundo Encantado da Criança" and "O Gato conta e encanta com a Estrela". Community health agent.

“Ourselves, as women in the favela, we have to have a lot of strength and grit to claim our fights and search for our dreams. Don't you ever let anyone say: "You can't do this, you won't do that", no, if you want it, you will make it.

ROSENI OLIVEIRA



Roseni Lima de Oliveira was born on 21 December 1957, the daughter of Adevanir de Oliveira and Maria Tereza de Lima. She was raised by her paternal grandmother, Sebastiana de Oliveira, who was "one of the people who moulded my personality and gave me "A strength, a force and a zest for life".

About the origin of the surname Oliveira, she said that over time she discovered that it was the name of the owner of the farm where her grandmother's ancestors had been slaves. She said that her great-grandmother and grandmother were not slaves, but they were *colonos*, they worked on the farms, and there was the custom - a remnant of slavery - of the bosses registering with their names, showing that people belonged to that farm. She also recounted that:

After I grew up, I discovered that my grandmother was not from the family she was born into, because there was still the practice of the owners of the farms sexually abusing the maids, also a remnant of slavery [...].

Roseni arrived in Maré in the period of the removal of the Carlos Lacerda government, having previously lived in the Favela do Esqueleto. She said she had little contact with her mother's family, because they went to another region after the removal - Vila Kennedy - where it was necessary to pay a monthly fee. Her father was a market vendor and did not have a fixed income, so they went to Nova Holanda.

The day of the move was traumatising for me, because some people we had never seen before arrived with a truck and were taking our things, and many things my grandmother was still packing, many things got lost [...] I remember I took a bag with my dolls and got stuck [...].

Roseni's was raised by her paternal grandmother to help her mother who worked at the market and was not at home very much, although she did not stop living with her mother. She said she always liked to study and that her grandmother encouraged her and never made her do the house chores. She also remembered that when she finished the sixth grade her grandfather said that for a woman primary school was enough because no man would put up with a woman who knew more than he did. He stopped helping with the expenses of school materials and it was her grandmother who continued to support her studies.

Roseni left Maré when she went to live with a boyfriend, the father of her oldest son, but she decided to separate because she was unhappy with the relationship because of domestic violence. She then returned to live in Maré with her grandmother and father. Her father was an important local community leader and one of the founders of the Unidos da Nova Holanda carnival block, which later became known as Mataram meu Gato. In the 1990s, it was registered with the Federation of Samba Schools of Rio de Janeiro under the name Gato de Bonsucesso. Her father asked her to write a carnival story for him and this is how, in 1980, she wrote her first carnival story, which was called 'Enchanted World of Children'.

She said: 'The history is like an essay that you are going to write, telling a story of something that is going to be presented'. Then I said: 'Like a play?' He said: 'It's more or less like that, because that's what carnival is, a play that goes on. I wrote it down. [...] He said, 'now you make some drawings as if you were going to do a play, the clothes that the people are going to wear so that you can put this story together'. We [she and a friend] did the drawings, my father took them and presented them at a meeting of the Mataram meu Gato, because there were other themes on the table, and our theme won to be the plot for carnival.

Roseni became enchanted with the world of carnival and ended up getting completely involved with the block, doing the accounting, administration, documentation, among other things. In terms of the block's name, she noted:

The people kept making batucada (drumming) under the woman's window and the woman kept fighting with them. They disappeared with the woman's cat and that's when the woman got really annoyed. And they made this samba that "They killed my cat, they took away my hide, my God in heaven, what an insult. They didn't feel sorry for me. My God in heaven, why do I suffer so much". But it was to pick on this girl and it grew, became a block de embalo. But Manoel de Jesus registered the block with the Federation of Carnival Blocks of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

She also stated that there began to be a political engagement in her movement and that it was on her return to Maré that she began to see some issues within the territory. With her father's encouragement, she accepted an invitation to support the founding of a residents' association that would be effectively representative and a space for struggle.

At that time there was also an opening to work here as a community health agent, and I applied for this position and passed. So, before this, I had already started to integrate, to take ownership of the margins, of my place, I saw the possibility of a connection through culture.

Roseni recalled that she suffered a lot at that time for being a woman, being the target of much discrimination. She said it was because she was firm in what she wanted and defended her opinions, but that her presence irritated men. But she always stood up to the challenge and never backed down.

She tells how the Gato had always been part of her life and that she would like young people to preserve the memory of the Gato, which is also the memory of the culture of the territory of Maré.

Because I will always see, even if not on this specific way, the Gato there at Marquês [Sapucai]. But my dream was the Gato telling the story of Maré, of its origin, how it came about, where it came from [...] and I will still see this.

6. Reflecting on digital storytelling through social memory technology with the Museu da Pessoa

I think this opportunity to eternalise our stories is incredible [...] I have the impression of having lived many things, [and I wonder] how it could be possible for them not to remain only in me.

Priscila Monteiro

Feedback from researchers

With the conclusion of the activity carried out with the Museu da Pessoa, a meeting was organised to evaluate the process with all the researchers involved at Redes da Maré, who were part of the social memory technology methodological transference workshops and the entire participatory process of interviews and audio-visual production. The aim of the meeting was to capture their perceptions about the workshops, about the participatory construction of the interviews and videos, if they perceived possible uses of the methodology learned in other activities and future projects.

In general, the women highlighted that it was positive to come into contact with a new methodology and another perspective on conducting interviews and collecting memories. The importance of knowing other tools to ask questions, other strategies on how to ask questions without influencing the person who was giving their testimony and how to create a space of trust for the exchange was highlighted.

As much as I have a background with interviews, it was another perspective, another possibility of deepening on how to work the story of a person, this memory.

Fernanda Vieira

It was very nice to participate in the training last year. I am a museologist, in 2015, I wrote about the Museu da Pessoa in a congress. It was nice to have this meeting and be able to participate thinking about the construction of the project itself and implementing a methodology that I already knew because of [my] training, but I hadn't necessarily worked with it directly like that.

Jessica Hipólito

During the meeting, the need to deepen the reflection on participatory processes and the co-construction of activities in research was problematised, indicating the importance of, in future experiences, being able to discuss in more detail the construction of each stage, the overall planning of the project, the role of each person in the development of activities and also the involvement of the people interviewed in discussions about the final formatting of research products.

Regarding this project specifically, it was indicated that it would have been enriching if the women who told their stories themselves had participated more actively in the process of editing the materials. However, the possibility of revising the planned stages, making changes not previously thought of was valued, as was the possibility of women having an opinion about the final videos, requesting eventual changes.

The perception of the positive impact that participation in the research, the making of testimonies and the possibility of telling their stories had on the lives of the women interviewed was notable. It was a moment to remember their trajectories and histories, build new meanings, talk about their paths, achievements and pain.

I think it was incredible, participating in various stages of research, I think this one seems to me to have the most positive feedback for women. [One of them said that she felt like going back to Maré. [She felt heard. [...] They all bring a lot about how this is a moment of recognition, it helps to reconnect with the stories.

Andreza Dionísio

I was impressed by many things. How that person needed to tell that story. I found it incredible for her, I kept looking at her and seeing how happy she was to tell that story.

Elivanda Canuto

It was beautiful to see how important it was for them to be interviewed and to have their life stories taken into consideration.

Isabel Barbosa

They also emphasised how difficult it was to select the parts that would remain in the final edition of the video and how they wanted everything to appear, since the material was so rich. They commented on how interesting it was to participate in the review of the materials, selection and final editing with the team from the Museu da Pessoa.

The post-interview was sensational, reading all that history, that interview. The hardest part was selecting what was going to stay. I was left with the feeling that it could have been a bit more.

Elivanda Canuto

I found the post-interview work interesting. I had these remote meetings with Paula [the coordinator of the Museu da Pessoa], and we went phrase by phrase, we thought about every single thing that was going to make it into the final edition.

Fernanda Vieira

Finally, reflecting the positive perceptions of the participation in the training process on social memory technology, the workshop members indicated how they were already incorporating it within other initiatives.

[In NUMIN [Núcleo de Memórias e Identidades de Moradoras e Moradores da Maré], this year we are doing a mapping with favela residents and places of memory within the set of sixteen favelas of Maré. And our methodology is social memory technology. So I participated in the project with you, I read the publication [didactic material about SMT], I brought it to the team that works with me and we are interviewing these residents. [...] The training was crucial for our work within Redes.

Jessica Hipólito

It was an experience that aggregated a lot because it is a very specific methodology that we can bring some steps of this work to the work here in our institution.

Tabata Lugão

What is most powerful about this is that we value these stories, which seem common, which seem ordinary, but which have the extraordinary in the middle of them all. [...] We will be able to replicate them, but in our own way, based on our learning.

Fernanda Vieira

Feedback from women artists interviewed

A feedback process was also organised with the women interviewed. Initially, after the interview recording, transcription review, selection of cuts and video editing had been completed, the final products were made available for the women interviewed to evaluate and suggest changes. In general, there were few requests for edits.

Subsequently, the women were invited by the Women's House/Casa das Mulheres worker who was responsible for mobilising them to provide an evaluation of the process, based on a short interview with three questions. The questions were answered in different ways: in writing, through WhatsApp audios and also in person, the form chosen by the women themselves.

The women's feedback on the interview process was based on three questions: 1) How was the interview process for you? 2) Has your understanding of your life story (and your self-image) changed with this experience? 3) What do you think about your story becoming part of a collection in a digital museum available to the whole world? We will not analyse here the individual return of each woman, but the collective impressions.

I was very happy to have done this collection of photos, of my memories, to talk to my mother, to ask things that I couldn't remember. It was a beautiful process. Of course, there are things that are difficult to understand, things that I lived and didn't know what it was, and I can reflect on it today. But in a [general] way it was very happy, I felt very good being interviewed. [...]

Luana Bezerra

Regarding the first question, the women experienced a mixture of emotions, some of them painful memories, but also inspiring them to reflect on their paths and all that they had achieved. They were happy with the opportunity to tell their stories and felt an opening up and strengthening of new paths. They also suggested that telling their stories made them remember facts and experiences they had forgotten, indicating that the exercise of narrating is really the construction of a memory and not just a report of something ready to present in a fixed way.

From that day to now, I felt that people were taking an interest in me, in my work, that they were seeing me, then I felt like coming here [going back to Maré]. Do you know how long I have lived here? I came here when I was thirty, I left here when I was eighty. [...] I think ... anyone gets emotional being recognised all over the world.

Iraci Oliveira

In general, they considered the experience of being interviewed as comfortable, not having produced feelings of nervousness, embarrassment or shame. It was an important moment of reaffirmation of life choices.

When asked if their understanding of life stories had changed since the interviews, the women indicated that looking at their trajectories had brought about changes in their perspectives on their lives and on their relationship with the territory they live in, being able to see and talk about the potential of Maré. For some, telling their stories led to a process of searching about the history of their families, their ancestors.

It was a mixture of emotions [...] Remembering childhood, adolescence, rescuing adult life and strengthening this path. [This process] strengthened my life story in this place. [...] [Being able] to see this place as very powerful.

Rafaela Feitosa

When watching the edited videos, they spoke of feeling surprised when they realized how possible it is to narrate the stories, to note the coherence in their stories, the coherence in the paths they built and realize that over time it was possible to take ownership of themselves. They were also able to identify what had developed through demands placed on them outside their control.. They reported that it was an important moment to be able to tell their stories through their own words, without being narrated by another person, and that this contributed to the perception of details of themselves. The narrative process made it possible to create a link between the events, connecting what is often not talked about.

I feel that perhaps this path has become a little clearer, this trajectory, this path that I chose to take. Everything I said in the interview is a story that is in me, it is my story. But they [the experiences] become disconnected if we don't talk about them. The interview was a place to remember [...].

Luana Bezerra

When we revisit the places of memory [...] I realize what my truths are and what are the truths that somehow end up impregnating me [...] To speak from my place [...] of someone who has lived through everything that constitutes me [...] to have a better perception of myself.

Priscila Monteiro

I think, I felt safe, it was something that changed for me. I saw myself as a safe person, which I don't think I normally am and it was good for me - to have this image of myself.

Jaqueline Souza

The interviews were also perceived as a moment to reflect on the historical processes that penetrate individual lives, on processes of erasure, and on how important it is to feel that one is the author of one's own life, to reaffirm the knowledge left by ancestors and the places of resistance.

It was very inspiring for my journey [...] I got to know myself through my history, through my ancestors [...] This led me to search more about the history of my mother, my father, who are still here, of my aunts, to look for photos. I felt very good and very happy to do this.

Juliana Aguiar

Thinking about this historical process that creates me as a black, Afro-Indigenous woman, who maintains the process of erasure [...] it is very significant that I am the author of my own life, the creator, the artist of my own inventions and reaffirming the knowledge, technologies, reinvention and art that remains in me from my ancestors. It is very significant to reaffirm this place of resistance.

Priscila Monteiro

On the third question, the women spoke of feeling able to share their stories, pass them on to their children, grandchildren, family members and also disseminate them more widely. The happiness of being able to share with the world the stories of the women of Maré and that only at the end of the process was it possible to realize how big it was. They also talked about how this material can be something to be reviewed at other moments of life, enabling their access to what they carry in their bodies and the appropriation of the constant changes that their stories go through. Finally, they talked about the expectation that their stories can influence other women, that other people can see themselves in their stories and the importance of the digital format to allow a wider access to the material produced.

I am flattered and honoured! It is very chic to know that my story will be part of a digital museum collection. I hope it can inspire other women. I am grateful for the opportunity.

Lenice Viegas

It is the people who dictate the history of a place [...] I think that now other people can see themselves in my story.

Luana Bezerra

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