# A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup> threads interwoven in the sea of tales: a creativity workshop on shape – ethical/aesthetical propositions in outreach actions

*Os fios A.R.T.E.*<sup>2</sup> *entrelaçados no mar dos contos: uma oficina de criatividade sobre a forma – proposições éticas/estéticas em ações de divulgação* 

Los hilos de A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup> se entrelazan en el mar de los cuentos: un taller de creatividad sobre la forma – proposiciones éticas/estéticas en las acciones de divulgación

# Maria Da Graça Lima

Instituição: Escola de Belas Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro E-mail: gramulima@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1047-2506

## Katia Correia Gorini

Instituição: Escola de Belas Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro E-mail: kcgorini@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0120-792X

## Aurelio Antônio Mendes Nogueira

Instituição: Escola de Belas Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro E-mail: aamnog1@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6768-1216

# Ana Cecília Mattos Mac Dowell

Instituição: Escola de Belas Artes da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro E-mail: cilamacd@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7027-2632

#### ABSTRACT:

In activities developed in the projects Mar de Histórias and A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup>, the perception of the line is viewed/analyzed in its poetic possibilities, as a compositional element and in different supports. The experimentation started in regular undergraduate classes, in the discipline Creation of Shape, generated proposals for practices with the Creativity Workshop on Shape, by dealing with the use of the line by different artists, throughout the history of art, applied in the Center for Mathematical and Nature Sciences (CCMN) of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ).

Keywords: Education. Art. Culture. Extramural activities. Society

#### **RESUMO:**

Em atividades desenvolvidas nos projetos Mar de Histórias e A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup>, a percepção da linha é trabalhada em suas possibilidades poéticas, como elemento compositivo e em diferentes suportes. A experimentação iniciada nas aulas regulares de graduação, na disciplina Criação da Forma, gerou propostas de práticas com a oficina Criação da Forma, ao tratar sobre o uso da linha por diferentes artistas, através da história da arte, aplicadas no Centro de Ciências Matemáticas e da Natureza (CCMN) da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ).

Palavras-chave: Educação. Arte. Cultura. Extensão. Sociedade, memória, identidade visual. Sustentabilidade.

#### **RESUMEN:**

En las actividades desarrolladas en los proyectos Mar de Cuentos y A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup>, se trabaja la percepción de la línea en sus posibilidades poéticas, como elemento compositivo y en diferentes soportes. La experimentación iniciada en las clases regulares de graduación, en la disciplina Creación de la Forma, generó propuestas de prácticas con el taller Creación de la Forma, abordando el uso de la línea por diferentes artistas, a través de la historia del arte, aplicado en el Centro de Ciencias Matemáticas y de la Naturaleza (CCMN) de la Universidad Federal de Río de Janeiro. (UFRJ).

Palabras clave: Educación. Arte. Cultura. Extensión. memoria,

Artigo recebido em: 08/09/2020 Artigo aprovado em: 06/04/2021

#### Introduction

Drawing a line in space is an attempt to capture a presence. A line takes two marks and tends to occupy its space like the void of a plant looks for its own place. It sprouts from within, in a shy, edgy or hesitant movement of the hand, as the record of an emotion... (Au Fil de la Parole / Collective exhibition by Yves le Fur, Paris, 1995)

An article starts from the threads that weave written words together, outlining a drawing and spinning a tale through time, to wind us all up in a single mesh, uniting relations amongst the many possibilities. The "A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup> Threads Interwoven in the Sea of Tales: a Creativity Workshop on Shape – Ethical/Aesthetical Propositions in Outreach Actions" brings multiple forms of records and narratives together into different cultural groups. This is the fabric in which these herein professors first met.

In the outreach activities, a concern with perceiving new narratives of science and art records in time and space seeks to bring forth the perspective of various social segments as a proposal comprising culture in the segments of art and aesthetics as well as of politics and ethics, valuing the records of verbal and visual narratives referring to cultural heritage. "A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup> Threads Interwoven in the Sea of Tales: a Creativity Workshop on Shape – Ethical/Aesthetical Propositions in Outreach Actions" has a program in place for issues related with line usage in accumulation, repetition, connectivity, encounters, collision, stability and instability. An expanded drawing is explored by casting lines and planes into a three-dimensional space, trespassing two-dimensional supports, proposing dematerialization of the artistic object as oeuvre in order to repurpose drawing and the multidisciplinary interfaces that involve culture.

This reported experience refers to outreach activities performed in 2019, within the "Creativity Workshop on Shape – Ethical/Aesthetical Propositions in Outreach Actions" held at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro's Center for Mathematical and Nature Sciences (CCMN). The originating theme was "line as a structuring visual element in artistic production of various dimensions and supports". That allowed for an exploration of the line in two-dimensional to three-dimensional drawings, furthering comprehensiveness to then practice an "expanded drawing". Participants, in

their turn, were given the opportunity to accomplish their own voice and expression and to conceive art beyond mere deft making and were led to conceive drawing's inherent codes within the interfaces of contemporary society.

### **1** A.R.T.E.<sup>2</sup> Threads Interwoven in the Sea of Tales

The A.R.T.E.2 (Art; Recycling, Techniques, Education and outreach (T.N.: "Extension", in the original Portuguese phrase) and Mar de Histórias (Sea of Tales) outreach programs blend in with proposals offered in the course of hands-on practices in the field of visual arts. Steered to uphold principles of self-esteem and sustainability, the artistic actions and interventions presented in the workshops and in the projects are in place to weave webs of affection, knowledge, and wisdom. The project seeks to involve the academic community and the populations who live in the vicinities of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro's Cidade Universitária (University City) Campus. We have thus engaged the Associação de Moradores e Amigos da Vila Residencial (Association of Residents and Friends of the UFRJ Residential Village – AMAVILA) of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and the CCMN in a partnership.

We understand that, as their internal demands come to fruition, the academic community of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro starts to prepare themselves for professional work to generate and develop methodological mechanisms and new knowledge that comprise art, sciences and techniques to mitigate social inequalities. In their turn, the AMAVILA/UFRJ and the CCMN/UFRJ partnership demonstrates the contribution to the educational training in visual arts that imbricated with upholding valuing citizenship for social segments that fall outside the realm of universities by promoting artistic activities in association with disseminating the concept of sustainability to exercise individual creativity that will generate an authorial visual brand to the artifacts they will be developed.

To implement and prepare for the project's activities and workshops, we resorted to EBA/UFRJ spaces as well as to other spaces, collaboratively, within the units of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, in addition to the AMAVILA and the CCMN/UFRJ spaces that were offered to the local community and the Fine Arts School students. The faculty here also maintain another six ongoing

workshops (Silicon Workshop, Weaving on Fabric and Paper, Artisanal Book Binding, Papier-Mache Masks) and course attendees periodically set up sale stands on conscious contribution in order to exhibit and distribute objects produced in the workshops. The group comprises four professors, eight mediators and two studio support assistants. We shall contextualize the "Creativity Workshop on Shape – Ethical/Aesthetical Propositions in Outreach Actions" from the perspective of history and the theory of art and from an observation of different artists in order to invest in possibilities of understanding the use of lines, present a report on the activities that have been performed, and reflect upon educational outreach procedures and practices that may contribute to academic projects (LIMA, 2020).

#### 2 Background

In the first half of the 20th Century, a time when artists were concerned with including art as a specific science, gestures in space were upheld to dematerialize the values of neoclassic aesthetics. The indecipherable visual gestures in Wassaly Kandinsky's watercolors, for instance, present the ruling concepts of Abstractionism, a modernist avant-garde movement that proposed to expand lines on a two-dimensional plane to evidence the denial of perspective (Fig. 1), with the subsequent loss of image contours, representing lines, curves, threads and random planes on a flat picture. Kandinsky had it that a visual language is developed to provide fruition to image and visual forms. As such, it is fundamental to thoroughly understand and master the visual language from its basic units such as dots, lines, planes, color, light, volume, texture, movement and rhythm that generate codes and systems of representation that change with the passing of time (ARGAN, 1992).



Fig. 1 – Wassaly Kandinsky, first abstract watercolor 1910, Georges Pompidou Center, Paris.

Neverthless, the outward expansion of drawing beyond traditional categories of graphic representation on two dimensions involves the artistic movements that proposed a geometric abstractionist aesthetics as well as the informal abstractionist movement. In Brazil, as of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, artists from within the Concrete and Neoconcrete movements were concerned with dematerializing the object in space and in time. The Brazilian artistic avant-garde inserted art in politics in the 1960's and 1970's. In subsequent decades, artists were concerned with issues of time, considering the poetic instant as a way to move between the past, the present and the future, and repurposing the advents of culture by underlying them in contemporary paradoxes in the sense of art inserted in life (GORINI, 2010).

In the context of producing technical images, reproducible beyond photography, coming out of computer systems the digital images arrived to break through the line of drawing that once had been served to the continuity of history. In The Universe of Technical Images (2008), Vilém Flusser helps us review primordial gestures where the awareness of living experience is subtracted and triggers even greater multiplicity when the computational gesture reaches out to reorganize the very cultural system. He takes us to a phenomenological model of the history of culture with this trajectory of abstract gestures, manipulation, outlining, conceptualizing and computing. The linearity of these gestures provides guidance to distinguish between traditional images and the techno-images that unfold from the producer gesture of computing. In the abstract gesture linearity

breaks into counting, calculating, computing to determine the technical image. That fragmentation seems to now require other entrapments of materialization. Processes of creative production, in turn, set out to reinvent content in order to integrate them into their several networks, recontextualize and reinterpret, still along a reverse pathway that is not nostalgic but rather necessary to primordial gestures, out of the computer and onto the outline and the manipulation, in the benefit of finding the guidewire and their relations. (MACDOWELL, 2003).

## **3 The State of the Art**

In the context of Brazilian contemporary art, we highlight the installation Ttéia 1C created by artist Lygia Pape in 2002. Since the 1950's, the artist has been concerned with addressing the relations between life and art, between art and ethics, and with the aesthetics of her time. In this installation, the lines or webs (Fig. 2) determine a volumetric graphic space that dissolves as the observer moves and the incidence of light changes (ANJOS, 2011).

In 2019, Edith Derdyk speaks of lines by creating fabric, labyrinths and textures in her piece *Moiras*/SESC-SP (2019), observing how human communities organize around the urgencies of contemporary connectivity, dialogs and socialization (DERDYK, 2019).

On the Artsoul website, Tereza de Arruda writes in october 2020 about Chiharu Shiota's exhibition *As Linhas da Vida* (The Lines of Life) at São Paulo's Banco do Brasil Cultural Center. The artist speaks of significance that is either unspoken or imperceptible to rational logic and modes veiled behind the contraptions of a seemingly unchangeable everyday life that actually, in the small print, is never the same again but rather breaks down into other webs that connect with time as an instant and not as a continuous timeline of past-present-future (ARRUDA, 2020).



Fig. 2 – Ttéia 1C, Lygia Pape (2002).



Fig. 3 – Edith Derdyk, part of the "Moiras" installation, Sesc Ipiranga, São Paulo, 2019. Photo: Rosa Antuna.



Fig. 4 – Chiharu Shiota, The key in the hand, 2015, Japan Pavillion, 56th Venice Biennale, Italy. Photo: Sunhi Mang.

### **4 Rationale**

"Since 1997, when I made my first installation using lines in space, I have been working on understanding drawing as this bodily extension into space, which springs out of reading the space out there. Lines eventually become a field of events" (DERDYK, 2019).

From Edith Derdyk's assumption, our educational instruments steer towards understanding relations between basic principles of *visual* in order to show how target viewers can use this ensemble of knowledge to build, appreciate and repurpose art and the visual narratives of art. As in the Moebius strip, where the simplicity of finitude is allied with the complexity of infiniteness, we see that, for the acquisition of knowledge, we must exercise the infinite possibilities of drawing as it can be seen in an enhanced field by converting 2D lines and markings into 3D structures and then reconverting it all back to a 2D plane. So, by alternately trespassing the two dimensions, we show the possibilities of expanding drawing, lines and other 2D markings into other visual forms.

If we are to follow the trajectory of visual arts in the act of seeing and drawing, we ought to observe that verbal and visual narratives allow us to learn to see, so we can learn to correlate and to draw, intent on finding a meaning for the recognition of different shape characteristics around us, understanding this process as a way to interpret and to add a series of aptitudes that may contribute to enhancing our perception and our view of the world. The interdisciplinarity between making an artistic drawing and the virtual reality technology in the Creativity Workshop stands out because digital tools can be used to enhance drawing characteristics or even remove unwanted ones. The Workshop was conceived after investigating images in artistic work, repurposing visual symbologies and interpreting texts, which led us to develop a visual methodology that supports our approach to the meaning of expanded drawing and presents the various drawing trends within the visual arts (NOGUEIRA, 2019).

# **5** Ethical/Aesthetical Propositions for the Outreach Actions of the Creativity Workshop on Shape, in Five Methodological Movements

- The first movement tried to expose the breadth and assimilation of the theoretical rationale: course attendees did research and presented seminars on the use of lines by different artists throughout the history of art.
- The second movement tried to create a three-dimensional drawing from lines on a twodimensional plane, generating a lot of complexity because of the dimension changes, which challenged attendees to think up a drawing/installation that would encourage creative processes through the use of lines on the three-dimensional space.
- The third movement involved translating the lines from the drawing/installation to a twodimensional plane using tools such as the photographs that recorded the previous step.
- The fourth movement had course attendees cut up a 7 x 3 cm rectangle on an A4 sheet of paper and select drawings done in the previous step for free hand replication, considering the absence of the void rectangle on this support. Course attendees then drew the missing core on the outlined rectangle to complete the drawing.
- The fifth movement was conceived for an organization of the drawings in a visual narrative where the small core rectangles could fit loosely at the viewer's discretion (Fig. 5, 6 and 7).

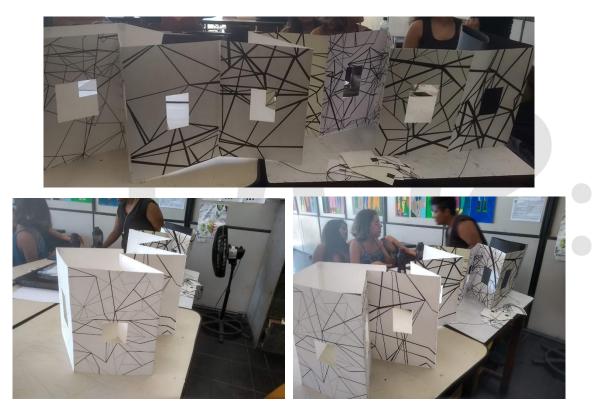


Fig. 5, 6 and 7 – Free hand replication of the rectangles considering the absence of the void rectangle.

## 6 Activities Developed and Results Obtained from the Creativity Workshop on Shape

The outreach activities were conducted in 2019 through a partnership with the Center for Mathematical and Nature Sciences – CCMN/UFRJ. Course attendees comprised UFRJ undergraduate students and the community sharing an interest in visual arts. And the theme "Line as a Structuring Visual Element in Artistic Production of Various Dimensions and Supports" was presented.

We proposed to explore lines in drawing, to understand space through the possibilities of "expanded drawing" as an artistic experience and by looking into artists who addressed that theme in their oeuvres in the context of the history of art. So, the seminars presented by the course attendees were the first outcome and they rendered enthusiastic reports on the artists: Mondrian, José Augusto Petrillo, Waldemar Cordeiro, Geraldo de Barros, Kandinsky and Lygia Pape.

In the subsequent encounter, course attendees engaged in hands-on exercises, rolling up newspapers into rods that were considered lines. We observed the collaborative spirit in this action because each course attendee produced his/her own ensemble of thick or fine, long or short lines that were somehow hinged to cast a single drawing on the three-dimensional space (Fig. 8, 9, 10 and 11). The expanded drawing was thus assembled from the informal agreements established on the making by the course attendees, conceived upon the very moment of assembling the parts for a balance of lines on the three-dimensional space. The outcome was seen as a type of mutant structure (Fig. 12) that could be expanded at the makers discretion.

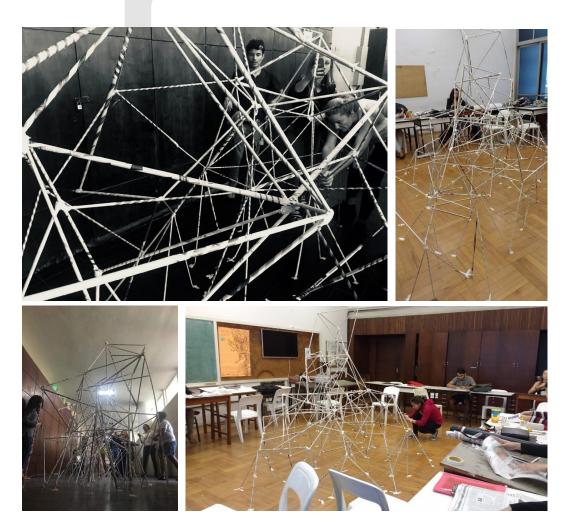


Fig. 8, 9, 10 and 11 – The structure being built by course attendees.



Fig. 12 – Mutant structure.

After assembling this structure, the course attendees brought yet another contribution to the group as they presented kinetic sculptures by Dutch artist Theo Jansen (Fig. 13) built from PVC pipes that move according to wind movements.



Fig. 13 – Sand animals, Kinetic sculptures by Dutch artist Theo Jansen, University of Louisiana.

The third moment of the activity was making a photographic record of the expanded drawing or structure for the purposes of documenting it and for course attendees to develop the images into poetic photography given by the choices of random angles and in accordance with each individual's own imagination.

In the subsequent movement, students chose one of the photos they had made and registered the lines of photographic outline on drawings. Those drawings could be made in Indian Ink on coated paper, or in digital drawings made on computers and then printed on coated paper.

The fifth stage of the practice involved establishing a visual narrative after observing the final ensemble of drawings. Interpreting the sequence of images may lead to conclusions whose meaning goes beyond the logic realm of conventional reading and may create a narrative of its own. An abstract image may gain "airs of reference" when it is put in a context of sequential narrative. In other words, the iconic solidarity – relation of significance amongst the images thus produced – creates a scene of interaction among the different codes therefore enhancing the possibilities for reading it.

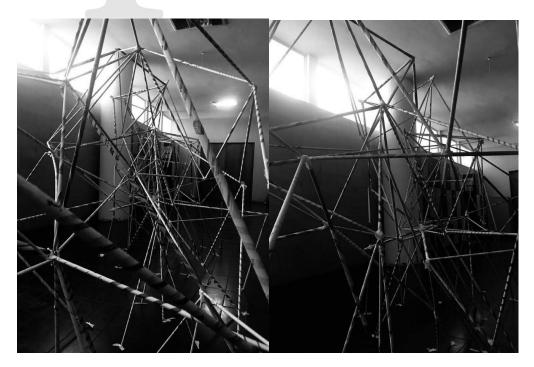


Fig. 14 and 15 – Examples of photos from different angles.

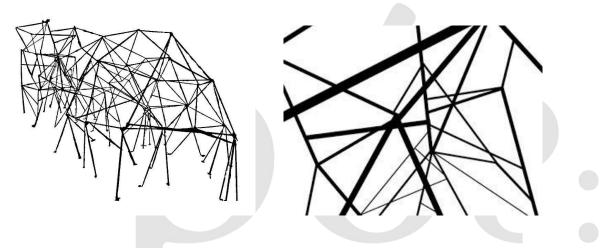


Fig. 16 and 17 – Lines of the photographic outline with drawings.

The images were drawn on an A4 format without the rectangle. The narrative sequence was organized on a *leporello* format or a folding album, where the open content can be read or it can be assembled in a variety of manners. The core rectangles were glued on a black line and added for free fitting interventions at the viewer's or player's discretion.

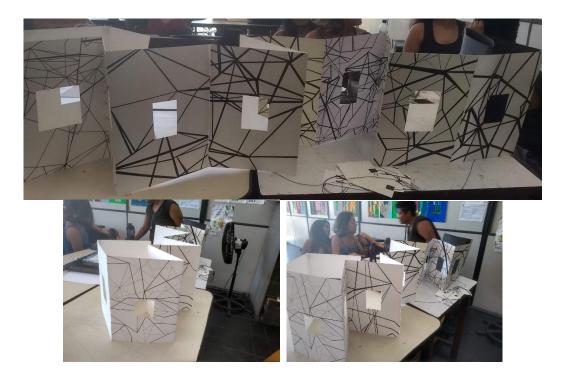




Fig. 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22.- The narrative sequence was organized on leporello format.

### **Final considerations**

The outreach workshop involved fifteen course attendees and one mediator, and lasted five months, between July and December 2019, including ten 60-minute encounters and totaling six class hours, ten bibliographic research hours, thirty preparatory hours (arranging the in-person encounters, training the mediator, searching materials, preparing tutorials, among other activities). It featured three interspersed installations lasting 2 days each on the corridors of the Fine Arts School building and drew the attention of both the academic community and extramural third parties. The research into lines in the oeuvre of many artists in the course of time and space encouraged thoughts about the artistic production and contemporary language, because we concluded that visual elements operate as a basis for an understanding of art and its spatial-social surroundings.

For the purpose of conducting those activities, it was important to conceive the process of building a web and its infinite developments of poetic significance as possibilities for visual artistic expression represented in structures, skeletons, expanded drawings in the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional spaces. Notwithstanding, we have observed that the original proposal grew beyond the assembling of a structure during the making of it; other significances came forth about the social relations that allow an individual to understand and to position him/herself in the world. And since we believe art is always a proposal, including when it is meant to enhance social spaces by means of an appreciation of human beings, this experience helped us to develop a work

proposal that is adapted to our activities with the community of the Residential Village of UFRJ between 2020-2021, in continuation to the AMAVILA partnership. The effort to repurpose line in the performance of art on the basis of resizing the spaces and narratives has helped redefine know-ledge in the fields of perception, cognition and relations.

#### REFERENCES

ANJOS, Moacir. **A cidade o desenho nas obras de Lygia Pape e Artur Barrio**. Rio de Janeiro: Conncinitas, 2011.

ARGAN, G. C. **Arte Moderna**: do iluminismo aos movimentos contemporâneos. São Paulo: Companhia de Letras, 1992.

ARRUDA, Tereza de. Exposição As linhas da vida, de Shiahu Shiota. In: **Artsoul - marketplace de arte contemporânea**, 2020. Disponível em: <https://artsoul.com.br/revista/eventos/exposicaolinhas-da-vida-de-chiharu-shiota>. Acesso em: 2020.

BELTRÃO, Catherine. Esculturas cinéticas de Théo Jansen. *In*: **ArtenaRede**, 14 maio 2016. Disponível em: <a href="http://artenarede.com.br/blog/index.php/a-arte-cinetica-de-theo-jansen/">http://artenarede.com.br/blog/index.php/a-arte-cinetica-de-theo-jansen/</a>. Acesso em: 16 jun. 2021.

FERRAZ, Marcos Grinspum. Instalação de Edith Derdyk cria tramas, conexões e tessituras no Sesc Ipiranga. *In*: **Artes Brasileiros**, 3 abr. 2019. Disponível em:

<https://artebrasileiros.com.br/topo/instalacao-de-edith-derdyk-cria-tramas-conexoes-e-tessituras-no-sesc-ipiranga/>. Acesso em 16 jun. 2021.

DERDYK, Edith. Catálogo da exposição Moiras. São Paulo: SESC, 2019.

FLUSSER, Vilém. **O universo das imagens técnicas**: elogio da superficialidade. São Paulo: Annablume, 2008.

GORINI, Katia Correia. **Memórias do forno Monumento**: arte cerâmica imbricada à vida cotidiana. 2010. 126 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em História e Crítica da Arte) – Escola de Belas Artes, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

MACDOWELL, Ana Cecília Mattos. **Instalações Multimídia**: coexistência do espaço físico e virtual. 2003. Dissertação (Mestrado em Artes) – Instituto de Artes, Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, 2003.

NOGUEIRA, Aurélio Antônio Mendes. Coletânea de artigos: arte e arquitetura. Rio de Janeiro: Ebook EBA/UFRJ, 2019.

NOGUEIRA, Aurélio Antônio Mendes; GORNI, Katia Correia; LIMA, MACDOWELL, Ana Cecília Mattos; Maria da Graça Muniz. **O A.R.T.E.2 navegando no Mar de Histórias**: oficinas de arte, extensão universitária e sociedade. Rio de Janeiro: E-book, 2020.