

P. A. R. T. S.

- Opening PARTS 20 – Speech by Maya Oliva - Student 11th generation 2013-2016 -

Our generation is one the first ones to be raised in the age of information. The computer age, the Digital revolution.

While growing up, we have witnessed the rapid acceleration of the world around us. Our brain has adapted to it consequentially. And now it works differently. We prioritize other things, we multitask. Our generation finds it harder to hold attention for long on one thing. This means that we process information that we receive in ways that we are still discovering .

For example, our brain would rather remember where to find the information than the information itself.

In addition, news, images, commercials, fly, right in front of us - or in the background of everything we do - almost at an unperceivable speed, constantly. like an omnipresent persistent buzz.

This new revolution has turned the human being into a high speed stimulus junkie, spoon fed a huge milkshake of data. And I don't know about you, but for me it's becoming harder everyday to recognize what is necessary or what is actually not. Like that lyric from the Pink Floyd song "us and them" says: "black or blue, who knows which is which and who is who?"

I'm not saying anything new by saying that this reality is pushing us to think and act in favor of the "me", or the "I".

So, if the arts are really the mirror of our society, then we can speculate that this is also happening in our environment. Here in our creative field.

Like many others, I've been questioning, why I chose the performing arts. Why this discipline and not another one. Personally its because working with our bodies, gives us infinite possibilities of incorporating all other arts. And, most of all, it can bring together elements while allowing them to keep their own identity. It all comes together in a collective symphony. Things fit in the space like pieces of a mutable puzzle.

This bubble, in which we work and live, is a perfect place to celebrate and cultivate the practice of being together. This very school, is an example of that, an amalgamation of different ingredients. The variety of what we study and the ways that we collaborate everyday, work, share and create projects together, are an evidence of how people from different cultures, upbringings and personalities can cooperate.

But, I feel like, effected by todays society, everyone is closing themselves into little boxes, working really hard on what they're doing, struggling with their own livelihood. We can imagine that these boxes, actually, are bricks of a big wall. Its true, they are keeping the wall together, but there is no room for air. They are working alone, next to each other, and they are not working the spaces between them.

Francois Jullien, in his lecture on polyphony the other day (ref. 01/09/2015 at PARTS), mentioned how allowing space between things enables things to flow, to pass, to happen. Because they have no identity, and so they have potential. If we work these gaps between us, we might find something.

We are many, more and more each day. We have to learn how to deal with the new dynamics of today's art field. I believe in strong individuals, but in a time where there are a lot of fantastic individuals, coming to surface, one voice alone is less heard.

The "I" needs contrast in order to be heard. And if that contrast is no longer a reality, then we have to work it through another way.

I would love to have, as would many others, the answer. So I could say it to you right now. But I don't have it, WE have it. We need to keep promoting situations that truly bring us together. And if, today while becoming stronger as individuals, we're able to keep that same component in a collective situation. If we get together not necessarily for how similar we are, but we also encourage and dare to test what does it mean to work the areas separating us and someone completely different from us, without fearing dissimilarity. Then, something unexpected might happen.

The "I" is strong but the "We" is stronger, generations and generations have heard that many times, and how many beautiful things have happened in history thanks to that?

Maya Oliva, Brussels, 8.9.2015.