"It's not just a party, ya know?": Work and Affective Circuits in LGBTQIA+ Music Collectives in the South of Brazil

Transposition

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Abstract

This article addresses the application of affective theories in relation to electronic dance music parties, specifically from a Global South perspective. The aim is to comprehend the circumstances of collective and individual formations facilitated through music as an element that intensifies affect, as well as the labor demanded by the creation of these affects. Drawing inspiration from ethnographic methodology and employing observational techniques and informal interviews, this study explores work, affective circuits and music scenes through a pilot study of a party that's been running for 5 years, organized by Coletivo T in Porto Alegre, southern Brazil. In this way, the analysis of parties, embodiment and urban spaces unfolds through an archaeology of the city's electronic music scene. This reveals a distinct circuit from its inception, marked by both ruptures and continuities in the aesthetics and identities of these events and their participants.

Keywords: electronic music, affective circuits, collectives, LGBTQIA+, street parties

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Introduction

In this article, we are interested in understanding the articulation between electronic music parties, bodies and corporealities in action and urban spaces, which bring with them the combination of social and urban spatial dimensions, as well as their possibilities for producing difference and plurality. These three interconnected themes help us comprehend how parties and music collectives—as we analyze here—carry political meanings related to the power of bodies in action and in collectivity (Fernández 2013; Liska 2023).

In environments like these, the ludic, the festive, the corporeal and the aesthetic elements are inseparable from their politicization as urban experiments, corresponding with a renewed understanding of what the political itself entails, linked to performative agency (Butler 2010) and the activation and reframing of identity discussions. Issues of gender and sexuality, as well as class and geolocations are brought forth in the intersectionality of the city; as are issues involving access, means of production, dissemination and organization of parties by individuals and collectives embarking on their trajectories.

We understand that the use of affect theory in musical environments—especially in electronic music and/or related to the LGBTQIA+ community—is useful in intricately mapping elements of various cultural and subjective productions, as well as the possibility of better focusing on materialization through affect theory. Some interpretations of this theory propose the idea of a presumed "purity" of corporeal affections, embracing a reiteration of mind-body binarism (Hemmings 2005). This makes the investigation of how non-hegemonic identities, feelings and cultural elements can come together in the combination of musical waves and other bodies particularly unique, conveying meanings that are both contingent and material (Garcia 2020).

Our analysis will focus on Coletivo T ("Collective T") and street music events produced by them. Originally from Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul, the collective is formed by LGBTQIA+ DJs, performers and producers, mostly trans individuals, with a focus on creating a safe space for the expression of dissident identities, as well as addressing the lack of visibility in other city electronic music events (and in the city itself). We begin by discussing the relationship between labor and affective circuits, music scenes and corporealities. We contextualize how the electronic music scene emerges in the city of Porto Alegre and then conduct an ethnographic analysis of one of the collective's parties, to form an understanding of this scene of bodies coming together and the affective circuits of embodied identities, understandings and feelings.

Affects, Affective Circuits, and Music Scenes

To reflect on how music scenes acknowledge political-aesthetic elements to consider gender and sexuality, we will use the understanding of affect and the so-called affective turn. The conceptualization of affect used in this work is an attempt to understand music as a unique apparatus of subjectivation and community production, composing and materializing desires, scenes and collectives. Affect is understood as a measure preceding other productions, whether conscious (ideas) or even unconscious (feelings, desire), also understood as pre-conscious.

This pre-consciousness occurs as a corporeal affect—that is, it is materialized before its displacement into other instances normally understood by the social sciences—whether in individual models (consciousness) or collective ones (ideology, imaginary, culture). Therefore, affect is an infinitesimal particle that, in certain positions and moments, ends up acting on bodies. It never occupies or solidifies within bodies, but is always "in-between" them, always collective in its interaction (Massumi 2002).

Another important characteristic of affect lies precisely in its actualization and virtuality—that is, in its conditions of manifestation. Affect exists, according to a Bergsonian understanding, within a virtuality, on an inaccessible plane of immanence and eventually ascending to the realm of materialities upon its actualization. It is in the encounter between bodies that they can ascend and affect, whether these bodies are human or non-human. Hence, this plane of virtuality is not susceptible to prior readings; it can only be seen

through its inscription, in the affectation of bodies in a given space or movement. The effects of affect are striking in their intensity and unpredictability, because they originate in a virtual state and ascend in an uncertain manner, making them impossible to predict or meta-analyze.

There are attempts to restrict the productive possibilities of affects especially with the aim of enhancing capital circulation and its conditions of production and reproduction (including sexual, racial, and gender aspects). However, this production is composed of what is called "affective labor". This concept refers to workers—particularly female workers—whose objective is the (attempted) systematization of affects into predetermined thoughts and feelings (referred to as "assemblages"), aiming to shape them by exerting a certain type of subjectivizing control, limiting the possibilities of actualization, materialization, and inscription of affects into desire (Hardt and Negri 2001).

This perception of affects as central to the interpretation of social phenomena is named "the affective turn" in the social sciences—a post-anthropocentric understanding of the production of materiality, desire and cultures. This turn is based principally on the denial of an ideological/imaginary metanarrative and the production of a map of possible movements and potentialities of affects. The focus of this turn becomes what we call "networks of affectation", as it often includes a diverse and extensive range of understandings based on post-anthropocentrism and non-hierarchical relations between humans and non-humans.

These analyses come from an attempt to free oneself from the epistemological and ontological framework of capital reproduction circuits and their foundations. Differences promoted by these needs—such as human and non-human, cultural and natural, organic and artificial, rational and emotional, and especially individual and collective—no longer organize the analyses, creating space for the promotion of new compositions and resignifications. That is, new assemblages outside the affective circuits of capital production (Clough and Halley 2007).

The understanding of "affective labor" often hovers around identities typically associated with women (mothers, wives) or caretaking professions (healthcare, secretaries). However, the field of art and entertainment is also considered "affective labor", due to its function of organizing emotions and ideas.1 In Amaral and Grohmann's research on communication and music in Brazil, labor constitutes one of its material aspects (2022).

The affective circuit of entertainment is seminally examined by Theodore Adorno (2002), who portrays cultural products as shaping affective-sentimental instances oriented toward escapism, while simultaneously reproducing the same structures found in spaces of labor. In doing so, they maintain the reproductive mechanisms of capital.

However, music itself as an object becomes a differential choice from an affective perspective, due to the difficulty of measuring music subjectively. Attempts to understand music symbolically, as understood in cultural studies, or strictly ideologically, as done by the Frankfurt School, prove to be reductionist when considering the centrality that they attribute to lyrics, social contexts, or strategic positions within cultural industries. These

analyses are relevant in political terms, but they do not consider the understanding of music itself, the affects of vibration, melody and their inscription in the encounter with individuals' bodies and the geographical instances where these bodies are located—in their homes, at parties, in cultural scenes, et cetera (Thompson and Biddle 2013). The vibration of music, which is commonly translated into bodily affects (goosebumps, dance, movement), triggers intersubjective effects of affects that circulate between bodies.

The production of sound waves, rhythms and melodies promotes a differential embodiment, fostering the materialization of collective desires and feelings that operate directly in the encounter between the body-wave and individuals' bodies. Meaning is constructed not through typically understood manifestations (speech, clothing, social position), but through affective cohabitation and collective experience of the vibratory presence of sound and its affective manifestations in the body. This brings about unique corporeal embodiments and productions in musical scenes (Henriques 2015).

> The material aspects of music in Media and Communication research have many dimensions, infrastructure, socio-cultural aspects, the economic and political context, as well as environmental consequences, which affect the way music is circulated, produced, and consumed. These aspects – from the material aspects of the media to the material aspects of production – are inseparable (Amaral and Grohmann 2022: 84).

Affective labor can be considered not only as an instance that aims to maintain affective circuits linked to the reproduction of capital, but also as a means to question them. If we acknowledge that affective circuits, which produce identities of "normality" in terms of gender, sexuality, race and national belonging, are extremely important for capitalist maintenance (Berlant 2010), the work on the effectiveness of counter-heteronormative spaces with a focus on music and vibration opens up a possible rearticulation for other affective effects and relations between and among bodies. These rearticulations offer possibilities for non-normative readings, promoting differential possibilities of subjectivation and access to relationships initially thought impossible or paradoxical, but they emerge as possible due to the agencies fostered in these affective scenes.

Parties, Corporealities and Spaces of the City

The universe of parties that utilize public and semi-public spaces (Delgado 2007) in cities, has gained relevance in recent years. The pioneering works on cultural studies (Hebdige 1979; Hall and Jefferson 2006) and post-subcultural studies (Thornton 1996; Amaral 2008) analyzing festive and/or musical environments of youth groups—which consider socialities and identities related to class, gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, generation and symbolic capital as significant elements for the convergence of ludic, affective and belonging dimension—are already well-known.

In the past three decades, the notion of music scene (Straw 2006; Bennett and Peterson 2004; Sá and Janotti Jr. 2013) has served as an important conceptual and analytical axis for reflecting on sets of more or less organized social and cultural activities that have a

strong component of construction in urban cultures and cities, centered around music and its sounds, performances, dances, aesthetics, fashion, tastes and lifestyles. These activities configure territories within the city through the dynamics of cultural/musical production and consumption that extend beyond fixed demarcations in terms of identities and subcultural or post-subcultural perspectives.

In recent years, parties and other sound-musical manifestations articulate issues related to youth (and other) identities and renewed uses of the city.2 Polivanov and Medeiros (2020) provide a bibliographic review of the still scarce works on the issue of women in electronic music scenes, particularly in cities of the Global North such as Manchester (Hutton 2006), New York (Pini 2001), Montreal (Abtan 2016), among others.

We focus on studies produced in Latin America that examine urban street parties as forms of resistance, where collective actions challenge aspects of everyday life and contest urban tensions. These parties forge new social alliances in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Barroso 2022), while the Batekoo parties in São Paulo also highlight aesthetics and values that reconfigure racial identities, gender performativities and power relations (Oliveira 2022). Similarly in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Batuka collective uses percussion and communal musical practices that articulate forms of social organization for cis women, non-binary individuals and trans men (Liska 2022).

When it comes to electronic dance music parties in Brazil, this scene has developed since the 1980s and the 1990s in nightclubs in cities such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre and Recife, constructing a clubber (from the English for clubbing or club) scene with many branches and developments (Sá 2003; Assef 2010; Braga 2018; Amaral 2018; Neves and Silva 2018). Since the beginning of the 2010s, the search for alternative festive spaces has been central in the electronic dance music scene, in contrast with the more hegemonic models of club culture of the 2000s (Braga 2018). Referred to as "street parties" by many DJs, artists, attendees, and producers (Braga 2018; Pereira and Gheirart 2023), there has been a type of renewal of the scene, with itinerant parties being produced by artist collectives (linked in varying degrees by racial/ethnic, gender/sexuality and class-based movements and agendas), minimal financial investment, as well as collaborative forms of production (transportation, set design, lighting, organization, DJing, performances, etc.), utilizing streets, squares, city tunnels, and even warehouses and parking lots.

A scene or circuit of electronic music parties has been established on city streets and other public spaces, as well as abandoned areas occupying the so-called urban "fractures" (Pereira and Gheirart 2023), giving them renewed meanings. In general, the parties in this scene share a search for musical and electronic experimentation, as well as on the importance of music and its communicative dimension within urban environments (Herschmann and Fernandes 2014). They bring people together to dance, perform their bodies and identities, as well as build connections, belongings, socialities and ways of being together in the metropolis. This does not exclude engendered political meanings; rather, it articulates and emphasizes them—particularly those connected to struggles for resistance and the re-existences of dissident identities and groups; as well as the reclaiming of spaces in the city, their use, occupation and visibility.

In São Paulo, parties like Mamba Negra, CapsLock, Autonoma A-Temporária, Vampire Haus, Blum—among many others—have built an independent electronic music scene self-defined by the social actors themselves. Emerging through a process of conflict and negotiation, this scene consolidated during the 2010s and sparked important discussions about alternative music cultures, public cultural policies, regulations, and the use of public spaces in the city (Pereira and Gheirart 2023). Also, in Belo Horizonte, the capital city of Minas Gerais state, this new scene has given birth to movements "with a strong influence from popular and festive occupations that...emerged and strengthened" the political protest actions throughout Brazil in 2013, as well as also articulating "themselves with the street carnival mobilizations" (Cortez and Siqueira 2022: 89). Collectives such as Masterplano, 1010 and Mientras Dura have been producing parties in that city since 2015, connecting electronic music, visual interventions, artistic performances, and "empowerment discourse for women, Black people and the LGBTQIA+ community" (Cortez and Siqueira 2022: 90) in public spaces and/or spaces outside of nightclubs.

In Porto Alegre, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, the electronic music scene has undergone similar transformations to other cities in the country. Starting in the 1990s with indoor parties held in venues such as abandoned factories, warehouses and nightclubs, as well as open-air raves documented in Fontanari's ethnography (2003), the scene later transitioned to street parties produced by collectives composed of minorities (Cordova and Bernardo 2023), which form the focus of our observation and analysis in this article. More about the city itself will be discussed in the next section.

By addressing issues related to identity, these parties confront us with the theme of bodies and corporealities—that is, the ways in which meanings, practices and sociocultural sensitivities are constructed through bodies in action, which act as producers of agency, identities, subjectivities and aesthetics (Marmól and Roa 2020)—positioning this as an important phenomenon for analysis. Bodies here are understood from a Foucauldian perspective of "strategic relations" that encompass forms of power, management and control by normativities and institutions, but also encompass counterpowers, fissures, lines of escape and resistances (Fernández 2013; Valenzuela Arce 2009). Bodies are considered mediations (Lindón 2012), ambivalently articulating processes of control, normalization and subjection, as well as freedom, transgression, and resistance. Valenzuela Arce (2009) complements this approach to bodies—particularly youth bodies—with the notions of biopowers and bioresistances, in which the body emerges as a vital and strategic element for young people, through which they seek recognition and relations of belonging.

In this way, bodies are composed in diverse modalities, whether in their singular or collective dimensions. In this collective dimension—which Fernández (2013: 21-22) calls situations "between bodies", meaning the activation of the power of bodies through interactions in mobilizations, protest marches, or parties—affections are constructed, bringing into play "bodies in action" that create "machinic sequences" full of dynamism and collective potential. Drawing on a Deleuzian reading of Spinoza's notion of affects and bodies, Fernández emphasizes the power of action released by the collective intensities

made possible "between bodies"—that is, within affects understood as the capacity to affect and be affected—which situations such as the parties analyzed here can generate.

In the face of normative, governmental or moral biopowers, the use of bodies arises as a way to elaborate bioresistances through multiple forms of signifying them, whether through clothing and other aesthetic expressions, or through the embrace of sexualities and genders seen as dissident, emphasizing the collective agency of individuals and their possibilities of constructing processes of subjectivation that are centered on the body, its uses, and its capacity to affect and be affected.

By being held in public, semi-public (Delgado 2007), or collective spaces (Caiafa 2003; Pereira et al 2021) of the city, this renewed electronic music scene also confronts us with issues involving the spatial dimensions of the social and the urban dimensions, developing what Lindón has named a "betweenness" (2012), an approach that articulates a mutual configuration of the city and bodies in action.

It is worth remembering that—beyond the urban environment and its spaces conceived by the order of the State, institutions and macrostructural dimensions of power and inequalities—the city is also shaped by the logic of the uses and appropriations by its people and groups, always in contention and negotiation. Discussions in cultural geography help us understand space and territory in their unequal dimensions of power and their effects on the social position of individuals (Massey 2008; Haesbaert 2014).

In a reflection that encompasses both the order and discipline of spaces and their forms of occupation, reclaiming, and resignification within a constant dynamic of power and appropriation, the construction of the spatial dimension has emerged as the fabric of lived experiences that are contested and negotiated. As Massey suggests, space needs to be understood both in its dimensions of power and in its potential for the presentation and visibility of difference, plurality and heterogeneity (2008). In agreement with this author, we emphasize the importance of the spatial dimension when thinking about cities, their interdictions and barriers, but also their uses and the various strategies of resistance, which, in spatiality, can find the possibility of constructing heterotopias.

In this sense, collectives and electronic music parties highlight their political dimension, as they underscore dissident identities and bodies in action and make use of public and semi-public spaces in the city. In these territories appropriated and occupied by parties and musical activities, they become places of use, shared senses of belonging, connections, encounters, identity elaborations and possibilities for developing careers connected to music scenes. We understand these actions as possibilities for new performative dimensions of politics (Butler 2010), even if they are more ephemeral or take the form of cracks and fissures in everyday life.

It is important to recall the reflection proposed by Milton Santos (2017) regarding cities and the nature of spaces. The author defines "luminous zones" and "opaque zones". Both, respectively, relate to urban spaces with greater or lesser technical, financial and informational density, indicating their capacity to attract capital, economic activities and

visibility. Tourist and business areas, for example, can be considered luminous zones, while degraded or labeled violent areas can be considered opaque zones.

Global cities characterized by the expulsion of marginalized individuals—lower-class people, Black people, as well as sexual and gender dissidents—from central areas to the outskirts and peripheries, reinforce the existence of this capitalist logic of expanding opaque zones as the hegemonic model of urban planning. In this scenario, the occupation and appropriation of the luminous zones in the city center by the youth of parties like T stand out, conveying new meanings to squares, streets and other territories through their presence and actions.

This resignification occurs because, according to Santos (2017: 325), luminous zones are associated with "spaces of exactitude", capitalist rationality, and fast-paced time. However, "slow people"—along with their alternative temporalities—who inhabit opaque zones create "fabulating and creativity spaces", enabling the construction of territories of art, resistance and sensitivity through poetry, music, dance and encounters forged at parties. They promote environments of collective production and creation, fostering possibilities for multiple and dissenting existences through the resignification and occupation of urban spaces with their bodies; presences; temporalities and aesthetic, cultural, communicative and political actions. We emphasize, thus, the ways in which the interactions between musical practices/parties, bodies/corporealities and cities can be employed to create, mark, or transform the meanings of individual and collective experiences, as well as our understanding of them.

"Far away from the capitals": Porto Alegre's Electronic Music Scene

It is important to provide context for Porto Alegre's electronic music scene, Brazil's southernmost capital, which has gone through several waves. There are divergent opinions regarding the possible beginnings of the scene, but according to the "native history" and mythical accounts shared by Fontanari's research collaborators (2003), reports date back to a party in 1991 or 1992 that brought together around 50 people at a nightclub called Porto de Elis.3 However, it is commonly discussed among those who experienced the scene in the 1990s, that 1993 was the year when Porto Alegre effectively launched itself into the country's electronic music circuit with the LM Party, which featured performances by international artists including Moby and Altern8.

During the mid-1990s, the buzz of raves and other parties spread club culture—as well as subgenres like techno, house and trance, among others—to certain parts of the city. This coincided with a decline in the popularity of the so-called gaucho rock genre produced in the city. Gaucho rock—as a distinct facet of the broader Brazilian rock (BRock) scene that originated in the 1970s—reached its peak in the 1980s. Its identity was characterized by a fusion of punk rock, new wave sounds and ironic lyrics that reflected the language of the city's youth (Govari 2020), contrasting with the aesthetic features of electronic music culture.

It is important to highlight that many participants in the early-1990s electronic music scene in Porto Alegre either came from, or were part of, the alternative rock scene. Club

culture (Thornton 1996) initially reached the city through the exchange of records brought back by travelers and ideas among DJs and partygoers. The profile of these individuals was predominantly white, cisgender, middle- to upper-class and university-educated, although among them there were people who identified with other gender identities, referred to at that time as GLS (Gays, Lesbians, and Sympathizers).4 In the 1990s—according to Fontanari (2003)—the scene had a well-defined public, consisting of young communication undergraduate students from the two largest universities in the city: UFRGS and PUCRS.5 Many of the influential figures in the scene at that time had access to travel, both internationally and to São Paulo—considered the model city for the scene in Brazil.

Despite their connections with the country's largest city, participants in the scene still perceived themselves as people coming from the idea of a province or the countryside, both as a form of regional identification and a form of scorn, in dialogue with the gaucho rock scene.

> The idea of 'province', periphery, region, is used in a paradoxical sense. While the notion of 'province' is used to refer to the local scene, it is also connected to the rest of the world. 'Our' culture is also the one that comes from outside, and the 'capital of the gaúchos' of which 'we are taking control', is the city where we were born (Fontanari 2003: 64).

On the other hand, while the gaucho rock scene was treated by the press and media as a scene whose identity was tied to the city (Bonfim 2016; Govari 2020), the same did not apply to electronic music, which was related to the perspective of drug use. The media within the scene itself (webzines, internet forums) would focus on the idea of community and the so-called P.L.U.R. (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect) set of principles, which were part of what the participants of the scene and researchers like Garcia (2020) referred to as the "vibe".

Another interesting aspect of this initial period is linked to the means of communication, especially the internet. Given the profile of the majority of participants in this scene—students and young people from middle- or upper-class backgrounds—already had access to the internet at a time when it was not yet so common in Brazil, it is understood that the internet played a central role in disseminating club culture and promoting events (Fontanari 2003). In addition, the internet fostered a sense of community in virtual environments and forums such as the #Tecno-RS channel on IRC, the e-zine E-ar (Electronic Alternative Resistance) and later on websites like Poavibe (later Poabeat), all of this predating the formation of social networking sites and digital platforms as we understand them today.6

During this period, most of the parties took place in the central regions of the city between the following neighborhoods: Centro Histórico, Bomfim, Independência, and Cidade Baixa or further south from the city, but still along the margins of Guaiba Lake, according to Fontanari's cartography (2003). Geographically, Porto Alegre's downtown is not located in the middle of the city but alongside the Guaiba Lake (previously categorized as a river and estuary by geographers); so, the nightlife of the city has always had a strong

connection to the territory surrounding the freshwater and the harbor.

Towards the late-1990s and early-2000s, a process of professionalization of the amateur cena eletrônica (or "electronic scene" in English) began, with the creation of event production companies, agencies and education for DJs and producers. Moreover, the rave parties grew larger, reaching different types of audiences. The connections with alternative fashion events and fairs like Mix Bazar, and electronic music expanding from the dance floors and the internet to the radio, further facilitated its popularization and the expansion of the events themselves. This brought with it complexities and contradictions around this movement and, later on, a certain saturation with a decrease in the number of parties, accompanied by increasing ticket prices as the audience changed.

In the 2000s, with the rise of subgenres with more broken beats such as breakbeats, jungle and drum 'n' bass, the itinerant party Quarta Quebrada gained prominence and attracted Black DJs and Black people from the start, as these subgenres originated in the peripheries of the city. In the late-2000s, DJs like Eduardo Herrera (who moved to London) and Fabricio Peçanha (who became famous in the mainstream circuit and moved to Santa Catarina) left the city. During this period, there was also a resurgence of other genres and styles of parties, sometimes focused on nostalgia for the 1970s and 1980s, or pop rock, diva-centric pop music and indie rock cover bands (Amaral and Sartori 2017).

The 2010s were years in which the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre was reduced to a few events and some parties more connected to the visual and audiovisual arts scene, as well as having a relationship with different alternative aesthetics and public policies. Among the initiatives for re-existence, we highlight the Kino Beat festival: "a project created in 2009 by the DJ Gabriel Cevallos as a showcase of music-related films of the Porto Alegre Department of Culture. It keeps evolving, incorporating new languages and formats every year" (Kino Beat 2025).

The Kino Beat Festival continues to this day and has maintained its more experimental focus, expanding the concept of electronic dance music beyond the traditional club setting, as well as hosting artist residences. While other sporadic electronic music events either focused on mainstream circuit parties or parties that emulated the nostalgia of the 90s, the more alternative Kino Beat project occupies an in-between space, although it is still predominantly characterized by a production focused on a middle- to upper-class, university-educated and white audience. The theme of technology—a central theme for electronic music since its inception—alongside the audiovisual aspects that have always been important to the scene, continue to be part of its configuration in the city.

In the late-2010s, with the popularization of home production technologies, the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre—and the metropolitan region—became virtualized, and the production of subgenres such as vaporwave, futurefunk and trap, among others, emerged and spread through digital platforms. The scene has become less focused on the streets and nightclubs, and more focused on performances and online networks, as reported by Conter (2016) in his media archaeology of electronic music in Rio Grande do Sul.

The transformations in the scene during this period were technological, social and generational, among others, shaping a new circuit of music producers and audiences that were not centered in the city's downtown area but rather in its outskirts and peripheries. There was also an increased presence of different aesthetics and social and gender identities, with a slightly higher representation of women but still a minority in terms of racial diversity, according to research interviews conducted by Conter and Sartori (2019). The researchers have also noted that there were few aesthetic references to the city or regional identity in these musical and audiovisual productions, as they often opted for transnational references and critiques of the capitalist system and mainstream culture.

During this period, the organization of street parties became more complex due to a series of municipal administrations linked to right-wing governments. Their regulations profoundly affected the city's nightlife and the notion of occupying public spaces until the the post-pandemic period of the early 2020s, when they started gaining more space again.

5 Years of Coletivo T: A Party as a Political Act and the Changes in the Electronic Dance Music Scene of Porto Alegre

Coletivo T (or Collective T in English), created in the city of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, in 2018, is a collective composed of LGBTQIA+ DJs, performers, and producers, with 75% of the members identifying themselves as trans and/or non-binary people. The group emerged with the aim of promoting the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ professionals in the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre. The focus of Coletivo T has arisen from a history of the erasure of LGBTQIA+ individuals in parties organized by other collectives, as well as the need to create a safe space where marginalized people could occupy and express themselves, being fully heard and respected.

In addition to organizing parties, the collective created the subdivision T REC., an independent record label. In their first release, they brought together 20 LGBTQIA+ Latin American artists in a compilation called VITAMINA T (2021a). Alongside this project, the album Tramóia (2021b) was also released, featuring tracks from four artists from the collective. The realization of these projects was supported by Beck's beer.

In 2023, Coletivo T celebrated its fifth anniversary. In order to make the occasion memorable, the collective organized the event Jardim T: 5 anos de travessia (translating to English as Garden T: 5 years of crossing). The event took place on two Sundays in April at Jardim Lutzenberger, at the Casa de Cultura Mario Quintana (CCMQ), located in downtown Porto Alegre. The event was made possible through an open call for trans artists promoted by CCMQ, an institution affiliated with the State Department of Culture, whose aim was to bring visibility to the trans cause. The event was conceived by Pétrus Vargas, artistically known as PV5000, one of the founders of Coletivo T.

In this article, we focus on the first date of the event, which took place on April 23, starting at 5:00 PM with a panel discussion on event production and the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre, featuring DJs Nogayra and PV5000, as well as other members of the

collective. From 7:00 PM, the DJs played music for the party, which ended at 10:00 PM. At the beginning, the host, Isa Blame, guided the conversation, asking questions for the members of Coletivo T to answer.

The event began before sunset, something that was mentioned by Pétrus as an important aspect for the collective, because the opportunity to occupy a public space during the day to talk about cultural production has been very rare for the LGBTQIA+ community, especially for trans people. Usually, these groups only find space at night, at parties, where their knowledge is rendered invisible and their voices are silenced. During the panel discussion, different themes emerged, and we will delve into them here: the beginnings of the parties; identity construction and changes in the electronic music scene through partying as a political act; the first street event, as well as music references.

Pétrus Vargas (DJ PV5000) explains that Coletivo T started together with Bruno Louzada (DJ Baroque Angel) in 2018, producing a party in the 4th district with various performances and DJs.7 However, they ended up accumulating a large debt because they didn't have experience in event production, which led them to pause the parties for a while. In 2019, they went back to hosting events, but on a much smaller scale, with small parties. Before the gentrification process, the abandoned factories in the 4th district hosted the first Coletivo T parties. Pétrus mentions that one of the parties even took place in an industrial kitchen, site of a former medicines factory.

Gradually, other members have joined the collective. Bruno explains that it was during this period that they began to understand what they wanted to convey through the party and the visual direction they intended to pursue, working with designer Librae, who continues to shape the visual identity of the collective. Later on, multidisciplinary artist Isabela Pereira (also known as Bela) from Ceará joined the collective and moved to Porto Alegre, where she started DJing. Shortly after, Una (DJ Nogayra) also joined the collective. All these people mentioned are transgender and this is how the identity of Coletivo T and its members has developed collectively. As Pétrus says:

> I transitioned while already being a part of T [Coletivo T], so it's crazy how the collectives you're a part of change with you, and you change with them. I think that's the power of a collective... It's crazy to find yourself within the identities of others, you know? I think that happened to me a lot, like being in a space where there are few identities and then starting to discover others and discover yourself through others. And I think that T was a lot of that, we were discovering ourselves through each other (Vargas 2023).

In this excerpt, Pétrus emphasizes how the collective helped him find his own gender identity through his relationships with other transgender people. Through encountering different identities, the DJ began to see and understand himself as a transgender man. Therefore, while the identity of a collective is shaped and transformed by the individuals who are part of it, those involved also have their identities shaped and transformed by the collective.

This process of identity construction is reflected in the production of events, as parties have a political dimension, enabling different bodies and identities—previously erased and marginalized—to occupy spaces in the city. They not only occupy the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre but also transform it. This transformation began before the creation of Coletivo T. Pétrus mentions that in 2017, Greta, the women's collective he was a part of, started including transgender people on the guest lists for their parties, something that was already happening at some events in São Paulo.

> And then, at this first Greta party, I met Marine, who is a photographer, and Isabela, who was this girl who later joined [Colecttive] T. And they, two transgender girls, much younger than us, they came and said: 'Dude, we only came because you created this list, because we see it happening in many places and only now have you realized it, but we came here to tell you that this is dope'. And then we started becoming friends with them, ya know? Then we started exchanging and stuff, and then Marine joined Greta and said, 'Okay, listen, now I'm going to make the list, now a trans person will make a trans list'. And then, at the second Greta party, there were like ten trans people. Damn, ya know, I didn't even know all of this existed in Porto Alegre at that time. And now, these days, we see that trans people, they like being in the space. Because it's no longer a hostile space, because, man, when you're alone in a place, it's not good, ya know. It's not good to be the only trans person in this environment, especially in the electronic music scene, that doesn't fit (Vargas 2023).

The trans list is an example of an initiative that allowed people with other gender identities to go to parties whose public was predominantly composed of cisgender and heterosexual people, thus redefining the electronic music scene of the city. Pétrus recalls that when they started going to parties in 2015, there were already collectives organizing electronic music events, but there were hardly any LGBTQIA+ people in those places (Vargas 2023). Una emphasizes that besides occupying spaces, it is important to create mechanisms for dissident individuals to feel comfortable, accepted, and respected in the venue (Nogeira 2023).

Bringing this theme into dialogue beyond the collective, rather than limiting it within the group, increases awareness among the community attending the events. One of the members of T, known as DJ Lovinho, commented on the need for opportunities like this:

> It is very important that T has been selected in this call for proposals to show the people who attend the party, especially cisgender and white individuals who don't have much perspective beyond going to a party (...) There is a whole lot of work that people completely take for granted. There are people who mess up, people who are not in their place, cisgender white men who end up messing up in a scene that is not theirs, who don't know half of the struggle it is. T being selected in this call for proposals helps to show that it's really awesome, it's not just a party, ya know (Escobar 2023).

One of the biggest events of Coletivo T took place in October 2022, hosted in response to incidents of transphobia at a party in Porto Alegre organized by another collective. Pétrus also admits having experienced transphobia alongside friends. They didn't receive any support from other people present who witnessed the prejudice. Una believes this has to do with the comfortable position that cisgender people are in and how the demands of trans people are not a priority for them. Transphobia also manifests itself in silencing, as when one is aware that a trans person is being discriminated against without taking a stand against it, means being complicit.

In order to address these problems, the collective members had internal discussions and decided not to talk about instances of transphobia on Instagram, the main social media platform used by the group. They decided instead to turn the situation into an opportunity to showcase the quality of work by trans DJs and performers. The party where the transphobic incident occurred was sponsored by Beck's beer. Therefore, they reached out to the company to expose what had happened and propose a party entirely produced by trans people. This is how Coletivo T's first party in a public space Destrava a Rua (translating to English as Unlock the Street), happened with the support of Beck's. The event was entirely led by trans people, including transgender, transmasculine and non-binary individuals, in various roles such as DJs, performers, the visuals team, hosts, MCs, planners, bar tenders and general staff.

When it comes to musical subgenres, Pétrus mentions that house was one of his first influences, but he felt the need to hear something at the parties with lyrics that he could better relate to, since he had limited knowledge of the English language. Therefore, when he decided to start DJing, he made the choice to include more Brazilian songs in his sets. Una adds this has an impact on the dance floor, that people resonate and interact more with the music. They opt for more underground Brazilian artists from funk and rap, particularly from the LGBTQIA+ community. However, they also mix Brazilian music with subgenres like house and techno.

In considering these statements, we can identify in the practices of Coletivo T the ongoing importance of resistance tactics mobilized to create, occupy and transform space. In other words, there was initially a need to create a collective in order to strengthen these individuals through horizontal unity. Thus, the trans lists were created, allowing people with other genre identities to join the parties. Subsequently, the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre has become increasingly occupied by transgender people, both as partygoers, as producers and organizers. This led to the recognition of the need to transform the scene to make it safer and more accessible for these dissident identities. Although this process is still ongoing, there are already visible signs of change, with new aesthetics and music being created, transforming the electronic music scene in Porto Alegre through the influence of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Final Considerations

The objective of this article is to understand electronic dance music parties from the perspective of the Global South, drawing on affect theory as an analytical framework and using the case study the parties organized by Coletivo T in the city of Porto Alegre (southern region of Brazil). We observed that the experiences generated by music and sonorities are intertwined with political dimensions related to corporealities and affective processes, which are appropriated, developed and expressed by dissident identity formations in that context. Our discussion of parties, corporealities and urban spaces has been developed through an archeology of the urban electronic dance music scene, which has evolved into a form distinct from its original configuration, producing both ruptures and continuities in the aesthetics and identities of these events and their participants.

Regarding corporealities and identities, what can be observed is that in the 1990s, the electronic music scene in the city was predominantly composed of cis gay men and some cis lesbian women, with a predominance of white, heterosexual individuals from middle-class backgrounds. In the 2000s, with the rise of drum and bass, there began to be a greater presence of Black people, something that is even more noticeable nowadays. In recent years, this scene has increasingly highlighted the presence of transgender people and people from different social classes, including those from peripheral areas. While this does not necessarily indicate an egalitarian and prejudice-free scene, it does point to greater diversity and internal differentiation, offering possibilities for the construction of more equitable and plural spaces and interactions that must be taken into account from intersectional perspectives.

In terms of the geographical spaces in the city utilized by this electronic music circuit, a continuity is perceived, where the parties continue to occupy the central area of the city, which is built along the banks of the Guaíba Lake. It can be inferred that this may be linked to the hegemonic presence of rap and other genres in the peripheral and metropolitan areas of the city, establishing more entrenched acoustic territorialities (and musical consumption). Young people from the periphery who enjoy and identify with electronic music parties often need to travel to the centre, exposing the limitations and constraints imposed by the dynamics of access as well as (physical and symbolic) mobilities in the city.

When it comes to the dimensions of work within the scene, it can be observed that it has gone through waves of amateurism and professionalization since its inception. This can be noticed, for example, in the collaboration with clothing and beverage brands at different times. This seems to impact the cycles of this scene and its political aspects or meanings. While in the beginning the parties had more universal and abstract themes such as peace, unity and respect, nowadays the political dimension is expressed through the affirmation, resistance and visibility of identity issues. These strategies are simultaneously political and affective, as the performative dimensions of corporealities take center stage. We call attention to the fact that, in terms of media production and consumption, the use of the internet emerged in the early days of the scene—initially with e-zines, web flyers,

and websites—and has continued with digital platforms (Instagram), but with different approaches and usage strategies.

The musical practices and parties of Coletivo T bring out the search for non-heteronormative spaces and connections, where music plays a central role as a mediator of encounters, sharing, affections and the construction of subjectivities (Vila 2017). They promote, hence, environments of joint production and creation, as well as possibilities for multiple and dissident existences in the redefinition and occupation of urban spaces with their bodies, presences, temporalities and aesthetic, cultural, communicative and political deeds.

In this sense, affective circuits are developed based on interaction, intersubjectivity and the ability to affect and be affected by other bodies, facilitated by sounds, vibrations, socialities and encounters. Therefore, we emphasize the ways in which the interactions between musical practices and parties in the city, bodies, corporealities and affects can be employed, creating, marking, or transforming the meanings of individual and collective experiences, as well as our understanding of them.

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Notes

1 Duffy (2017) discusses the work of digital influencers as "aspirational labor," since it creates a form of connection with audiences in which the work produced on digital platforms generates a sense of identification and desire to be part of that circuit as well.

2 This is not an exhaustive literature review of all the works that have delved into this thematic articulation. We merely highlight some reflections that help us perceive this analytical perspective in Latin America.

3 The name of this nightclub was a reference to the popular Brazilian Music singer Elis Regina, born and raised in Porto Alegre (Brasil).

4 The interviews from Fontanari's research (2003) have already demonstrated that even at this time there were discussions about gender, ethnicity and social class with the participation of working-class individuals, non-heterosexual individuals and non-white individuals, nonetheless in a very incipient way. Regarding gender issues, many interviewees revealed that their participation in the scene helped them "come out of the closet" and construct their identities.

5 The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul.

6 The E-ar was an electronic fanzine (e-zine) sent via email and produced amateurishly by members of the scene.

7 Former industrial hub of Porto Alegre, where the neighborhoods Floresta, Farrapos, Humaitá, Marcílio Dias, Navegantes and São Geraldo are located, in the northeast zone. Due to flooding, industries gradually vacated the area. Subsequently, the old warehouses and abandoned factories began to be used for hosting parties. Currently, the region is undergoing a process of gentrification due to a revitalization plan initiated by the municipal government of Porto Alegre, which is focused on higher-income populations. Bonfim and Amaral (2017) have observed the beginning of this gentrification process.

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