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ARTICLE

"Organizing" must go on: theoretical proposals for understanding live organizations

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Abstract

The creative industries sector is a field where art, culture, technology, entertainment, and management converge. Although it is a promising field for organizational analysis, mainly because it is characterized by dynamism, complexity, and possible contradictions between art/culture and business, little is known about creative work or the organization of creative products or services. Some products of the creative industries have some particularities, such as "live" performances, presented with the presence of an audience in the space and moment in which the action takes place, being organized and experienced simultaneously. Given the scarcity of empirical studies aimed at understanding how artistic/cultural or entertainment events or performances are organized, this article, in the form of a theoretical essay, aims to present two theoretical-methodological approaches that can potentially be explored in understanding the processes of "live" organizing: Actor-Network Theory and the Dynamics of Organizational Routines. It is presented and justified why these approaches can be used to understand "live organizing," especially performing arts such as plays, operas, ballets, or popular and classical music concerts.

Keywords: Creative industries. Live organizing. Performing arts. Actor-Network Theory. Routine Dynamics.

O "organizar" must go on: propostas teóricas para a compreensão das "organizações ao vivo"

Resumo

As indústrias criativas referem-se a um campo de convergência entre arte, cultura, tecnologia, entretenimento e gestão. Embora seja um campo promissor para a análise organizacional, principalmente por ser caracterizado pelo dinamismo, complexidade e por possíveis contradições entre arte/cultura e negócios, pouco se sabe sobre o trabalho criativo ou a organização de produtos ou serviços criativos. Alguns produtos das indústrias criativas possuem certas particularidades, como as performances "ao vivo", apresentadas com a presença de público no espaço e no momento em que a ação acontece, sendo organizada e vivenciada ao mesmo tempo. Diante da escassez de estudos empíricos voltados para a compreensão de como eventos ou apresentações artístico-culturais ou de entretenimento são organizados, o presente artigo, no formato de ensaio teórico, tem como objetivo apresentar duas abordagens teórico-metodológicas que, potencialmente, podem ser exploradas para compreender os processos de organizar "ao vivo": a Teoria Ator-Rede e a Dinâmica das Rotinas Organizacionais. Tais teorias se apresentam e se justificam porque as referidas abordagens podem ser utilizadas na compreensão das "organizações ao vivo", principalmente as artes performáticas, como peças de teatro, óperas, balés ou concertos musicais populares e eruditos.

Palavras-chave: Indústrias criativas. Organizações ao vivo. Artes performáticas. Teoria Ator-Rede. Dinâmica de Rotinas Organizacionais.

La organización debe continuar: propuestas teóricas para entender las "organizaciones vivas"

Resumen

Las industrias creativas se refieren a un campo de convergencia entre arte, cultura, tecnología, entretenimiento y gestión. Aunque es un campo prometedor para el análisis organizacional, principalmente porque se caracteriza por el dinamismo, la complejidad y las posibles contradicciones entre el arte, cultura y negocios, se sabe poco sobre el trabajo creativo o la organización de productos o servicios creativos. Algunos productos de la industria creativa tienen ciertas particularidades, como las performances "en vivo", presentadas con la presencia de un público en el espacio y momento en el que se desarrolla la acción, siendo organizadas y vividas al mismo tiempo. Ante la escasez de estudios empíricos dirigidos a comprender cómo se organizan eventos o presentaciones artístico-culturales o de entretenimiento, este artículo, en formato de ensayo teórico, pretende presentar dos enfoques teórico-metodológicos que potencialmente pueden ser explorados en la comprensión de los procesos de organizar "en vivo": teoría del actor-red y la dinámica de las rutinas organizacionales. Dichas teorías se presentan y se justifican porque los enfoques antes mencionados pueden utilizarse para comprender las "organizaciones vivas", principalmente las artes escénicas como obras de teatro, óperas, ballets o conciertos de música popular y erudita.

Palabras clave: Industrias creativas. Organizaciones vivas. Artes escénicas. Teoría del actor-red. Dinámica de las rutinas organizacionales.

Article submitted on November 07, 2023 and accepted for publication on July 12, 2024.
[Translated version] Note: All quotes in English translated by this article's translator.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/1679-395120230217x

INTRODUCTION

The creative industries (CIs) denote a domain of convergence between art, culture, technology, entertainment, and commerce (Caves, 2000; Hartley, 2005), characterised by the production of symbolic goods (Throsby, 2001). These encompass activities such as advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, craftsmanship, design, fashion, film and video, leisure and interactive software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and IT services, as well as television and radio (DCMS, 2001). Within the so-called "experience economy" (Lampel & Germain, 2015), CIs have been increasingly acknowledged as key drivers of progress, development, and economic and urban growth (Lampel & Germain, 2015; Lazzeretti, Capone & Innocenti, 2018; Saucedo Estrada, 2022; Cederholm, Lindqvist, Sandström & Warkander, 2024). Beyond this, they reshape cultural landscapes and engage not only individuals, enterprises, and cities but also national and international governmental policies aimed at supporting and safeguarding cultural and economic sectors (Gilson, 2015).

Academic research on creative industries, their defining characteristics, and their role in the economic development of advanced capitalist societies has expanded considerably over the past two decades (Dorigatti, Been, Burroni et al., 2022; Cederholm et al., 2024). This has rendered them a recurring subject in academic journals and conferences worldwide (Lazzeretti, Capone & Innocenti, 2018), with scholars demonstrating a growing enthusiasm for creative sectors (Dharmani, Das & Prashar, 2021). Nonetheless, while creativity – whether individual or collective – is conceptualised both as a process and an outcome, we possess a reasonable understanding of what generates or predicts creativity, yet relatively little knowledge about the creative processes themselves or the manner in which creative outputs correlate with other key outcomes such as performance, efficiency, and satisfaction (Gilson, 2015).

The literature does not delve in depth into the management of creative labour within creative organisations (Oakley, 2004; Warhurst, 2010; Berubé & Demers, 2017), meaning that analyses of individual or collective creative work remain underexplored. There is a lack of case studies across diverse contexts employing various perspectives (Cederholm et al., 2024). Thus, despite the vast scholarship on creative sectors, further research is required to scrutinise the practices and intricacies of creative activities (Haugsevje, 2022).

Certain scholars devoted to the study of CIs uphold the view that the logic of creativity and the logic of organisation/management are so inherently distinct that they frequently stand in opposition to one another (Caves, 2000; Berubé & Demers, 2017). However, this is not the perspective adopted here. In contrast, we embrace an understanding in which organisational and managerial practices are interwoven with cultural, creative, and performative processes, each exerting mutual influence (Beech, Broad, Cunliffe, Duffy & Gilmore, 2015). Given that change, innovation, and flexible working arrangements are central to CIs, organisational theory has much to gain from examining the production practices of these industries (Beech et al., 2015), particularly when considering the creative sectors as pioneers and early adopters of novel organisational and commercial practices (Lampel & Germain, 2015).

Bibliometric studies on the field reveal its multifaceted, diffuse, and fragmented nature (Lazzeretti, Capone & Innocenti, 2018; Dharmani, Das & Prashar, 2021; Saucedo Estrada, 2022), a characteristic largely attributed to CIs representing an emergent academic domain. Despite significant growth over the past two decades, this field remains in its nascent stage (Dharmani, Das & Prashar, 2021). This is partially explained by the heterogeneous nature of CIs, comprising various industries that differ in size, structure, workforce skill levels, task interdependencies, complexity, and the type of work produced (Gilson, 2015).

Utilising scientometric and bibliometric analyses, Dharmani, Das, and Prashar (2021) conducted a study that established an intellectual framework for academic comprehension of the CI field between 2000 and 2020. Employing the same classification as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2010; 2022), the authors observed that the arts sector (including theatre, live music, dance, opera, circus, puppetry, painting, sculpture, photography, and antiques) has received less scholarly attention than functional creations (publishing, print media, film, television, radio, and other broadcasting) and media (interior design, graphic design, fashion, jewellery, toys, research and development, architecture, advertising, and digital services and products). The arts sector ranks above only the heritage sector (craftsmanship, festivals and celebrations, archaeological sites, museums, libraries, and exhibitions) in terms of academic focus. The most extensively explored organisational aspects across the field are organisational culture, structure, power, and politics (Dharmani, Das & Prashar, 2021).

Consequently, relatively little is known about the performing arts within the broader arts category, which, according to UNCTAD (2010; 2022), encompasses creative sectors grounded solely in art and culture, with artistic endeavours inspired by heritage, identity values, and symbolic meaning. This category is subdivided into two principal groups: visual arts (painting, sculpture, photography, and antiques) and performing arts (live music, theatre, dance, opera, circus, puppetry, etc.).

If we consider theatre as a representative of the performing arts, for instance, it appears to be overlooked as an organisation within the field of Organisational Studies (OS). The literature tends to explore it either as a metaphor (Clark & Mangham, 2004; Cornelissen, 2004; Vera & Crossan, 2004; Biehl-Missal, 2010; Sinha, 2010; Sharma & Grant, 2011; Cassinger & Thelander, 2020) or as a form of intervention/tool in organisational change processes, training, learning, or crisis management (Schreyägg, 2001; Meiseck, 2002; Meisiek, 2004; Nissley, Taylor & Houden, 2004; Schreyägg & Häpfl, 2004; Pruetipibultham & Mclean, 2010; Gagnon, Vough & Nickerson, 2012; Boje, Rosile, Saylors & Saylors, 2015; Tawadros, 2015), rather than as a type of organisation or as the outcome of organising processes.

Given the points presented, we now turn our attention to the organisation of the performing arts. While all artistic or creative work resulting from the creative industries (CIs) entails the production of goods and services, the works or objects generated by the performing arts – such as theatre productions, operas, ballets, or musical concerts, both popular and classical – are distinctive in that they are (re)produced or (re)organised on each occasion of their performance, in the presence of an audience: "each is a unique piece of work – a 'prototype' – that emerges from the place and time of its making" (Greig & Nicolini, 2015, p. 188).

In the performing arts, and in how they manifest or unfold in and during their performances, the "how it is done" or "how it is organised" is inseparable from "its outcome while it is being organised". Regarding the particularities of this type of organisation, Greig and Nicolini (2015) draw on the words of Joni Mitchell when referring to musical concerts, to highlight the performative nature of music in contrast with other artistic activities.

> That's one thing that's always, like, been a difference between, like, the performing arts, and being a painter, you know. A painter does a painting, and he paints it, and that's it, you know. He has the joy of creating it, it hangs on a wall, and somebody buys it, and maybe somebody buys it again, or maybe nobody buys it and it sits up in a loft somewhere until he dies. But he never, you know, nobody ever, nobody ever said to Van Gogh, 'Paint a Starry Night again, man!' You know? He painted it and that was it" – Goni Mitchell, Miles of Aisles (Greig & Nicolini, 2015, p. 188).

A piece of music, a theatrical performance, a concert, an opera, or a choreography may be conceived, yet they truly come into existence as complete artistic works only when they are performed before an audience in a specific location and moment in time. For such occurrences to materialize – be it within a season, a tour, or a singular event – organisational efforts are indispensable to sustain the work as it unfolds before the public. A performance, in this sense, constitutes an intangible artistic entity, an ephemeral experience (Boesch, 1997). Its realisation necessitates a sophisticated network of agencies, without which the endeavour would be unattainable. These are circumstances in which diverse actions, efforts, resources, and individuals must be orchestrated in seamless synchrony, with relationships that emerge and dissolve in the pursuit of producing and executing a live performance (Greig & Nicolini, 2015). The success of such an undertaking hinges on meticulous coordination and articulation of every action to weave together the final outcome (Weeks, 1990). Although each performance is inherently unique, there exist established mechanisms for managing such processes, much like in other domains of artistic production, such as television and cinema (Bechky, 2006).

How, then, can we study the organisational frameworks that underpin these events, or move towards a deeper understanding of how they unfold, given their defining characteristic – their live nature? This is the central inquiry guiding the present research, conceived as a theoretical essay with the objective of presenting, and thereby proposing, two theoretical approaches that may offer valuable perspectives in comprehending the processes involved in live organising. To that end, we adopt a processual perspective on organisations, specifically drawing from the ontology of becoming (Cooper & Law, 1995), wherein organisations are understood as evolving processes – verbal rather than nominal entities (Chia, 1995, 1996; Cooper & Law, 1995; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) – emerging as a result of organising practices and processes (Weick, 1979; Czarniawska, 2004), rather than as fixed, homogeneous, and stable entities. While the latter perspective aligns with modernist thought, which assumes reality to be a given, prioritising stability, absence of conflict, and structural determinism, the former is in harmony with postmodern

thought, which perceives reality as fluid, heterogeneous, and precarious (Duarte & Alcadipani, 2016). The notion of becoming encapsulates the idea that organisations are in a perpetual state of flux, continuously emerging and evolving.

A processual lens on organisations unlocks new avenues for investigating the production of organisation rather than the organisation of production (Cooper & Burrell, 1988). From this standpoint, organisation is construed not as a predefined structure, but rather as an outcome, an ongoing product of organising (Czarniawska, 2004). As Czarniawska (2006, p. 1557) asserts, "organizations have never explained anything; organizations have to be explained". This approach challenges the hegemonic ontology of organisations as discrete entities (or "substantives") possessing intrinsic properties, which, although frequently presupposed, can prove elusive in practice (Czarniawska, 2008). By contesting rigid conceptions embedded in organisational metanarratives and rejecting the notion of organisation as a fixed, solid entity with well-defined boundaries, rationality, and explicit objectives, the processual approach – as suggested by Cooper and Law (1995) – adopts a post-structuralist stance. It conceives organisations as fluid constructs, with loosely delineated boundaries and functions of varying degrees of discreteness, in which the fundamental organisational challenge lies in managing interdependent functions to achieve ostensibly well-defined objectives through more or less structured plans and programmes. In this way, postmodern thought underscores the transient and ephemeral nature of reality, privileging an ontology of movement (becoming ontology) that reorients analytical focus away from static states and entities towards the dynamic interactions and relational patterns embedded in the flow and transformation of our social worlds (Chia, 1995).

Although still a niche area of inquiry, certain studies have applied processual perspectives to the organisational dynamics of the creative industries. Internationally, Endrissat, Islam, and Noppeney (2016) examined the micro-processes of creative labour in perfume production, while Cnossen and Bencherki (2018) adopted an organising-as-practice perspective to demonstrate the role of space in shaping and sustaining new organisations, such as creative hubs.

In Brazil, scholars have likewise engaged with this approach. Davel and Viana (2012), for instance, explored the everyday work practices within a theatre and dance foundation, while Oliveira (2016) examined organisational practices within the circus. Turetta and Alcadipani (2011) and Júlio (2016) investigated the organisation of samba school parades, whereas Possas, Medeiros, and Valadão (2017) analysed the organising processes of a theatre group. Rufino, Moreira de Souza, and Lopes et al. (2017) examined the organisational practices of a competitive "quadrilha junina" group; Duarte (2019) delved into the production of a musical theatre show, and Dias, Ipiranga, and Bezerra (2021) scrutinised the temporary organising of a music festival. It is worth noting, however, that while some of these studies approach the notion of "live organising" (Turetta & Alcadipani, 2011; Duarte, 2019; Dias, Ipiranga & Bezerra, 2021), none have explicitly centred their investigations on it in the manner proposed by this essay. Moreover, Schuessler, Svejenova, and Cohendet (2021) contend that further scholarly engagement is required to advance theoretical understanding, empirical insights, and methodological approaches for studying creativity as an unfolding process.

Guided by the organising perspective, this study turns to Actor-Network Theory (and After) (ANT and After) and the Organisational Routines Dynamics, introducing these frameworks as promising theoretical approaches to elucidate the phenomenon of organisations that emerge and operate in a live context.

Considering the inherent liveness of certain activities within the creative industries – such as theatrical performances, dance productions, opera, ballet, festivals, or musical concerts, in which performativity is Paramount – we argue that investigating the organising processes underlying such events offers a unique opportunity to delve into organising in action and its immediate outcomes. This exploration also serves to illuminate the intricate and multifaceted nature of creative industry products and services, particularly those that take place in real-time, characterised by their material heterogeneity, the presence and interaction of an audience within a defined space and time, and their seemingly precarious stability—an ephemeral state sustained through continuous effort. We contend that advancing our understanding of the specificities of live performances and presentations can yield valuable insights and contribute to the theorisation of creative industry products and services, as well as analogous organisational forms in other sectors that share similar characteristics, such as project-based endeavours, temporary teams, and the orchestration of unique events.

ACTOR-NETWORK THEORY (AND AFTER)

The Actor-Network Theory (ANT), or Sociology of Translation, an approach developed from the Sociology of Science and Technology (SST) (Law, 1992; Calás & Smircich, 1999), integrates the ensemble of material semiotics, which also includes feminist material semiotics, the successor projects of these two traditions, and a series of workstreams related to disciplines such as social and cultural anthropology, cultural studies, post-colonial studies, and geography (Law, 2007; 2019). Material semiotics presents itself as a set of tools and sensibilities for exploring how practices in the social world are woven from threads to form networks that are simultaneously semiotic – because they are relational and/or carry meanings – and material – because they refer to the physical matter embedded and shaped in these relationships (Law, 2019).

ANT posits that things take shape and acquire their attributes through a network of relations that establish themselves with one another, existing only through these relations (Law, 1999). While entities, in their broadest sense, are generally conceived as having stability and singularity (Law, 2002), ANT, by contrast, argues that they are a result achieved when different heterogeneous elements are continuously brought together, interacting with each other (Callon, 1986; Law, 1999). It is an empirical version of post-structuralism, grounded in empirical studies (Law, 2007; 2019).

The term actor-network is paradoxical in that it simultaneously includes the representation of both the actor and the network, reinforcing that, rather than being dual (actor/network), entities exist only within networks of relations, assuming the attributes of the entities that comprise them (Law, 1999). Thus, an actor does not act alone; it acts in relation to other actors, bound to them, which means it is also subject to the actions of other actors (Law & Mol, 2008). In this view, the social is constituted by a kind of momentary ordering, characterised by the association of materially heterogeneous elements, both human and non-human (Latour, 2012). ANT thus describes the materially and discursively heterogeneous relations that produce and re(order) all types of actors, including objects, human beings, machines, animals, nature, ideas, texts, organisations, inequalities, and geographical arrangements, among others (Law, 1992; 2007).

As a material semiotics, ANT assumes that there is no single social structure or form of standardisation, as these material and social networks and webs take different forms and styles (Law, 2019). Instead, the tools and sensibilities of material semiotics (and, consequently, ANT) are used to explore a wide range of topics, including how these weaving processes are achieved or fail in practice (Law, 2019). Thus, ANT and its tools investigate where these threads come from, what their character is, what they exclude, as well as their productivity and performativity, including the ways in which they shape the elements that constitute them, the agendas they carry, and the multiplicity of different realities that they "enact" (Law, 2019). The investigations of ANT also encompass how these threads or webs interact with one another, clash, or ignore each other, how they colonise or are colonised by other webs, how they produce domination, and how resistance to such forms of domination might occur (Law, 2019).

Studies grounded in the principles of ANT, particularly those developed in the 1980s and 1990s, have undergone various criticisms, which have spurred new developments in this approach, known as Actor-Network Theory and After (Law, 2007; Law & Hassard, 1999). The agenda of the "ANT and After" literature focused on recovering and problematising the basic principles of ANT, while further theorising it (Durepos & Mills, 2011).

One of the contributions of ANT and After is the notion of enactment or performativity (Law, 2007; Law, 2009; Mol, 2002; Camillis & Antonello, 2016), which is crucial to material semiotics, as it holds that nothing has reality or form outside of the enactment of relations (Law, 2002; 2007; 2009) that allow their existence. In English, enactment is akin to the term performance, and in various texts in the English language, both terms are used interchangeably as synonyms (Camillis & Antonello, 2016). Enactment refers to "the claim that relations, and so, realities [...] are being endlessly or chronically brought into being in a continuous process of production and reproduction, and have no status, standing, or reality outside those processes" (Law, 2002, pp. 159). What is different here, compared to earlier versions of ANT, is the idea of the enactment of network relations (which are also objects) in practices, and that nothing has "reality or form outside" of them. Regarding science, for example, and the broader collective world, scientific facts or particular realities "are produced along with the statements that report them" (Law, 2004, p. 38). However, these facts may appear independent, prior, singular, and so on, which is solely due to the fact that they have been produced in scientific practices; they are a consequence of the method that produced them (Law, 2004), demonstrating how methods are also immediately political (Cavalcanti & Alcadipani, 2013).

Thus, reality is no longer assumed to be independent, solid, prior, singular, or coherent (Law, 2009), but exists by being performed, "enacted" in practices (Law, 2007; 2009; Mol, 2002). In the field of ANT and After, Law (2009) defines practices as "detectable and somewhat ordered sets of material-semiotic relations" (Law, 2009, pp. 1-2). To study them is to undertake the analytical and empirical task of exploring possible patterns of relations and how these come together in specific places; it is to treat the real as that which is being related, "enacted", performed, materially and semiotically, in a given context that one seeks to understand (Law, 2009). Realities, objects, subjects, materials, and meanings, in whatever form they take, are all explored/comprehended as an effect of the relations that are bringing them together, making them, making them real. Practices are, therefore, sets of relations (assemblages) that make ("enact" or "perform") realities. Thus, realities are inseparable from the juxtapositions of patterns of practices (Law, 2009, pp. 1-2). In this way, different organisational realities do not precede practices but are shaped, performed, "enacted" by them (Mol, 1999; 2002; Law, 2019; Law & Mol, 2008).

To understand the organisation of a strawberry market, for example, Callon (2007) traced the webs of heterogeneous material practices that produce it, that "enact" it. Buyers, sellers, noticeboards, strawberries, spatial arrangements, economic theories, and rules of conduct – all these entities are interrelated, "enacting" or performing a set of practices that render reality (the market) more or less precarious, emphasising how networks of relations are performative, that they "make" things. "You cannot build a network, lock it in place, and throw away the key" (Law, 2019, p. 4). It and the relations that sustain it must be continuously made and remade to persist, to continue to exist. Everything is a process (Law, 2019). Entities are, therefore, reversibly performed through relations, for there is, in this approach, no fixed attribute for any entities in the network; they take shape within the relations they establish (Capaverde, França & Henriqson, 2022).

To perform or "enact", therefore, does not refer merely to something that has been done, in the sense of constructed and stabilised, though it may be destroyed and reconstructed (Law, 2004). Since they are inseparable, "enacting" means participating in the continuous artisanal practice of making reality, of bringing it into existence, in a combination of people, techniques, texts, arrangements, and natural phenomena, all of which are also "enacted" (Law, 2004). "If something is real, it is enacted" (Mol, 2002, p. 44); thus, one cannot speak of a reified stability or finality. If things seem solid, prior, independent, defined, and unique, it is because they are perhaps being "enacted and reenacted" in practices that are continuous and multiple (Law, 2004; Camillis & Antonello, 2016).

Considering that the ANT studies of the 1990s describe the generation of more or less precarious realities, Mol (2002) questioned a crucial assumption of these analyses: the fact that successful relations generate a single coordinated network and a single coherent reality. By observing objects as performed/"enacted" in practice, their nature and the possibilities present in this situation, in the enactment, also multiply. Reality is confusing; everything is located, fluid, and unstable (Rimpiläinen, 2009). Thus, if realities are performed, "enacted" in materially and relationally heterogeneous practices, different entities/objects are "enacted" in distinct practices, even though they may bear the same name (Law, 2004; 2019). While it may be tempting to think of distinct representations of the same object, this is not a matter of pluralism, but of multiplicity (Mol, 2002; Law, 2004; 2019). As Mol (2002) asserts, this difference must be understood ontologically, as it is no longer a matter of different perspectives on a single object, but of the enactment of different objects through different sets of relations and practice contexts.

In her research on atherosclerosis, Mol (2002) found that the notion of difference is crucial in healthcare, as different healthcare practices produce distinct diagnoses for individual patients. If we assume there is a single reality in the patient, we would say that different diagnostic techniques offer distinct perspectives on a single disease, a single reality. Instead, we might say that the different practices are weaving unequal, yet overlapping, versions of atherosclerosis. As in material semiotics, each practice generates its own reality, in atherosclerosis, there are four actor-networks or realities instead of one (Mol, 2002). The body, typically imagined as a singular entity, is also multiple because it is "enacted", performed in multiple practices. In theory, it may be singular, but in practice, it is multiple because there are many bodily practices and therefore many bodies (Mol, 2002). How these networks relate, if at all, is an empirical, practical matter (Law, 2007; Mol, 2002). Sometimes, and for a certain period of time, they may be coordinated into a single reality, but often this does not happen (Mol, 2002).

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In considering this complexity and multiplicity, material semiotics resists reductionism and assumes that the fabric of social life is confusing and multiple (Law, 2004; 2019; Tureta, Américo & Clegg, 2021), and since the fabrics are performative, different realities are being intertwined in distinct practices (Mol, 2002; Law, 2004). Thus, objects, entities, and realities become ontologically complex, multiple, or even mutually exclusive (Law & Singleton, 2005). Fragmenting them, however, as if they were plural, is to ignore these complex interconnections between them (Mol, 1999), which keep them stable, albeit precariously, even in the face of the continuous enactment between them.

ORGANISATIONAL ROUTINE DYNAMICS

The Routine Dynamics fundamentally concerns itself with transcending the view of routines as mere 'things' to comprehend them as continuous, 'unfolding' processes (Feldman, Pentland, D'Adderio & Lazaric, 2016). Although descriptions of routines or formalised procedures may exist without being implemented, Routine Dynamics asserts that these are ontologically processes, not entities, and come into existence (and continue to exist) as they are enacted by people and artefacts. As a result of this ontology, dynamism is intrinsic to routines (Feldman, Pentland, D'Adderio et al., 2021).

Organisational routines can be defined as"repetitive,recognizable patterns of interdependent actions, carried out by multiple actors"(Feldman & Pentland, 2003, p. 25). Hiring, budgeting, developing, and producing goods and services are examples of routines, which are essential to the manner in which work is carried out within organisations (March & Simon, 1958; Cyert & March, 1963; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Routines are, therefore, predominantly associated with stability and inertia, in such a way that changes or unexpected occurrences are considered anomalies, aberrations.

Feldman and Pentland (2003) challenged the traditional understanding of routines as generators of organisational inertia and proposed a new ontology for routines within organisations. Research following this reorientation focuses on the internal dynamics of routines, comprising a field known as Routine Dynamics (Feldman, 2016; Feldman et al., 2021), which has been developed based on studies comprising ethnographic observations, interviews, and archival data (Feldman et al., 2021) and is grounded in practice theories, ethnomethodology, Actor-Network Theory, and sociomateriality (Feldman et al., 2016; Feldman et al., 2021). As Tsoukas (2021) notes, Routine Dynamics "challenged what the entitative approach took for granted: the key question is not what routines do [...], but 'how routines are done'"(p. 37). And because routines are performative, the way they are done affects what they do (Feldman & Pentland, 2022).

Such research highlights a close connection between routines, practices, and processes (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2016), focusing on the idea that routines, as practices, emerge through their own enactment and their relationship with other practices (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). Like practice theories in general, Routine Dynamics examines how actions (re)create structures that constrain and enable ongoing actions (Feldman & Pentland, 2022). Routine Dynamics treats routine as a lived experience, not as an abstraction. In practice, routines are situated; they are performed and experienced by specific people at particular times and places (Feldman et al., 2016; Feldman et al., 2021; Feldman & Pentland, 2022). Adopting this theoretical lens of practice (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Nicolini, 2017), more recent studies have begun to open the "black box"of routine, examining the situated actions through which routines are enacted (Feldman, 2000).

From this perspective, routines are dynamic in at least two respects. First, the patterns of action are temporal, as no routine can occur instantaneously or persist indefinitely:"like the flight of a bird, it exists as a trace through time and space. It is a process, not a thing"(Feldman et al., 2016, p. 505). Second, any recurring pattern of action may potentially change from one enactment, action (performance/enactment) to another:"like a folk song, there is always the possibility of a new verse"(Feldman et al., 2016, p. 505). In formal organisations, most routines do not resemble bird flights or folk songs. However, when closely examined, routines also do not appear as fixed or static entities. Organisational routines are dynamic because they exist through a process of (re)production, over time and space, through the continued effort of actants (people and things) (Feldman et al., 2016).

To theorise how routines are both a source of change and stability, Feldman and Pentland (2003) and Feldman et al. (2021) drew upon Latour's (2012) distinction between ostensive and performative. According to Latour (2012), social aggregates are not objects of an ostensive definition, such as cups, cats, and chairs, but of a performative definition. The object of an ostensive definition remains inert, regardless of what happens, but the object of a performative definition disappears when it is no longer (re)produced, performed, or when it is no longer acting, or, if it remains, this signifies that other agents have come into play:"If a dancer stops dancing, the dance is finished. No inertia will carry the show forward"(Latour, 2012, p. 63).

The proposal of Routine Dynamics is focused on the internal (or endogenous) process of routines, understood as the mutual constitution of the performative and ostensive aspects of routines (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Feldman, 2016; Feldman et al., 2021). The ostensive aspects of a routine incorporate what is typically thought of as structure and represent the abstract idea of the routine. The performative aspects consist of the specific actions, performed by specific people, at particular times and places, which bring the routine into existence (Feldman & Pentland, 2003). While the ostensive aspect refers to the abstract patterns of routines, it is relationally linked to performance (enactment). This allows Routine Dynamics to acknowledge the importance of abstract patterns without prioritising them over the actions that are integral to them. The notion that ostensive aspects are performed, 'enacted', and produced through action distances Routine Dynamics from a focus on patterns that are foreseen, intended, or mandatory (Feldman et al., 2021). The fact that both aspects are necessary for the existence of an organisational routine was a significant statement that further propelled the field by placing the performative and ostensive aspects in a mutually constitutive relationship with each other (Feldman et al., 2021). This body of theories provided a foundation for a new way of conceptualising routines and understanding the relationship between stability and change as a result of the internal or endogenous dynamics of routine. The outcome was a theory in which routines are understood as practices (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011).

Central to Routine Dynamics is the generative nature of social phenomena, so that many publications refer to it as a generative model of routines (generative systems) (Pentland et al., 2012; Feldman et al., 2021) and a performative model of routines (Feldman, 2000; 2003; Feldman & Pentland, 2003). As generative systems, routines create stability and change (Feldman & Pentland, 2008; 2022), for instead of understanding stability and change as two alternative states of being, focusing on action, on the routine, and specifically on how routines are enacted allowed researchers to see that change is part of stability, and stability is part of change (Feldman, 2016; Feldman et al., 2021). The theorisation of the dynamic aspects of routines helped to recognise that stability and change within routines are not opposites, but, in fact, are mutually constituted (Feldman et al., 2021).

To better express the processual dynamics of stability and change and recognise the various abstract patterns affecting the actions people perform within routines, Feldman et al. (2021) recently described the cycle as performance (performing) and standardisation. Performance refers to the actions that occur when performing or enacting routines; standardisation refers to the impact of patterns on actions and the continuous creation of patterns through actions. Performance and standardisation reflect an additional shift from the "entitative"mindset (typical of managerial/economic theory) to a more processual mindset (typical of practice-based theory) (Feldman et al., 2021; Feldman & Pentland, 2022).

Building on this generative or performative model, routines are created through the mutually constitutive and recursive interaction between the actions and efforts of actants (the performative aspect of routines) and the patterns that these actions create and recreate (the ostensive aspects of routines). The ostensive aspects (routine in principle) are multiple and non-unitary, as they depend on perspective and are therefore poorly represented by written rules or standard operating procedures. Performances of routines (specific actions taken by specific people at specific times and places) create, maintain, and modify the ostensive aspects of routines (the abstract patterns), and the ostensive aspects guide, refer to, and explain these performances. The interaction between these two aspects of routines produces a generative system that is more or less stable, depending on the variation of performances and the viewpoints from which people create patterns based on these performances (Feldman & Pentland, 2008; Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Pentland et al., 2012; Feldman et al., 2021).

The endogenous relationships between performative and ostensive aspects (actions and patterns of action) underlying the emerging accomplishments resulting from diverse actions and efforts are continuous and may produce relative stability. The interrelation between stability and change is central to Routine Dynamics, for what appears stable is, in fact, an accomplishment, the result of efforts that continuously enable and (re)produce a relative stability (Feldman et al., 2016; Feldman et al., 2021).

Flexibility or change in actions is often the path to achieving a stable pattern. Indeed, stability has been compared to walking a tightrope, a matter of constant adjustment, the result of which appears as sameness, stability, or apparent non-variation (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). The ontology of practice, the notion that social life emerges through practices, is implicit in this theorisation, but is not the main point (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011).

Research guided by Routine Dynamics, being based on fieldwork, has dissolved the illusion of sameness and simple repetition, allowing for a new use of the term "routine, while emphasising the work/effort required to make a repetitive action pattern appear "routine" (Feldman et al., 2016). While it remains convenient to grammatically use nouns to refer to routines, understanding them as practices and based on their dynamic nature allows us to go beyond a static view, in which routines are seen as stable things (Feldman et al., 2016), a perspective that limits the analysis of complex and multiple scenarios, further distancing the understanding of how routines are interconnected with themes such as innovation, change, learning, and improvisation.

It is also essential to highlight the role of sociomateriality within the field of Routine Dynamics. Initially, Pentland and Feldman (2005) described artefacts as important, yet exogenous to the generative system of routines, giving the impression that actions could be performed and patterns could emerge without artefacts. This idea was corrected in later research, such as the works of D'Adderio (2011), D'Adderio & Pollock (2020), and D'Adderio (2021), who transferred artefacts into the generative system, where they have remained. The heterogeneous configurations that shape routines are termed sociotechnical arrangements or sociomaterial sets (D'Adderio, 2008) and encompass a myriad of sociomaterial resources, such as texts, bodies, objects, values, etc. (Feldman et al., 2021). D'Adderio (2014, p. 1347), for instance, shows how routines change"dynamically as they are enacted through specific configurations of artifacts and communities which shape ostensive and action patterns leading to varying outcomes (i.e. alignment or improvement, replication or innovation)". The notion of sociomaterial arrangement helps us transcend the futile ontological separation between actors and artefacts, physical and material, objects and subjects, solid and fluid, while simultaneously contributing to theorising how emerging and heterogeneous sociomaterial configurations shape routines as they are enacted within and between organisational sites and over time (D'Adderio, 2014; Feldman et al., 2021).

DISCUSSION

When analysing performative spectacles/shows through the lens of Organisational Routine Dynamics, one can discern that these creative products or services are dynamic in at least two ways, as emphasised by Feldman et al. (2016) in reference to the endogenous processes that constitute routines.

Firstly, live performances are the result of temporal actions, confined to a specific moment and space (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Feldman et al., 2016), such that the experience lived by the audience is not infinite and is directly tied to the phenomenon unfolding before them. However, this does not imply that each performance or presentation will be mechanical and immutable, as there will always be some potential for change, to varying degrees (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Pentland et al., 2012; Feldman et al., 2021). This matter depends, for example, on the type of work being performed, the potential involvement of the audience, or factors such as technology, sound, stage size, number of people involved, and so on. The organisation and presentation of a classical music piece or a Shakespearean play, for instance, limit the possibilities for change, creation, or improvisation during the performance. A song written and composed by the singer and musicians participating in the live performance already offers more possibilities for changes, although it remains the same song composed previously.

The pattern of actions that constitutes the performance, however, is not a stable, immutable object, but may undergo alterations at each moment or occasion when the live presentation takes place, thereby exemplifying the performative and processual aspect of a routine (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Latour, 2012). The music or play, as an idea or abstract notion of routine, when understood as an ostensive aspect (Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Latour, 2012), remains the same, but the audience's experience only occurs when the ostensive (lyrics and music) is joined with the performative, when efforts between different actants are combined (lyrics, music, instruments, sound equipment, singer, band, stage, audience, lighting, etc.). Thus, through the lens of Routine Dynamics, a "live organisation" represents a generative or performative model or system of routines, which are composed of ostensive and performative aspects.

This generative system (Feldman & Pentland, 2008; Pentland et al., 2012; Pentland et al., 2012; Feldman et al., 2021) is thus simultaneously composed of stability and change, understood not as opposing states but as interdependent, so that change is part of stability and vice versa (Feldman, 2016; Feldman et al., 2021). Based on this generative or performative model, routines are created through the mutually constitutive and recursive interaction between the actions and efforts of actants (the performative aspect of routines) and the patterns these actions create and recreate (the ostensive aspects of routines) (Feldman & Pentland, 2008; Feldman, 2016; Feldman et al., 2021). How this generative system stabilises or how it changes, and the reasons for these shifts, are questions to be understood through empirical studies centred on routines understood as practices (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Feldman et al., 2021).

It is also important to note that the performance or presentation, even if it involves some level of surprise or improvisation, is not entirely "made in the moment". On the contrary, for the presentation to come to fruition, certain practices (routines), involving the gathering and stabilisation of actions, possibilities, materials, bodies, and various elements, are planned and executed in advance, resulting in a "choreography of organisation," yet closely related to practices that will only be performed during the live presentation.

For ANT (and After), live performances are constituted by a momentary arrangement (Latour, 2012), characterised by the association or network of relationships of materially heterogeneous elements being continuously brought together and interrelating (Latour, 2012; Law, 1999; Law & Mol, 2008; Latour, 2012).

In accordance with the notion of enactment or performativity (Law, 2007; Law, 2009; Mol, 2002; Camillis & Antonello, 2016), the practices that constitute the "live" spectacle/show are being brought into existence through a continuous process of (re)production of network relationships and do not exist outside of these procedural actions (Law, 2002; 2004). In this sense, a "live organisation" represents the enactment (or performance) of different materially heterogeneous practices, which intersect in such a way that what is witnessed or visible to the audience as a spectacle/show is the intertwining of these multiple realities. The social reality, in this case the performed spectacle, is not seen as independent, prior, solid, or coherent (Law, 2009), but comes to exist as "enacted" within practices (Law, 2007; 2009; Mol, 2002).

The likely distinguishing feature of ANT (and After) in understanding organisations as processes is the notion of multiple realities (Mol, 1999; 2002; Law, 2004; 2007; 2009) constructed, "enacted" from different practices (Mol, 2002; Law, 2007; 2009), which may or may not align or may even be mutually exclusive (Law & Singleton, 2005). From this perspective, for example, one can emphasise the complexity of the heterogeneous relationships that constitute the different practices that enable or bring the "live" spectacle/show into being. Understanding a "live presentation", as Law (2009) explained, is undertaking an analytical and empirical exercise to explore potential patterns of relationships, and how these gather in specific locations, treating the real as that which is being related, "enacted," performed, both materially and semiotically, in a specific scenario one seeks to comprehend.

For instance, a performance involving a large number of people, technologies, and diverse heterogeneous materials, such as an opera or a musical theatre show, presents itself as a multiple reality, woven by multiple practices, such as rehearsals; direction; installation of microphones in spaces and on the cast or singers; creation and handling of costumes; development of choreographies; adaptations of lyrics and music of songs; vocal techniques appropriate for the Portuguese language; orchestral conducting; performance of musical instruments; preparation and adaptation of scores; communication systems between backstage technicians; creation and planning of sound and sound effects; creation of dramatic lighting; operation of lights and sound during the show, just to name a few.

This complexity and multiplicity can be explored through the developments of ANT and After, particularly as it has overcome certain criticisms of earlier studies inspired by Translation Sociology and because this approach provides analytical tools for understanding fluid and mutable objects, which may undergo alterations while being performed, according to the particular perspective of John Law (Law, 2007; 2019) and Anne-Marie Mol (Mol, 1999; 2002). Even though one might expect all performances of a play or opera, for example, to be identical, changes will inevitably occur, such as the replacement of technical and artistic equipment, cast and musicians, and the unpredictability or uncertainties inherent in live performances. Therefore, there are changes in the heterogeneous networks or associations constituting the practices, so that the object resulting from these various practices (the live spectacle/show) remains the same to be appreciated by the audience.

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ANT also allows for an understanding of the complexity and multiplicity involved in the union of different temporalities (classic theatrical practices combined with contemporary theatrical or scenographic techniques, coupled with a greater availability of technology or historical or centennial texts, combined with new versions and adaptations) and different places and cultures (American and English plays being reproduced in Brazil; Brazilian songs being performed and presented by Brazilian or foreign singers abroad).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This theoretical essay aimed to present and suggest two theoretical-methodological approaches that can potentially be explored in understanding the "live organising processes". In order to realise our intentions, we introduced and discussed the approaches of Organisational Routine Dynamics and Actor-Network Theory (and After), whose premises and directions appear promising in the exploration and understanding of events, presentations, or "live" performances, as is the case with certain activities derived from the creative industries, particularly the performing arts, such as theatre plays, operas, ballets, or both popular and classical musical concerts.

From the perspective of ANT (and After), a "live organisation" is the enactment of different materially heterogeneous practices that intertwine, so that what is witnessed or visible to the audience in the form of a spectacle/show is the interlacing of these multiple realities. According to the lens of Organisational Routine Dynamics, a "live organisation" represents a generative or performative model or system of routines, which are composed of both ostensive and performative aspects.

Both approaches enrich the field of creative industries by treating creativity not as an attribute, but as a process that needs to be performed or "enacted" in actions or practices which, in turn, will provide the impression of stability of the "creative product". What the audience sees "live" is the result of these organising actions being performed/enacted in that specific location, at that singular moment, and for a unique audience, so that the "how" of its execution/organisation is inseparable from the result while it is being organised. Adverse situations are foreseen and planned in advance, so that the tolerance for error is minimal. However, precariousness and uncertainty are always present, given that routines and organising practices may always yield unexpected results. In the "live" setting, it is expected that the unexpected is quickly absorbed as a change in routine or an alteration in the actor-network, thus maintaining the integrity of the spectacle/show for that audience, always different at each session.

Another contribution refers to the fact that Organisational Routine Dynamics and ANT enrich studies in the creative industries by addressing creativity as an organisational process, where materiality cannot be disregarded. Considering that most of the literature on creative industries typically values the "human subject" in creative practice, adopting the notion of creativity as an inalienable attribute of creative individuals, understanding the materiality of creativity (and its modes of organisation) suggests that it is far more complex and does not depend solely on the human element, but also on material, technical, temporal, spatial, biological, etc. aspects.

Both Organisational Routine Dynamics and Actor-Network Theory are approaches for which it makes little sense to discuss without empirical studies. Here, in this theoretical essay, our primary intention is to highlight these perspectives, demonstrating how both can nurture the field of organising practices in creative industries, particularly when adopted to explore so-called "live organisations", which can be defined through the processual lenses explored here. Thus, this is expected to be an initial step towards conducting field studies that explore theatre plays, concerts, and operas as outcomes of organising processes.

In conclusion, we acknowledge the several limitations of this study. Firstly, there is a need to deepen the theoretical grounding in order to discuss what a "live" performance or presentation truly is, as new technologies increasingly make this categorisation between "live" and "non-live" ever more difficult, especially when considering a post-pandemic context, in which countless sectors and activities, including creative ones, have had to (re)create organisational formats. Probably, the answer will be found in the empirical focus of in-depth research, further suggesting the need for studies dedicated to this end.

We also note that we have presented only one version of ANT, such that other perspectives or examples, based on the works of John Law, Bruno Latour, AnneMarie Mol, and Barbara Czarniawska, could not be explored further. We are aware of this, and the decision was made solely in favour of arguments potentially aligned with the particularities of organisations understood as live performances. More than that, it is worth emphasising that, as they are developed based on empirical studies, both ANT (and After) and Organisational Routine Dynamics researchers and scholars present and insist on certain epistemological, theoretical, and methodological implications in relation to the possibility of conducting studies guided by their approaches. Some of these include the suggestion of ethnographies, the decision between researching ostensive or performative aspects, the need to follow actors (actants or agents), whether human or non-human, the necessity of detailed description, and the political nature of practices that enable the existence of certain realities at the expense of others.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

The entire dataset supporting the results of this study is available in scientific and academic databases, and, as this is a theoretical article, all such data are referenced in the references section.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Financial support: research supported by funds from Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP), Brazil (research grants nº. 2012/22166-5 and 2013/2013/25778-4).

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