

# Review of: "Somatic Arts and Liveable Futures: (Re-) Embodying Ecological Connections"

Paula Guerra<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidade do Porto

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

It is a well-written, persuasive, and engaging article; its interaction with the reader is very positive. It is also very relevant, topical, and essential for scientific development. The proposal under analysis is initially presented as a more attractive and viable solution to tackle the ecological crisis; however, as it develops, more is needed when subjected to a meso and macro analysis of the problem. This approach appears to be holistic and has a solid theoretical basis, emphasizing the change in mentalities and individual perceptions of the body. Second, it needs to pay more attention to the importance of the collective and systemic changes needed to deal effectively with the environmental crisis.

This perspective tends to disregard the intricate interconnections between ecological and social systems, favoring a more atomized and fragmented view of the solution, which can undermine efforts to promote effective long-term change. The author considers these concerns when she says, "How can an intimate, slow, first-person approach to ecological and eco-social change, tailored to individuals and small groups, be combined with a political approach?" The article's end corroborates this: "We must get together and practice. Only by practicing and developing awareness through practice will we have the opportunity to know." Thus, there are still fundamental questions to ponder about this text: Will art aimed at individual change does not have a limited reach (and risk being almost insignificant - except anthropologically speaking) in dealing with the ecological crisis? Despite its ability to mobilize and raise awareness, whether the argument is fallacious or simplistic is still being determined. In other words, this doesn't mean that changing attitudes in individuals or small collectivities through art isn't necessary, but the limitations must be pointed out.

Change through awareness and artistic action does not imply systemic change. Of course, some contexts have provisions for these changes and enhance them (e.g., ecological intentional communities). Still, it needs to be clarified how, in the broader society, this systemic change - essential for dealing with environmental problems - can be created. A more integrated approach may be needed. Individual behavioral changes inspired by art can be ephemeral and subject to setbacks. People can quickly return to their consumption patterns without solid structural and institutional support.