

## **Of love and old age:**

### **On the photographic and editorial project *Advanced***

#### **Love by Ari Cohen**

#### **De amor e velhice:**

### **Sobre o projeto fotográfico e editorial *Advanced Love* de Ari Cohen**

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#### **Interest in the project**

This article results from the confluence of interests that have as a common denominator the research about verbal and non-verbal discourses that privilege ways of experiencing the facts and feelings, besides the intention of make known or make something see. Affection, in the Kantian sense of the subject feeling affected by the sensitive qualities of things and people, is at the basis of this reciprocal concern, which understands different forms of life as a major instance of integration of such experiences.

It has as theoretical and analytical anchor, for this purpose, postulates coming from studies that configure current developments in discursive semiotics, namely: the reflexive apparatus that seeks to apprehend forms of manifestation of the sensitive by the plastic formants and materialities of the image (FLOCH, 1986); its implications for interactional processes, which can be supported by strategic assemblies or adjustments in action between subjects - things or people (LANDOWSKI, 2004, 2005, 2014) and ways of integrating the different discursive instances that make up, in their entirety, different forms of life (FONTANILLE, 2015). Such choices were determined primarily by the attraction to the object of study - the *Advanced Love* project, by Ari Seth Cohen (2018) - which exposes in artistic process the links between aesthetic-aesthetic options and passionate involvement; interactions at the enunciated level, between the protagonists, as well as their

projection at the enunciation level; and lived experiences that are seen in unique ways of presence in the world.

### **Advanced Love project**

*Advanced Love*, a work that guides the argumentative reasoning of this text, is a photobook of portraits and brief interviews of elderly couples. Cohen's interest in the subject arose from his close relationship with his grandmother, Bluma, whose death inspired the photographer to create his photographic project in 2008, which culminated in the work analyzed in this article. With the intention of understanding his production process, we will make a path about the photographer's trajectory.

Since 2008, Cohen has dedicated himself to recording the style and history of older people in his documentary street-style blog, the result, as said, of an action that we can conceive as the experience of mourning lived in a creative way, inspired by proximity with your grandmother. The *Advanced Style*<sup>1</sup> blog address was intended to enable your own creativity to flourish by proposing a different understanding of aging: an authentic and sensitive way of being and being in the world, and, most importantly, unrelated to age.

The people portrayed in the blog, at the beginning, were mostly women who caught Cohen's attention on New York streets due to his ways of dressing and adorning himself, considered as excessive or inappropriate for elderly people, according to a standardization of the western taste: they mixed trends, textures, colors, dimensions and volumes, to their own desire. The proposal comes, above all, to fill a media and image gap in the representation of older men and women, with their own style, built in a creative and subjective way, over the years. It is also important to highlight that the project goes against the compulsive association of youth with beauty and happiness, in the terms of Morin (1984), in a fight against the marginalization and invisibility of older people.

They are people who dress boldly (Figure 1), colorful, with prints not available in department stores - who standardize and pasteurize clothing around the world. Cohen takes dressing as a form of expression, but not only; talks about style and stories, as he says in the description of his YouTube channel: "Style and Stories from some of the world's most inspiring older men and women"<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, it photographs people who over the years have dedicated themselves to the refinement

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<sup>1</sup>Youtube channel, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/user/AdvancedStyleVideos>>. Accessed on: 14 abr. 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Youtube channel, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/user/AdvancedStyleVideos>>. Accessed on: 14 abr. 2020.

and improvement of their appearance outside certain aesthetic standards normally constructed in the figurativization of older people. With this attitude, they foreshadow an authentic style that seems to assert itself with age.



**Figure 1** – Gai & Rhonda, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.88-89)

Besides the blog, the photographer produced three photobooks: *Advanced Style* (2012), focusing on older women and New York street fashion, *Advanced Style: Older & Wiser* (2016), with men and women from the USA, Europe and Asia, and *Advanced Love* (2018). He also co-produced the documentary *Advanced Style The Documentary* (2016), directed by Lina Plioplyte and the book *Advanced Style The Coloring Book* (2012), besides advertising campaigns.

The most recent production, *Advanced Love* (Cohen, 2018), brings together 40 profiles of elderly couples from different countries and continents. The couple who inspired this shift in their documentary work was Mort and Ginny Linder (Figure 2), from San Francisco (USA), whose connection, passion and creativity touched Cohen almost immediately (COHEN, 2018). With a long-standing relationship, the couple is dedicated to art and drew attention for love, companionship, partnership and creativity in building the relationship - the guiding thread of the profiles and stories told in this book.

According to this proposal, love would not be linked or restricted to certain ages, in opposition to the recurrent narratives that represent passionate relationships<sup>3</sup> in western society. Cohen (2018) reports that he felt his own creative work contaminated by the shared style and creative connection

<sup>3</sup>In the discursive semiotics, the idea of bonds between passionate subjects has a modal valorization, besides to its restricted current definition of connected by love. Passions can be evil, like hate, and beneficial, like love, which in this case implies a patemic association based on common well-being. The modalities, and their combinations, determine the states of the subjects in their relations with the values in circulation in the social movement, at any stage of their life trajectory, regardless of chronological ages. It is, therefore, about passionate values of the human condition (GREIMAS; FONTANILLE, 1991, 1993).

of couples, as partners, and not individuals, by the wisdom and exchanges expressed in their speeches and in the integration of values and practices with the entire environment, represented by clothes, houses, scenery, gestures and nature. Besides, the photographer takes love as the most potent human bond, understanding love and aging as true privileges.



Figure 2 – Mort & Ginny Linder, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.152-153)

It should not be understood, however, that Cohen's project favors the prospect of a marriage that lasts (at all costs), or the union of people considered eccentric. This notion does not fit the description of his photos, because there are several ethnic groups living together in the same project (online or in the book), in the cultural space of the United States; life forms; diverse tastes, which redound traditions or reject them without provoking attitudes; types of sexual and sentimental relations, and, above all, a certain respect for the other expressed through statements that indicate the joint learning of acceptance, or even the assumption of what at the beginning seemed to be the "defect" of the partner.

I first met John at a spiritual retreat. At first glance we had little in common. He wore mostly T-shirts and jeans, while I wouldn't think of leaving the house without lipstick, at least five pounds of jewelry, and one of my many magical coats. I took one look at him and joked, "Don't dress up for me." He's been dressing up ever since! On the inside of the wedding ring I gave to John, it's engraved, "To my disappointment." I wanted him to know he could be human and fail or hurt, and I would still love him... I would still love us.[Pattie reporting on John] (COHEN, 2018, p.198)

It is precisely this direction taken by the author that should be emphasized and confronted both with an imaginary linked to the love of young people (or younger), as well as its opposite, manifested in attitudes that confuse the other as an object of possession, from which the violence

against women. We understand that the issue of this type of violence is manifested not only in acts of physical harm or insulting or disrespectful verbal attacks, but also in gestures or everyday situations that endorse centuries of a culture of domestication of the body. This shaping concerns the attitudes of different orders that include gestures, posture, dress, appearance as a whole, against the life forms assumed by the people portrayed in Cohen's project. Therefore, instead of a relationship of dominance and submissions, the reports point to ways of adjusting tastes and styles, with marked differences, or sometimes even abolished by the comprehensive sharing of the other's gaze and action. Intercorporeity relationships are therefore based on forms of growing desire for interaction in presence and the habit of living together (GUMBRECHT, 2006), of "living-with".

By assumption it is that the photographed set inserts the debate that divides the subjects by the triad of excess, middle ground and lack. Historically, the middle ground appears as the mark of balance, common sense and good taste (or good tone), as already stated by Aristotle (1973) in *Nicomachean Ethics*, referring to various segments of life. Cohen's project installs this logic, forcing it to rethink it in terms that supplant the social adaptations of love and the ways of making themselves known and points to a modulated and coexistent encounter. The process is done both by the appreciation of the excessive and the lack, and it is possible to speak of a limit of the lack that is given by the minimalism of a dress and scenery featured in one of the photos (Figure 3).

With dark blue clothes, on her back, white hair in a bun, the woman walks with her companion who wears traditional gray pants and a lead-colored coat with an unstructured appearance. The photo seems out of step with the others, just like the Asian couple with traditional traditional clothes (Figure 4), but it is precisely in this contrast between images in the entire book that the triad insinuates itself as possible - excess or lack, it doesn't matter - and not as exclusivity of one of the poles.



**Figure 3** – Joseph & Caroline, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.117)

The effect of a sense of excess, however, reigns, and it is worth highlighting the fact that placing oneself on the side of the excessive in the face of certain sociocultural "normalities" can raise the idea of eccentricity and even madness. For this reason, some of these women are seen and evaluated, mainly because they are older, in a period of life in which the demands of balance, so-called common sense, discretion and convenience are strongly demanded. In other words, the excess that could be associated with the eccentric, with the daring style at certain ages, becomes the misfit due to the overdetermination of the "being old" factor.

With this bias, old age implies restraining desire, affection for a partner (outside, therefore, the circuit of bonds that define the image of a good mother and a good grandmother). Dressing in neutral colors, wearing dresses with a traditional and low accent, not painting yourself, not overdressing yourself, not kissing in public, are some of the tacit requests of conviviality considered to be of good tone, and everything that goes against the grain this aesthetics may sound like a lack or excess. How does Cohen operate to break with this view? He exposes (Figures 5 and 6) in layers of complexity the good life, endorsing the plans of expression and meaning as an enunciative policy of positively affirming the sensitive logic of these forms of life. When valuing them, he draws our attention to the fact that they break with certain habits, which are then strained in the face of the touching effect of such images and values. It resorts to an enunciative maneuver to positively axiologize some practices, contrasting them by presupposing to a prevailing *status quo* of figurativization of the elderly.





**Figure 4** – Without identification, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.215)



**Figure 5** – Ellen & Dick, *Advanced Love*(COHEN,2018, p.79)



Figure 6 – Tutti & Paul, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.230)

### **Mediation layers: forms of life, ways of figuring couples and integration with environments**

An articulation of meaning is given by two levels of apprehension of the theme: on the one hand, the statements given by the discursive actors, protagonists of the photos and speeches. Summoned by the camera and urged to manifest themselves in gestures and verbally, they assume the positions of subjects who want to be seen in a certain way. They behave as singularities, so they know they are and following a logic of anticipating images of what they suppose the photographer / interviewer expects from them and, consequently, the reading public. The body reacts, therefore, to the look of the other and to the summons of the camera, and, in this sense, it cannot fail to project a staging of itself within the scope of appearing to be (BARTHES, 2009).

The dialogue is established multiplied by the mediation of voices, the images of the woman, the companion, the photographer who follows them, the opinions and testimonies expressed in verbal texts. On the other hand, there is the field of enunciation of this process of photographing and interviewing them, which will eventually become statements in a book or digital projects. It is in this instance that the enunciator's sensitivity is to remove the image from a scenario of stereotyped views and interpretations in order to inscribe them in their natural manifestation, removing any ironic perspective from the reading horizon of the work. Let us stop, then, in this process that takes effect through different layers of verbovisual formalization.



### Framing and predication scenes

Although the framing has variants, the symptomatic in the procedure adopted by the photographer is the uniformity of the protagonists as the focus of attention. In general, centralized, they are placed as a fundamental part of the photos, constituting vanishing points that find echo in different levels of circumscription: whether occupying the entire spatial surface (Figure 7), whether framed in a more closed situation (Figure 8) or in an open scenario that combines with the limits of an environment, usually external, an atmosphere, and even in a few but revealing cases, in the perspective of a close-up, like the image of the hands that are in caress shared by the dog's paw on the man's leg (Figure 9).

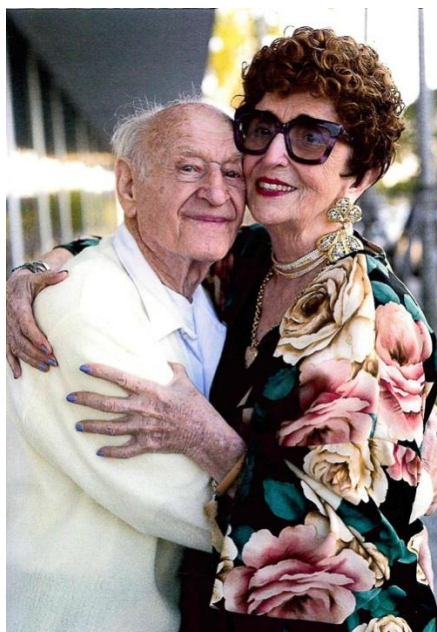


Figure 7 – Joseph & Caroline, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.115)



**Figure 8** – Patti & John, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p. 183)



**Figure 9** – Detalhe de Jerry & Evelyn, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p. 95)

Some cases of larger photos that occupy two pages (Figures 9 and 10) (totalizing 36x24cm) have a great effect of presence, proximity and summon the readers to the lived atmosphere. Although aware of the project to enhance their passionate experiences, and therefore their situation of comfort in front of the camera, the manifestations find support precisely in the forms of life that are represented there, with traits that echo in the general environment, that is, in the various levels of sign integration. Things do not act, but they fit human performances with adequacy or superficiality.



Figure 10 – Anado & Richard, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p. 22-23)

It is in this aspect that the apparent clash of ways of dressing, combing or adorning, reveals coherence with the ways of living and loving between genders, between differences, between humans and animals, humans and things, and, as a whole, everything acquires meaning, loses its excessive character and settles at the limits of the frame as harmonic, although exposing contrasts between the actors that make up a couple or even between couples (Figures 11, 12 and 13).



Figure 11 – Massimo & Gino, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.129)





Figure12 – Al & Emily, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.14-15)



Figure13 – Orren & Rob, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p. 168)

The question of the framing finds transversality with the forms of figurativization, because it represents the topological outline from which things acquire relevance (FLOCH, 1986), approached in this space as separate lives. There is a diegetic circumscription that starts to be interpreted in conjunction with verbal testimonies, making the book conceive as a totality of life's meanings.

Framing is one of the first composition actions. It is worth remembering that composing is the act of including, excluding and arranging photographic objects and “to frame is, literally, to place the image in a frame [...]” (SCOVILLE; ALVES, 2018, p. 41). The photographic look seems to collect, prioritize and arrange elements that dialogue with the meanings of the exchange signed by the couple.

When the background of the photographs is clean, it acts to exclude elements that could be in dispute with the main subject; when filled with shapes or colors, it seems to be arranged so as to present itself as a type of figurative continuity of the subjects, a continuity of harmony in difference; the garments are presented as if they were expanded forms of the body to the environment; the composition allows us to see how the photographed subjects look at the world. Thus, the photographic statement, which presents itself as a counterpoint, a type of history of difference, is also built by the photographer's respectful attitude towards the photographed, that is, from his authorial and creative proposal.

### **Discourse about the self and the others in the verbal plane**

The verbal composition in the book project is subject to the same framing as the image. It does not overlap with this nor does it appear as a caption; it juxtaposes itself as a picture in which the sets of lines, traits, points, are identified as signs and extra-segmental components, but at the same time as adornments of the photo. They are excerpts from the interviews rather than integral annexes to the dialogues. In other words, cut out by the author of the work, these speeches were carefully chosen to focus on what the visual image figurativizes. Each exposes himself and the other in a tone of lived complicity; difficulties are not spared, accidents and adjustments to interactions identified and formalized spontaneously, without the evident staging of the photos. In this sense, the choice of the enunciator is perceived, as well as the lack of control of the subjects submitted to an interview, when they allow themselves to be carried away by the thread of the conversation, exposing their qualities and limitations freely.

You need to learn to compromise from time to time, remembering that we all have faults and shouldn't expect perfection, as long as you treat one another in a caring way. Life is good when you share it with someone who truly loves you! [Patricia about relationship with John]. (COHEN, 2018 p. 70)

This procedure gives more spontaneity to the way of making oneself seen, and therefore, of being seen, because it humanizes the protagonists by what they express, in addition to the ways in which they are represented in actancial roles in photography (more cheerful or contained, more affective or controlled, more aware of the impacts they can cause, through the use of clothes and "decor" of the environments, more or less provocative, traditional, etc.). The photo mobilizes preparation and pose, but the verbal text inserts the subject in the discursive chain of dialogue,



inducing the manifestation of ways of feeling, which can be better worked by expanding the book's editorial policy in the virtual space in the form of blogs that interact and add more sympathizers.

In this endeavor to confront the accommodation of the standardization look of the bodies of older people, the values of shaping and pasteurization are revealed, which are concretized in practices of exclusion or depreciation of the different, through the expectation that this will be conform your social taste for the clothes you wear, the gestures and postures, the affections they contain. It is, therefore, a cultural domestication whose limits are expanded to the forms of life (FONTANILLE, 2015), in what they mean in their manifestations and in the way they materialize through external figurations: appearances, environments, exchanges, forms of interaction, meaningful practices.

The tacit forbidden is instituted as a reaction to something that borders on the "obscene stigma", because contrary to the expectations of the collective, each of these appearances being on account and risk of the madness and folly of singular individuals. By registering them positively, in a book, on a social network, on display or other forms of visibility, Cohen does not merely record everyday life; it makes visible a way of being and existing; it gives it value, gives it its own formalized framework in the photos frames and texts, advocates plurality and respect for values that transcend the hegemony of taste and tone.

### **Body, standards and obscenity**

The question of the obscene (like what hurts pudency) must be examined in its historical perspective to be brought up within the scope of this discussion. Guided by the notion of a culture of domestication of the body, in which the mentioned shaping is contained, Paula Sibilia (2014), in a genealogical perspective, proposes a discussion on the ways of looking at the nudity of the breast of the female body throughout history.

The author starts with the suspension of the cases of Facebook accounts in 2012, whose users posted photos breastfeeding and discusses the symbolic and moral displacements, as well as the prohibitions made possible by this social network and justified by a historical look that identifies as a sense of obscenity.

The network's justification was that the breast completely exposed is a type of sexual content that is explicit and, therefore, denounced (act stimulated and encouraged by the network's policies) and subject to subsequent suspension (which involves the verification of company employees) ).

Due to the cases mentioned, the social network needed to modify the text of the *Facebook Community Standards* (a set of its policies), including that breastfeeding could be included in the users' timelines.

The action may seem anachronistic, making use of a censorship already known, especially in the face of several freedom initiatives and expressions that go against the grain and find outflow and legitimation in the contemporary social tissue. The author argues that “there is something in these prints from other times that shock the contemporary eye, despite the immense freedoms in force today and the wide range of images that we have at our disposal.” (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 38). However, it also triggers the question raised by the author herself about what types of images would be obscene today and why. In other words, it points to a process of historicization of the senses of the gaze, of what morality allows to see, of what is framed as vulgar. The secularization of the breast, a phenomenon pointed out by Margareth Miles (2008 *apud* SIBILIA, 2014), indicates that until 1350 the nudity of the female breast was considered a religious symbol, giving the act of breastfeeding character of nutrition and spiritualization, and whose representation was widely done in several Christian images.

During this period, Sibilía (2014) also includes stories and iconographic representations of a lactating saint (man) and scenes of torture and amputation of breasts as accepted images. This was possible because the historical eye understood them as perfectly showable, as they were scenes of virtue and didactics for morals and religion.

From 1750, in a process of resignification, the breast went through eroticization and medicalization, and was involved by the expressions of romantic love and the new rituals and seduction. The Council of Trento, in the middle of the 16th century, also boosted this movement, indicating that it should be avoided in holy sacred paintings with necklines, among other orientations. Even afterwards, the Church ordered that the naked bodies of sacred images be covered. This was the case of Michelangelo Buonarroti's masterpiece, on the roof of the Sistine Chapel, whose characters were originally naked, and which was remade five years after its completion. There are no records of the original version.

[...] while their mystical charge agonized and their moving powers on the spiritual plane were deactivated, the anatomical knowledge and the pornographic industry were capturing them, until they ended up involving them in their own logic. Thus, with the advances of the modernization of the world and its secular impulses, it was impossible to fail to see in these images something of the order of sexuality, whether through the bias of medical instruments referring to reproduction or disease, or

through eroticism and desire. Including obscenity, by identifying in them something that should not be exposed due to their ability to offend the basic premises of current morality, which was becoming less and less Christian and more bourgeois (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 40).

With the above, the author proposes to try to identify which naked bodies are bothering today. She launches a paradoxical argument about what is obscene. On the one hand, it identifies greater freedom of body expression. On the other hand, it recalls that the secularization of the look produced a refusal to certain parts of the body. And she clarifies that not just parts are prohibited from being shown, but what prevents display has to do with specific bodily attributes, in favor of a type of purification.

[...] it is not difficult to notice that certain bodily attributes - such as wrinkles, hair, flaccidity and adiposities, for example - have become targets of "censoring" attitudes unfolded in recent decades. [...] This prohibition, associated with new pudency and dreads, does not usually inspire resistance because it is believed to be justified: it is one that tends to smooth the skins and tune or adjust the carnal volumes, erasing everything that is now considered "indecent" (SIBILIA, 2014, p. 47).

In a text that also addresses the provocation of uncomfortable photos about sexual affections among elderly couples, Caetano, Skura and Sperb (2018), argue that the stereotype of socio-cultural censorship prohibits the potential of the elderly to exist and that the manifestation of the body-flesh, in its figurative overflows and "deformations", has a very strong meaning and presence value for understanding and perception by the art.

These reflections are echoed in Cohen's project, as they emphasize the power of contemporary art in general, and in this case, photography, to overcome the ties of such social adequations, as acceptable representations of bodies, concession to invisibility and concealment of what society considers "not to be seen".

The project makes a displacement of symbolisms associated with the shaping of the elderly couple, of the ways they live together, of their potential for sexuality, explaining the contagion (LANDOWSKI, 2004, 2005, 2014) of their bodies by spontaneous desire, figured even in details of affectionate gestures ( Figure 14), outside the parameters dictated by advertising and fashion, as a way of breaking with current senses and morals. These are ruptures that are like "changes in the ways of looking, which are historically constituted and develop within certain" regimes of visibility "(SIBILIA, 2014, p. 39), and for which bodies are key parts of transformations.

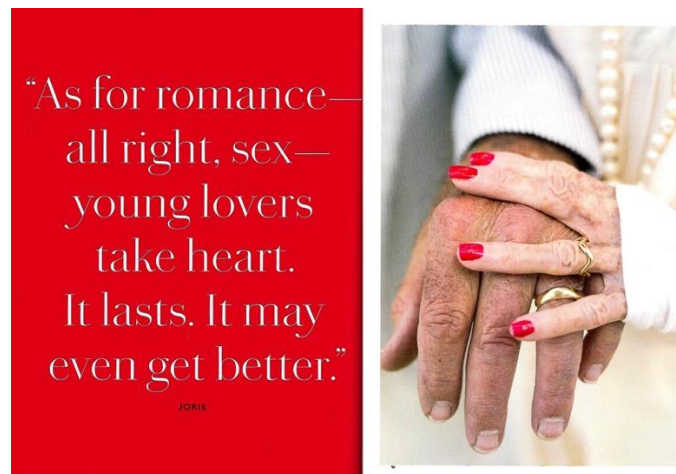


Figure 14 – Jorie & Gordon, *Advanced Love* (COHEN, 2018, p.112-113)

### Final considerations

In Cohen's photographic and editorial project, several aspects of current reflection are dealt with: the issue of gender, aesthetic taste, social tone, affections, coexistence, fashion and lifestyles, to name a few. All of them, however, are affected by age and love. In short, they question how older people behave in relation to love and in face of these constituents of culture. Taking them into account means continuing to persist in life, since the subject still sees himself in relation to the other as someone singular, donor and deserving of good feelings. When approaching such protagonists in their pluralities, the author and photographer explodes with a logic present in our society, which is to decide on the ways of being and existing of the elderly. It opens space for them to represent themselves in attitudes of intimacy or staging, delegates voices to speak in the first person, preventing at first any value judgment that determines the precariousness of old age, the excess in certain old people or the required prudence and common sense of others. In summary, on the pages and screens of his projects, it is not old age that is on the agenda, but the human availability for interaction, in movements of permanent adjustment (LANDOWSKI, 2004, 2005, 2014) with others, and the perception that bodies integrate with each other, between people, between people and non-people and in the setting of environments, in short, in the forms of life that each one chooses to see and make sense of.

The option for more than one form of materialization of this experience - verbal and non-verbal language, printed medium in book and virtual format - ensures greater reach and repercussion of these records to, in due course, confront a moment of contemporaneity marked by

stereotyped identities, intolerance of values and ideas, and the perniciousness of practices of exclusion and indifference towards those who do not count in a society (RANCIÈRE, 2005, 2018).

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## Abstract

This work aims to analyze the passions of affection among elderly couples in relation with specific forms of life that are opposed to images and imagery of the figurative and visual manifestation of old age. For this purpose, we take the project by Ari Seth Cohen entitled *Advanced Love* (2018), which portrays and interviews representative couples of different aesthetic tastes, reproducing in clothing, corporeality and in their speeches a sensitive sharing of life in common embodied in various materialities. The photographed set initially places the assumption of a debate that divides the subjects by the triad of excess, golden mean and deficiency. Historically, the middle way appears as the mark of balance, common sense and good taste (or good tone), as Aristotle already stated in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, referring to various segments of life. In the examined empirical, this unified view of "good taste" or "good sense" that should be shared by the elderly is broken. On the contrary, Cohen's project obliges us to rethink them in terms that supplant the social adaptations of love and the ways in which they come together and points to a modulated and coexistent encounter. The theoretical-analytical reasoning of the corpus approach is articulated with postulates of discursive semiotics in some of its unfolding: figurative and plastic analysis of the image, studies of interactional practices and forms of life in its various instances of integration - signs, strategies, practices and lived experiences.

**Keywords:** Aesthetics. Love. Body. Old age.

## Resumo

Este trabalho tem como objetivo analisar as paixões de afeto entre casais idosos em consonância com formas de vida específicas que se contrapõem a imagens e imaginário da manifestação figurativa e visual da velhice. Para tanto, tomamos como empírico que articula nosso raciocínio o projeto de Ari Seth Cohen intitulado *Advanced Love* (2018), que retrata e entrevista casais representativos de diversos gostos estéticos, reproduzindo na vestimenta, na corporalidade e nas suas falas uma partilha sensível da vida em comum encarnada em várias materialidades. O conjunto fotografado coloca de início o pressuposto de um debate que divide os sujeitos pela tríade do excesso, meio termo e falta. Historicamente, o meio termo aparece como a marca do equilíbrio, do bom senso e do bom gosto (ou bom tom), como já enunciava Aristóteles na *Ética a Nicômaco*, reportando-se a vários segmentos da vida. No empírico examinado, rompe-se com essa visão unificada de um "bom gosto" ou "bom senso" que deveria ser partilhado pelas pessoas idosas. O projeto de Cohen obriga, ao contrário, a repensá-los em termos que suplantam as adequações sociais do amor e dos modos de se darem a ver e aponta para um encontro modulado e de coexistência. O raciocínio teórico-analítico de abordagem do *corpus* articula-se com postulados da

semiótica discursiva em alguns de seus desdobramentos: análise figurativa e plástica da imagem, estudos das práticas interacionais e das formas de vida em suas diversas instâncias de integração, de signos, estratégias, práticas e experiências vividas.

**Palavras-chave:** Estética. Afeto. Corpo. Velhice.

## Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar las pasiones de afecto entre parejas de ancianos con respecto a formas específicas de vida que se oponen a las imágenes e imágenes de la manifestación figurativa y visual de la vejez. Por lo tanto, tomamos como un empírico que articula nuestro razonamiento el proyecto de Ari Seth Cohen titulado *Advanced Love* (2018), que retrata y entrevista a parejas representativas de diferentes gustos estéticos, reproduciéndose en la ropa, en la corporalidad y en sus discursos un intercambio sensible de la vida en común encarnado en diversas materialidades. El conjunto fotografiado coloca inicialmente la suposición de un debate que divide a los sujetos por la tríada de exceso, medio término y defecto. Históricamente, el término medio aparece como la marca de equilibrio, el sentido común y el buen gusto (o el buen tono), como Aristóteles ya afirmó en *Ética a Nicómaco*, refiriéndose a varios segmentos de la vida. En el empírico examinado, esta visión unificada de un "buen gusto" o "buen sentido" que deberían compartir los ancianos está rota. Por el contrario, el proyecto de Cohen nos obliga a repensar los términos que suplanten las adaptaciones sociales del amor y las formas en que se unen y apuntan a un encuentro modulado y coexistente. El razonamiento teórico-analítico del enfoque del corpus se articula con postulados de la semiótica discursiva en algunos de sus desarrollos: análisis figurativo y plástico de la imagen, estudios de prácticas de interacción y formas de vida en sus diversas instancias de integración - signos, estrategias, prácticas y experiencias vividas.

**Palabras clave:** Estética. Afeto. Cuerpo. Vejez.