

## Ritual Performance - Facilitating Overview

This section presents the refined version of the ritual performance as designed and enacted.

### Preparation and Setup

#### - Spatial Configuration

Participants are arranged in a circle, echoing—but not replicating—the structure of a capoeira roda. The center remains open throughout, serving as a shared focal point for sound and interaction. All instruments, food, utensils, and even documentation equipment (when necessary) are placed in the center, emphasizing their role as shared resources within the ritual space. This spatial setup removes front-facing orientation and establishes a collective field of attention, marking the transition from everyday space into ritual space.

#### - Instrument Allocation and Participant Roles

6–8 instruments are prepared in advance, with potential duplication across types. The exact distribution remains open, allowing future adjustments in sonic balance and interaction.

It is acceptable—and often beneficial—for the number of participants to exceed the number of instruments. Those without instruments are encouraged to contribute through clapping, stomping, vocalizing, or other forms of body-based rhythm. They can simply stand in the spaces between seated participants, forming a single-layer circle together with those holding instruments. Musical expertise is not required; the only condition is a willingness to contribute presence and energy. Passive spectatorship is not permitted within the circle.

Ideally, there should be no passive spectators throughout the performance. However, in situations where passive observation is unavoidable (e.g., due to institutional or academic requirements such as external examiners needing to maintain “objective distance”), we ask that these viewers form a circle around the active participants.

#### - Visual Presentation and Performer Identity

While the boundary between artist and audience dissolves during the performance, the facilitator enters with a visually distinct presence. Non-ordinary garments and symbolic earrings are worn—less as spectacle, more as cues signaling the shift into ritual. These elements function both externally, as spatial markers, and internally, as part of the facilitator’s own transition into a state of embodied attentiveness.

## Ritual Phases and Temporal Structure

### **- Part 1: Warm-up / Workshop (Approx. 20–30 minutes)**

**Objective:** Introduce the instruments, explore bodily rhythm and variation, activate vocal presence and group listening.

Participants begin by exploring their instrument's sound and responsiveness. The facilitator briefly introduces each design's logic and sonic behavior.

Next, participants use their instruments to create simple, repeating patterns. At this stage, actions remain mostly individual—the focus is on tactile discovery and embodied rhythm rather than coordination. If repetition doesn't yield sonic stability, focus on repeating the action, not the sound.

Participants are welcome to apply their existing musical skills to these new instruments to explore more sonic possibilities. Observing and learning from each other's interactions is also highly encouraged.

The final warm-up activity introduces a voice-based group exercise. All begin by sustaining the vowel sound "ah." At any point, one participant may shift to "oh" or "oo," and others gradually follow until unison is re-established. Only one person may change at a time.

A related variation invites all participants to vocalize in unison, with one person intentionally stopping midway—drawing attention to how absence shapes the shared sonic field.

This task activates vocal presence while reinforcing active listening during sound-making. The phase closes with a reminder: all structural rules that follow are simply invitations. If a participant feels the need to depart from a given rule, they are free to do so. The structure is there to support the collective—not to limit it.

To reduce potential disorientation during more open-ended phases, meta-instructions may also be offered—for example: when no specific direction is being given, participants can be encouraged to trust their instinct and respond to the moment as they feel moved.

### **- Part 2: Developmental Round Performance (Approx. 15–20 minutes)**

**Objective:** Enter the ritual state through shared rhythm and the principle of "only one person variation."

The facilitator offers a brief explanation of this round's logic, then initiates the ritual by walking the circle and spraying a subtle perfume on each participant. This gesture marks entry into ritual time. Everyone closes their eyes for a brief moment of silent transition.

The sound begins with instruments only. Each participant plays a steady, repeating pattern. A core principle applies: only one person may alter their pattern at a time. Once a new pattern is established, another person may shift.

When the collective rhythm has stabilized, participants may begin to add vocal sounds. These are single vowel tones (“ah,” “oh,” or “oo”) sustained for the duration of one breath. After inhaling, a new vowel may be chosen. There are no restrictions on pitch or volume—only the rule of one vowel per breath.

### **- Part 3: Established Round Performance (Approx. 15–20 minutes)**

**Objective:** Introduce singing and emotional resonance through theme-based improvisation.

For this round, before the performance begins, instruments spatial distribution can be adjusted.

This phase begins with the facilitator presenting three open-ended themes—such as “moon,” “home,” and “longing”—as associative prompts for memory or emotion.

Instrumental logic continues unchanged: participants maintain or vary patterns according to the “one person at a time” rule. Once the texture has settled, singing may begin.

Participants can choose between:

- Singing a longer, continuous song as a solo, with others listening;
- Singing short fragments (samples) of familiar songs, which may then be repeated by the group. Once a fragment concludes, another may begin.

There are no expectations of style, emotion, or genre. The only structure is that one vocal line enters at a time, maintaining clarity within the shared space.

For participants with more improvisational experience, call and response may emerge as an optional layer of interaction. If a phrase feels like a call, others are welcome to respond—either by echoing, complementing, or transforming it—so long as the overall clarity and attentiveness of the group is maintained. This mode offers additional space for musical dialogue, without overriding the one-voice-at-a-time principle.

### **- Ending**

The ritual concludes in one of two ways:

- Through a natural fade-out, as collective energy settles;

- Or through other forms of timekeeping—for example, when conditions allow, incense may be used to mark both the beginning and end of a performance: the act of lighting the incense signals the start, and when it has fully burned and the scent fades, all participants stop playing.

This open-endedness allows the group to co-sense the moment of ending, rather than having it imposed.

#### **- Reflection and Discussion**

Participants are invited to share food or drinks in an informal setting, completing the multi-sensory arc of the ritual. The food is handmade by the facilitator, and its taste marks the closing of a sensory loop—echoing how, in many rituals, eating serves to return participants to the body and re-ground the group through shared embodiment.

During this time, the facilitator reveals the conceptual and cultural foundations of the performance—especially its inspiration from capoeira, not in visual form but in spirit, drawing from the ethos of vadiar: drifting, playful presence, repetition without pressure, and deep listening without control.

This framing is intentionally postponed. The ritual is first experienced, then contextualized—allowing participants to encounter it directly before naming what it was.