PERFORMING BUILDING SITES
Curating *in/on/through* space

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Declaration

The candidate, Maria Inês da Silva Antunes Moreira,

declares that she is the sole author of this PhD project and the author of the body of text.

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Maria Inês da Silva Antunes Moreira

I have been running so sweaty my whole life
Urgent for a finish line
And I have been missing the rapture this whole time
Of being forever incomplete

… ever unfolding
ever expanding
ever adventurous and torturous
but never done.

Incomplete
a pop song by Alanis Morissette

This Thesis is dedicated
to those who get lost along weird paths,
so to be found elsewhere.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Performing Building Sites is the formulation of one of many possible critical strategies for curating. *Performing Building Sites* are approached as subject, site, and/or metaphor, proposing an understanding of architecture and construction as processual and hybrid fields of material and spatial practice. The project aims to explore methods for curatorial analysis and intervention on space, spanning from theoretical to practice oriented approaches. The Thesis is developed as both an academic research and as a curatorial project, extending the new research field of Curatorial Knowledge.

The curator is proposed as a field practitioner, studying and intervening in existing spaces, and, sometimes, creating space. Central to this argument are theoretical and empirical knowings acquired *through* fieldwork. Situating the curator *in* space, producing research *on* spaces, suggests an implicated position for curating, and researching: *in/on/through* space.

The academic research closely articulates with questions from a personal body of work developed by the author along a decade as an architect/researcher/curator. The images accompanying the study are (mostly) originals generated from fieldwork by the author and partners. Mostly set for curators, researchers and other spatial practitioners.

KEY WORDS

Curatorial studies, visual cultures, curating architecture, curatorial/knowledge

CONTENTS

VOLUME 1 – work in progress

[Abstract. Key words. Contents.]

Chapter 0 : ENTERING
Departure.
Structure.

"If architectural "work" is no longer considered merely the object of plan, section, elevation, or model, how does the curator reconceptualise display? What should they collect? What should comprise their discipline? And how will their decisions impact the public perception of architecture? (…) It is clear from this issue that curating architecture is neither editing nor other forms of museum display – painting, sculpture – but is in need of a discourse of its own".

Cynthia Davidson[1]

Performing Building Sites project was born from a personal disenchantment with what was perceived as "conventional" practices of curating art and architecture. This individual project is propelled by the urge for a new vocabulary for curatorial research as well as for a critical review of research methods for curating architecture and space. Exploring diverse porosities in practices of curatorial research, stepping in and out of the cultural field of architecture, I have proposed to expand curatorial research through both theoretical approaches and practical experiments.

I am interested on a peculiar approach to the curatorial field exploring the limits beyond the immediacy of communicating and promoting architectural/art pieces and architects'/artists´ bodies of work so to explore the gaps between curating and architecture, i. e., exploring the articulation of curating, display and exhibition space as a potential opening offered to architects acting within the curatorial and the cultural[2]. If one considers the potentialities of an elsewhere, the *lines of flight* for deterritorialized practices (Deleuze and Guattari[3]), we are able to reinvent what curating and specifically *curating space* may be.

While curating architecture was born of an extension of academic studies into the history or theory of architecture, i.e., as a process of communication to a wider public than that of the academy's research production, it can now be affirmed that the field of architectural culture has achieved a degree of "autonomy" from the strictly academic world[4]. At the turn of the 1990´s and in the first decade of this XXIst century, the field of architectural culture became active and multiple, as demonstrated in the many public events, exhibitions, gatherings and other ephemeral or transient cultural activities. There has been a proliferation of institutional platforms for the dissemination of architecture: exhibition centres[5]; collections and archives for the conservation of architectural models and drawings[6]; and other educational programmes that explain buildings and architecture[7]. And the celebrity "programmer" and the "curator" of architecture have come to the fore[8]. In this proliferating universe of professional organizations and mass culture, curating architecture is understood as an exercise in

mediatising works and authors, the generalisation of which has the effect of stultifying forms, objects and authors.

To my understanding, the aforementioned professionalization can be limiting of the critical and experimental dimensions of the curatorial in its exhibitionary outcomes and as a field of research. Though, alongside its institutionalization, many independent individuals and organized groups have emerged through single experiments or through new creative platforms[9], organizing events, exhibitions and exploring with curatorial formats. There remain cracks in this seemingly solid model where the field loses homogeneity, and this present Thesis aims to explore and to potentiate the existing fissures.

Present work

This work departs from a theoretical quest for critical tools and for a reflexive standing in front of my own practice, past and present. The organization of the project has followed research and production loops, where curatorial research feeds practical projects, which then subsequently come to dare the proposed concepts and, to some extent, come to shake the assumption that curators dictate projects. Reflexivity around the situation of a curator *in* space, or, on the implications of a project *in* place, have led to new questions, demanding more research and informing other new projects (present and future). To some extent, this reflexive mode of research is always in search for procedural sustainability, including the questioning and the transformations expected from critical and self-responsive processes. This looping in searching for a method, or growing *after a method*, is a methodology that we have been embracing, and which John Law´s theories of scientific production [10] have helped to enlighten.

Away from converging to a final synthesis, or from the sole purpose of clarifying a final argument, this project was developed in two different modes and, therefore, it is presented in two very different volumes. The first mode corresponds to a *work-in-progress*, testing and experimenting with diverse approaches, notions of space and, as well, testing a new vocabulary. Materialized as the Volume 1 of the Thesis, the first mode is mostly scholar, or academic, developed at the PhD program in Curatorial/Knowledge. Volume 1 corresponds to a research period testing several hypotheses of curatorial approach to space, and it assumes an experimental nature through a diversity of writing styles, visual documents, photography styles, discussing the achievements and doubts coming from the projects included in the several chapters.

The second mode of PhD research is the careful essaying of the learnings from the *work-in-progress* period and its application on a large cultural project, which I have curated and edited to become a book. It consists of contents from a multidisciplinary research I have coordinated, with the works and exhibits from the exhibition with the same title that I have curated along Aneta Szylak, my co-curator. The research project is titled *Buildings & Remnants*, and it is subtitled *"an essay-project on post-industrial space"*. I believe it corresponds to a greater degree of coherence and maturation of the attempts and proposals developed in Volume 1 of the work. *Buildings & Remnants* advances on the hypothesis formulated as the argument of the Thesis, – *curating in/on/through space* - constructing on it, and substantially depurating the several (rawer) experiments documented in Volume 1.

[Differing in form, content, coherence, and in what they proposed to achieve along the research process, the two Thesis Volumes differ, as well, in their design. Volume 1 is presented as the document of a *work-in-progress*. Written with word.doc tools and completed with the simple tools of that simple computer program; whether Volume 2, the essay-project, is the final result from a large scale cultural project and is conceived as an edited, printed and hard-cover book, designed by Manuel Granja.]

Research group

To discuss the work method and the references of this project, it is relevant to acknowledge the collective work developed within Curatorial/Knowledge think-tank group. *"Stop curating!"*, someone declared in the first PhD seminars, *"and think of what curating is all about"*[11] - this sidestepping from practice to critically reflecting on experience, on bodies of work, as posed, could resemble an empirical commencement but, in fact, it explores a new theoretical approach to "*the curatorial*". The program is set as an inquiry on *the curatorial*, addressing the encounters, the transferences, the send-offs, and other events of knowledge, grasping and grounding it along the several researchers´ works. The inhabitation of an unbounded disciplinarily field during the four year of seminars program (2007-2011) has permitted deep discussion of individual, and collectively shared, concerns with *the curatorial* as a field, with critical thinking and with knowledge production processes. Though individual and independent, the different dissertations under construction (in 2013) do communicate and share references and concerns.

The years of collective study within an interdisciplinary group/audience, i. e., outside the more expected field of architectural theory or architectural culture programs, profoundly informs

the experimental nature of this Thesis, from the toning of the interdisciplinary approach, to some concepts and many of the proposed and included readings[12]. The conceptualization of a potentially performative model – *building sites* – is very much due to this vivid context, as *Performing Building Sites* permitted bringing materiality, performativity, processuality and other dimensions of production and the making into discussion within Visual Cultures, affirming a position to establish a dialogue with other attempts[13] in curatorial studies. To some extent, some features included in the present document, as the Building Sites Manifesto, respond to the specificities of the academic *milieu* and the dynamic within the Curatorial/Knowledge PhD group.

Writing

Writing is a concern for curatorial knowledges and for curatorial gestures. If, as suggested along the argument, curating is an act of depiction of "objects" evolving through *reading and writing strategies*, then we must focus our attention on reading/writing. *Performing Building Sites* understands writing as a tool for registering spatial processes, along with photography and moving image, as in field work; and, most importantly, understands writing as a strategy for amplifying the readings of the objects/spaces, therefore, generating new curated spaces. These assumptions became clear along the written body of Volume 1 of this Thesis.

To write *on* space as part of a curatorial project differs from writing about space, or about architectural issues. Some authors have explored the writing issue, and an important contribution to critical writing on spatial and installation work is in the book by Jane Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*[14]. Expanding the relations of art criticism to space, Rendell explores situatedness and site-specificity as a ground from which to relate to work, through psychoanalytical relation of the writer with space. *Site-writing´s* approach offers a meandered position and relation of writer, space and the art works and revolutionizes the writing on/for spatial issues. It is an alternative position for writing, proposed as a practice, a spatial practice where the critic, the work and the spatial experience convey qualities that inform, and spatialize, the writing on contemporary art.

Multiple literacies form, and conform, the critical reading/writing strategies proposed in this project[15]. The broad diversity of writing modalities and styles deployed along this body of text demands one last word on the adopted references, as dissimilar writing styles are explored, coexisting, and establishing dialogues between them, sometimes in casual forms, other in more constructive and deliberate ways. How to transmit the polyphony of space, of research

and of collaboration? How to write the many spatial practices and readings? And how to include the debates, the encounters and the event of conversation, from which we relationally learn? The many writing tactics were learnt from several authors, from which the following are the most influential:

Short descriptive and analytical writing of cultural analyst Siegfried Kracauer in *The Mass Ornament*[16], a book of snap-shot essays on the birth of modern urban masses, its movements and inhabitations of urban spaces; and fictio-critical ethnographic writing of ethnographer Kathleen Stewart´s book *Ordinary Affects*[17], brings forth instantiations of the banal in short descriptive stories. These two writers provide one of the angles of the writing modes adopted, a reading and writing modality that permits to depict less formal spaces, some micro stories, and the inhabitations that occur *in* space, as we have attempted it in Chapter 1.

A different lineage of writing that enlightens this project as a whole providing a strong reference to its thinking, its methodologies, and, maybe less deliberately, to its writing are the long and meandering unfoldings of hybrid *material-semiotic* entities, proposed by Donna Haraway, as in her *Companion Species Manifesto*[18] book, and other well-known figurations as the cyborg, or Oncomouse. Haraway´s care and protection of hybrid and heterogeneous entities, for complexity and connectionism is presented in her debunking of material-semiotic figurations. This reference underlays along the Thesis and largely explains our investment in a complex entity, *Performing Building Sites*, as our companion[19]. Her notion of situated knowledge empowers our caring ventures in neglected, derelict and injured material-semiotic spaces as, besides a writing modality, the caring and protecting for strange entities inform our curatorial approach.

A very diverse slant into spatial writing that informed us are the resonant writings of Patrick Chamoiseau[20] on Martinique´s *creolité*. When language is used as a space of slave resistance that permits the creation of an alternate space, the thickness of speech and the textures of its embodiment permit an altered entrance to space and to space production. Coming from the body, or from the tongue, not strictly from official language or from written communication skills, the embracing of such reading permits to address less technical, visual, factual, or material dimensions usually addressed in architecture. Language becomes a space.

One last writing resource deliberately deployed in the curatorial approach to some projects/spaces, especially in *Aftermath & Resonance!*[21] and in *Buildings & Remnants*[22], are the dialogues between *presence* and *absence* and is performative allegory, as proposed by

social scientist John Law[23]. His *hinterland* allegory of a space in-between the known and the unknown[24], between the productive and the unproductive inscribed in science and disciplinary knowledge, are his proposal to embrace less clear sites and entities. His proposal is a model that stretches our own *building sites* so to consider allegory as a resourceful mode of writing expanding the limiting material extension of space.

When in printed form and available for reading, text may provide an immersive and spatial experience. By creating atmospheres, a curatorial text may explore spatialization[25] to amplify a project in writing: when a fire burning is transmitted in short explosive tropes, an erratic career is brought up by the intimacy of old personal letters, or when a short film script leads us through a story, the text plays with the reader and provides spatial experiences.

[I take one last word on formatting, or form, to decode some choices taken along Volume 1 as different chapters adopt slightly different criteria, depending on its own functions within the Thesis. Quotations use "quotation marks" and are referenced in footnotes, but in some cases, quotation marks are used to emphasize a word, or expression, used in vernacular or less formal manner. *Italics* are used in appropriations of foreign words and neologisms, and, also, to underscore the introduction of terms of relevance to the whole of the research project. ***Bolded italics*** in Chapter 1 links the main text to the under-layer of the vocabulary project included in its section 2, or in Chapter 5 it stresses the event of fire. References are mostly in the end of each sub-chapter, with exception for text columns (Chapter 2), or private letters (Chapter 1), which are footnoted.]

Authorship and collaboration

Curating, as I envision and practice, includes different forms of authorship, of positioning and, as well, it includes modes of operation which can be quite antagonical. The most visible and recognized productions are new exhibitions and catalogues, though there is a growing field of experimentation on other curatorial manifestations, from events, to publications, gatherings, and other. Misunderstandings occur when discussing how, where, even why, are curatorial projects developed, as the context and organization of cultural institutions, of production teams, and the necessary technical support for each new project may vary. Curatorial work, as developed in the several projects developed and presented in this Thesis[26] occurs within different institutions, different spaces, follows different organizations, and, above all, it is developed within different research and production teams. Independent projects, or large events, do have similar ephemeral structures producing exhibitions, editions, and other

outputs. Besides the conceptualization and delivery of curatorial projects, curatorial practice includes the multi-dimensional strategy of team building and engaging, as it evolves on the adaptation to the potentialities and the contextual contingencies of specific contexts and spaces.

Curatorial research may be authored individually but, as in *building sites*, collective teamwork is orchestred to bring new projects/objects to shape. We understand curating as an activity inhabiting the authorial, the conceptual and the creative delivery of projects, as well as, engaging the backstage and the teams in collaborative contribution.

The collaborative approach is better understood if we focus on a few stereotypes coming to the fore when discussing curatorial authorship, where the figure of the curator is cultivated as an individualistic, even autocratic, profession. Stereotypes are distorted reductions of reality, but facing it permits to sketch what, how and where we are practicing. One of such typecasts is the meticulous conservator working isolated on (historical) collections, preserving, restoring and researching around precious objects within the museum, archive or librarian collection; this stereotype comes mostly from traditional research in the fields of material culture and history (archaeology, anthropology, history or art history). Another broadly disseminated idea is the extravagant *persona* dealing with "new" creations, disclosing new artists´ works, dwelling white cube galleries; this *carnavalesque* figure is a distortion, farer from the role of a researcher, or a conservator, and closer to the caricature of a public relations. Another figure is a more formal official communicator, the "*commissaire*", a specialist in charge of official ceremonies and exhibitions, sometimes political representations of national art and culture, and less committed to content than to representation.

Many nuances exist around the notions of curating and authorship proposed in this Thesis. The first and most fundamental question is to understand curating as a research and process based activity, dealing with pre-existing and with new objects, with documents, and with spaces. Curating is understood beyond individual research, and beyond exhibition making. It mingles academic work and the involvement in the making and, therefore, it is individual and collective, research oriented and a material/processual activity.

The second question, coordination and decision, directly disturbs the stereotype of "curator". Curatorial projects tend to be authored by a single individual, or by a signing collective. Individual is the most common mode of authoring work, is the propelling starting of the majority of the proposals: the concept, the statement, or the idea comes from an author.

Though, larger cultural projects demand the composition of a broader team where curating becomes an extension of teamwork. Here lays a distinction, far from individual research/practice, curating may be a decentered activity, or to be more precise, curating may include the coordination and decision making within/along the many procedures that span from research to production. Stepping aside from the intricacies of production teams and stepping into other kinds of (pre)occupations, curating may imply the articulation with cultural programming, policy making and fundraising or management. The proximity to production and to the technical components of a project demand multidisciplinary skills and tools. We believe that this contiguity of research/production enlarges the possibilities for the unfolding of curatorial projects. For this reason, the Thesis oscillates between the singular first person – "I", Inês Moreira – and the first collective person – "We", the research group, sometimes the production teams I coordinated, or, in most cases, my supervisor, Professor Irit Rogoff, and me.

A third question even comes closer to collaboration, posing the curator as a coordinator of several contributions by a broader research team. This third way of authoring complements the two more prevailing voices, individual and the collective authorship. We find that in interdisciplinary and research oriented projects, the role of the curator shifts. The nature of interdisciplinary research demands to approach curating as an activity involving the coordination of several specialists, authors, artists and fields of knowledge. The position of a curator in interdisciplinary collaborative research is that of the coordinator of a team, constantly learning from collaboration, assuming chameleonic tasks and new responsibilities. Leading interdisciplinary curatorial work in a large team, as the one who worked on the project presented in Volume 2 of this Thesis, permits a close knowledge of the researched spaces and subjects, of the work processes of the different participants and it allows for a closer position to the several contributors, demanding to mingle between authors, specialized researchers, cultural producers, and diverse technicians.

Curatorial work, if perceived as an extension of the production system, can be performed as a connectionist position within the processes. The idea of curatorship as a collaborative, distributed and networked practice offers a potential strategy to curating space and, more specifically, to consider the field operating as *Performing Building Sites*.

[The projects presented in Volume 1 and in Volume 2 were all developed differently and I have assumed diverse functions within its teams: from individual authorship to collectively curated

projects; from cultural programming to the design of scenographies/ephemeral architectures; from the curatorial coordination of large research/production teams to the position of a production manager.]

A few nodes

Alongside academic research, and together with the unavoidable practical sides inherent to curating, I have reached a composite notion to grasp methodologies for curators: *research/production*. Two sibling bodies of work – one more theoretical, the second more practical – came to perform one another: research questions, methods and materials are produced in fieldwork; while production pragmatics enlightens the concepts behind the theoretical approach. To be more precise, *research/production* is a mode of operating, agitating discussions and animating performative modes of work beyond the crystallized ideas of curating. Facing curating as *research/production*, discloses what we perceive as fundamental nodes to the curatorial: *agency*, *event*, *object, position* and a last one, *fieldwork.*

The notion of *agency* of authors and pieces (whether human or non-human) is central to engagement with a context or situation. The notion of *agency* resituates the social and the cultural within a seemingly abstract network, but populated with humans, non-humans, events, materials and other variations. Social sciences invites to articulate *agency* within curating and relocate the epicentre of our activity in culture and society, whether aligning to Bruno Latour, who accentuates the agency of things and networks, or engaging the critical reviews of *Actor-Network Theory*, such as Haraway´s, Law´s, or Orlinkowski´s, *agency* and *networkedness. Agency* denotes active understanding of participation in the cultural field as a political gesture.

Event would be a second node to reposition relations of subject-object-exhibition. From the many scenarios of cultural and artistic production, some experimental curatorial practices destabilize fixed concepts replacing them: *event* (exhibition), *object* (artwork), *author* (architect-artist-curator) and *space* (architecture). In their particular settings, they continuously evolve in collaborative exercises, and have no intention of establishing or reinstating notions of expertise (or curatorship). These unusual sets of practices, much like the disturbing curiosities in a *cabinet d´amateur*, can be understood as exceptions, or as peculiarities. Primarily a-disciplined, they operate on a performative dimension in the "splits and passages" between more permanent actors and disciplines, in its convoluted they processes generate peculiar objects and events. Without becoming normative or prescriptive,

the notion of *event* punctuates and pushes our thinking and demands a quest for methods and non-stable systems of operation.

Curating revolves around a more permanent central third node: the definition of *object*. At the thresholds of the mainstream scenario of knowledge production in the humanities, there are free spaces, like the field of Visual Cultures, where objects are continuously examined and redefined. Visual Cultures as a field, and the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths College, is a rich context to explore and experiment strategies to address and depict "objects". A few authors are involved in the investigation of complex issues and entities and redefine the conventional definition of what an object/case study for research can be: from urban cultures and policies - Peter Mortenbock and Helge Mooshammer[27] -, to geopolitical tools - Eyal Weizman[28] - to questions of identity and gender, their bodies of work stretch the limits of research objects, and of their fields of research. Research in the field of Visual Cultures expands boundaries and objects, and its diverse methodologies offer entries to complex entities, expanding what a subject of investigation may be.

A fourth node is concerned with *position* and brings the potential for a c*ritical* insight. Radical reviews of curating contemporary art are located at the intersection of art history and political philosophy, geopolitics and other areas of the humanities, have been developing methods of research and production, resituating the centre of curatorial research beyond (or beneath) the strict centrality of the artwork and its material, or historical, contextualization. Engagement with critical theory and a deep understanding of social, cultural and political conditions of a situation in place, in time, and in its inhabitations, have radically transformed the role of critique within curatorial work. Here, the *implicated* position[29], as defined by Irit Rogoff, is central to cultural/curatorial practice, in which critical readings and critical proposals may become politically interventive. In the past, curating has been more concerned with the dissemination and communication of disciplinary knowledge, and less with a critical reflection on its production, means, and scope. As artistic/cultural productions can refer to issues broader than a visual product, so too the act of writing and the modes of visibility at play in curatorial work can participate in research beyond the scope of strict disciplinary inscription. Recent theoretical proposals, as the work of Ariella Azoulay on curating and photography[30], or Galit Eillat´s curatorial work, have an active embeddedness in the social and the cultural, understanding the curatorial as implicated in politics. The *critical* in curatorial work might instantiate in a way of writing and acting in the world that is structurally different from

"promoting" an artist or an artwork. Curating can become a platform for critical inquiry, an activity which falls outside the mainstream of institutional curating.

A final point of entry into this research is practical *fieldwork*. During this research, I have used my professional curatorial practice, as well as that of exhibition design, or production manager of projects developed over the last ten years as an architect, researcher, and curator (in that order). Programmatically, the projects are exhibitions, spatial installations for contemporary art, and other collaborations around spatial issues. The set of projects is diverse in form and origin, ranging from scenographies for institutional or independent projects, to projects curated with artists, to the foundation/self-organisation of an independent space. The various modes of production and involvement with curating and space are diverse, not strictly concerned with the curatorship of architecture and architects, they represent, rather, three-dimensional approaches. We believe to have initiated a long conversation between contents and exhibition spaces - the existing container space, the planning of installations and artworks by selected artists - and include multiple production processes - construction, assembly, or appropriations of space.

Contribution

Performing Building Sites, curating in/on/through space explores what I perceive as a new approach to curating, to space and to the relations between both. Departing from *Performing Building Sites*, as a model and in its literal circumstances, the Thesis considers the processual activity of any building process, a new approach that differs from the curatorial focus on architectural objects and authors. Exploring different interdisciplinary, processual and collaborative modes of curatorial work *on* space, I argue that research (and researcher) can be positioned *in* space, as a situated mode of operation, to investigate and intervene on the spaces addressed and to actually activate it. Another proposal is the multidimensional notion of space understood both materially and non-materially, an approach that inverts a more passive relation of curating to architecture, so to propose it as processual, conversational, and resonant or (non) material.

This work attempts a hybrid approach to material and immaterial dimensions of space, beyond its formal objectification, and claims for *curating in/on/through space* as a creative predisposition for situated and immersive research. Taking a further step, if spaces are activated by curatorial readings/writings/projects, curating space may, in a way, produce space. The call for understanding curating space as a specific mode of research *on* space, and,

as well, as a mode of production of space, is one of claims of this project: spaces can be activated by curatorial readings/writings/proposals and certain curatorial interventions can generate new spaces, both in curatorial depiction as in exhibition display.

The project explores the possibility for other paths, routes and crossings of existing fields, inciting displacements of positions around *curating* and creating a platform to cross practice based knowledge with theoretical knowledges, so to encounter zones between what is institutional and what is informal, between survey and enactment. In this encounter, alternate paradigms and diverse methodologies enact their differences rather than stage their antagonisms. Instead of confronting a centralizing practice with another centralizing practice, we unravel it by producing a series of oblique and partial activities at its margins.

Taking the last lines, we introduce a point of relevance: this project does not intend to discipline, or to counteract or rewrite any single stable methodology or ethics, or to redefine "new" limits the referred dominant practices, but, instead, it claims to open a diversity of modes of operation. If it does not aim at a normative redefinition of the "role of curators", or the "exercise of architectural curatorship", what is here at stake?

The "critical" element in this work proceeds through contained gestures, strategic interpolations and gentle questions, and, I must stress, part of the *drive*[31] for this project moves through a performative practical approach, and it is supported by a theoretical mesh. However, through the various modes of composition/edition/assemblage of the pieces of the inquiry, so to fix this very physical paper document, we found that the simultaneous activation of multiple pathways has destabilized the canons and the categories of curating, object, author, and so on. In itself, destabilization has revealed a productive mode of curating, which I have address in the body of text as an articulation of disturbance and depiction of the curated objects/subjects.

Therefore, I propose a conceptual model from the inverted metaphor of *building* a building. *Building sites* offer a productive conceptual model, introducing a notion of destabilization that feeds the possibility of the creation, disruption and rebuilding of a set of fields. The metaphor conjuncts – *in/on/through* – and enters the metaphor of knowledge production, overcoming the strictly projectual/objectual/authorial notions of what building, and to build, is. In this sense, *Performing Building Sites* is the proposed companion to start articulating an entrance to *curating space*, and Volume 1 investigates it, while Volume 2 essays with it.

The postulation that curating is both research and practice based leads to a Thesis structure divided in two Volumes: one developed as a *work-in-progress* engaging with several research question, finding paths, evolving processualy, for a long writing period, and assuming in the search for methodologies and tools; and a second Volume, more assertive and thematic, developing a multidisciplinary curatorial project on post-industrial spaces, to present an exhibition and a book oriented to wider audiences, using the research tools explored along Volume 1.

Volume 1, the present one, consists of eight chapters, diverse in style, introducing the question, experimenting diverse approaches, and finally proposing a research method we call *curating in/on/through space*. The body of text was mostly developed between 2007 and 2010 along Curatorial Knowledge seminars and paralleling the development of the practical projects.

Volume 2 is presented as a printed book (inside a blue box) and results from a large scale curatorial research, developed with the support of a specialized research and production team and for the duration of almost two years. The research has originated an exhibition at an industrial complex, co-curated with Aneta Szylak, and later was amplified as a book. Both components are titled: *Buildings & Remnants: an essay-project on post-industrial space*.

Volume 1 : work-in-progress

Chapter 0 : Entering the subject, the chapter consists of the introductory problems, the hypothesis, methods, and claims, and exposes the two volume structure of the Thesis.

Chapter 1 : Inhabiting, witnessing, practicing describes the constitution of a body of work and the spreading of research fields conjuncting architecture, curating, art and everyday practice. It encompasses curating as a mode of spatial production, exploring the potential of situated practices. The text is carefully constructed in a multi-layered strategy (report, letters, photography) and explores an ethnographic mode of writing

learnt from Kathleen Stewart[32], so to revisit the curatorial field and a personal body of work, from a situated witnessing perspective, as learnt from Donna Haraway[33]. It constitutes an entrance to curating through a personal literature, through personal experiences, and to what is central, it supports the whole body of research bringing forth the critical vocabulary of the project.

Chapter 2 : Building sites in action are literal and metaphorical places of interdisciplinary practice that overcome subordination to disciplinary borders. *Building sites* are a conceptual model and became a companion for research. The manifesto is an appraisal of looking and following *building sites* intricacy, instantiated by a multi-layered factual description of Iberian sites. The manifesto acknowledges the condition and sets the urge for a processual conceptual model.

Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 : How can one curate existing (or non-existing) spaces? Proposing a processual and transformative understanding of curating and space, and curating space, chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 draw together diverse elements, pieces, parts, fragments, texts, images, and books in order to articulate relations between practice-based research and theoretical writing, between exhibition making and curatorial knowledge.
In the four chapters, four specific projects are unfolded in order to expose four different modes of addressing and allocating the spatial: Processual space, Conversational space, Resonant space and (Non) Material space. Each chapter is composed of a pair of texts (sections 1 and 2). The chapters and sections are attempts to explore diverse modes of curatorial research, proceeding via critical, experimental and creative ways of addressing spatial objects.

Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 share a gradation of anxieties, bringing a diversity of concerns, questions, and proposals around curating space. And curating space clamours for ways to perform beyond strict disciplinary based research. Whether proceeding scientifically (from bodies of academic/structured knowledge), evolving empirically (from experience and fieldwork); situated personally (from affects and wishes), or even unfolding immaterially and fictionally (from language and imagination), curatorial research may describe and create new realities. The weaving of text and image explores the spatialization of the ideas presented: Processual, Conversational, Resonant space and (Non) Material space.

To epitomise, chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 assume diversity in output/format, in writing style, and in tone, essaying diverse reading/writing strategies and instead of "applying" a theoretical frame, or a methodological model, to analyze preexisting case studies, the chapters unfold its diversity, bringing forth the four proposed concepts.

Chapter 7 : Performing a theoretical scaffolding along its sections, chapter 7 grounds the several concerns experienced along the projects developed and analysed, by establishing a dialogue with the bodies of work of three authors that are referential to the field of cultural and social studies. The chapter replaces authors and objects (exhibitions, or architecture/art), and visits diverse reading/writing strategies for hybrid entities, to find as *actants* (Law/Callon/Latour), *figurations* (Haraway) or *processes and non-coherentness* (Law). The intriguing *hinterlands* by John Law provide a last spatial/physical/allegorical approximation to performative entities, more diffuse and puzzling than the *building sites* we departed from. It concludes with a section dedicated to curating, visiting a possible methodology for curatorial research in close relation to space: *curating in/on/through space.*

Chapter 8 : Archiving consists of a selected bibliography which has influenced the research on curating space, and the development of practical curatorial projects; and it consists, as well, of a descriptive archive listing the summaries/technical date of the practical projects referred along the Thesis´ body, and to several functions within curating, programming, designing, endeavours that complement my experience as a curator and researcher. The projects´ relevance to the argument of the Thesis varies: from actual case-studies, to footnote information, to the provenance of some illustrations along the text Thesis, to the instantiation of several fields of practice participating in the debates on curating. The inclusion of the summaries/technical descriptions is to be understood as an appendix, it does not contribute directly to the coherence of the argument, but, it is intended to facilitate the reader with further raw information on "practice", whenever necessary.

[1] Davidson, Cynthia. "Editors Introductory text" *Log Magazine*, no. 20 (Fall 2011): 2.

[2] I was involved as a contributing curator to the first Art and Architecture Biennale of the City of Bordeaux in 2009, curated by experimental architect/artist Didier Fiuza Faustino, in which the curatorial format, the relation to the city and the audience, and the idea of a stabilized art object were experimented. The project is thoroughly documented in the book: Didier Fiuza Faustino, ed. *Evento 2009: I´intime Collectif* (Bordeaux: Monografik editions, 2010).

3 Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Athlone Press, 1983.

[4] In architecture, as in contemporary art, a sphere of professional practice in the area of culture has split from academic research and circulates in public events as biennials, or in projects in public or private institutions.

[5] Architecture Foundation was established in London in 1991 as is devoted to an extensive program of events divulging and communicating Architecture (exhibitions, competitions, festivals, conferences and film projections): [www.architecturefoundation.org.uk]; NAI – Netherlands Institute of Architecture was open as a public Institute in 1993, in Rotterdam. It is specialized in exhibitions, publications, educational service, and a wide range of talks, vents, conferences, international partnerships promoting Architecture. The English website: [http://en.nai.nl/].

[6] La Cité de l´Architecture et du Patrimoine in Paris houses a cultural program and archives/collections: [www.citechaillot.fr/ressources_documentaires.php]; NAI houses in Rotterdam an archive and collection, having its model collection in a new venue: [http://en.nai.nl/collection]; CCA – Canadian Center for Architecture, houses an extensive archive of drawings, photographs, prints, models and other media related to architectural knowledge: [www.cca.qc.ca/en].

[7] The Building Center in London is one of such examples: [www.buildingcentre.co.uk/home.asp].

[8] The American theory magazine Log edited by Cynthia Davidson has devoted a number in fall 2010 to "Curating Architecture" providing a broad view of what´s been done in terms of architectural curatorial practices worldwide: Cynthia Davidson, ed. *Log Magazine*, no. 20, Anyone Corporation, Fall 2011.

[9] The Storefront for Architecture in New York is the leading organization open since 1982: [www.storefrontnews.org].

[10] Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. (London: Routledge, 2004).

[11] Martinon, Jean-Paul. Ed. *The Curatorial, a Philosophy of Curating*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

[12] The reading list of Curatorial/Knowledge research group is available on-line for consultation: ck.kein.org

[13] Some concepts developed by peers from Curatorial Knowledge whose works were fundamental include: conversationality (Sarah Pierce), polyphony (Aneta Szylak), hauntology (Cihat Arinç)

[14] Rendell, Jane. *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*, London: IB Tauris, 2006.

[15] And, I confess, writing in a second language redoubles the attention to writing.

[16] Kracauer, Siegfried. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1995. Original 1963.

[17] Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007.

[18] Haraway, Donna. *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People and Significant Otherness.* Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.

[19] The awareness and reference to companions is informed by *The Companion Manifesto* by Donna Haraway, in which she addresses human evolution in relation to non-humans, therefore humans as composed by relations with a "significant other". "*There cannot be just one companion species; there have to be at least two to make one. It is in the syntax; it is in the flesh. Dogs are about the inescapable,*

contradictory story of relationships – co-constitutive relationships in which none of the partners pre-exist the relating, and the relating is never done once and for all. Historical specificity and contingent mutability rule all the way down, into the nature and culture, into naturecultures. There is no foundation; there are only elephants supporting elephants all the way down." (p.12) Building sites constitute companions to our curatorial research *on* space, they are not pre-given, nor fact, or object, but relate and support, expanding our research. Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003), 12.

[20] Chamoiseau, Patrick. *Écrire en pays dominé* [*Writing in a Dominated Land*, extract translated by J-PM for the C/K Seminar 8 November 2007, 301-310] Paris: Gallimard, 1997.

[21] See chapter 5.

[22] See chapter 6 and Volume 2.

[23] Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. (London: Routledge, 2004).

[24] See chapter 7.

[25] Aware of the estrangement these diverse texts may cause, highlighting a few permits to explain such exercises: Inhabiting, Chapter 2, adopts ethnographic and descriptive writing, 10 years of a curator´s life, mapping the creation of a field. It learns from Kathleen Stewart fieldwork writing, to unfold small evidence of minor gestures. The text is intercalated with letters from a diary, and consubstantiated by a vocabulary project, where terms, books and projects are presented, side-by-side, providing the intellectual references to start the research. The three modes of writing compose one single chapter, are paginated with various styles. Following a different strategy in terms of writing, Chapters 3 to 6, explore the juxtaposition of two different Parts within the chapter. In the case of chapters 5 and 6, first parts are curatorial texts exposing a project, a space and the curatorial concepts behind the works of the several authors and guest artists. Written as a theoretical chapter/catalogue text - one in a more metaphorical/atmospherical approach (chapter 5), a second one in a more analytical and propositive intention (chapter 6) they are followed by critical revisions of the exhibition projects that happen in the form of conversations. Parts 2 of the Chapters 4, 5, and 6, are transcriptions of conversations between the curator/author and another specialists, who interpolates and leads the conversation to address issues not considered before the conversation, nor before the opening of the exhibitions.

[26] See Chapter 8

[27] Mortenbock, Peter and Mooshammer, Helge. eds. *Networked Cultures, Parallel Architectures and the Politics of Space.* Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2008.

[28] Weizman, Eyal. *Hollow land: Israel's architecture of occupation. London:* Verso, 2007

[29] Irit Rogoff. "What is a Theorist?" *KEIN.ORG / Irit's Blog* (April 2004), [http://www.kein.org/node/62] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[30] Azoulay, Ariela. *The Civil Contract of Photography*, New York: Zone Books, 2008

[31] The *disenchantment* with the limits of institutionalization and professionalization works as an engine for the exploration of possibilities. Coming out of the *disenchantment* (as understood by Max Weber) for the dominance of functionalist, objective and rational thinking and the limitations of a professional practice, and the dissatisfaction with the available means, the process of this research was to conceptualize and systematize empirical modalities of inquiry and practice, enabling the convergence of the relation of the *curator* and the *object*. The essayed critical review proceeds "altering" these notions.

[32] Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007.

[33] Haraway, Donna J. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_ OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.

Chapter 1 : INHABITING, WITNESSING, PRACTICING
A situated practice.
Vocabulary.

A SITUATED PRACTICE

Although networked and connected, she inhabits a profoundly analogical and everyday world in which the heavy load of material culture circulates in small discursive fragments. She moves much faster than the speed she is able to represent. She hears much more than she could ever write. To map, structure, or systematize her procedures would lead to a drifting movement through her present and past wanderings.

Educated as an architect and a spatial designer, flat representations should surface from of her hands and help to perfectly orchestrate brand new realities. Her disciplined training should adorn the abstract surfaces of masters' ateliers covered with plans, maps, and clear-cut cross-sections, printed on the same greyish white paper as the glossy photographic images of new objects in magazines like "Wallpaper". In Porto, Portugal, architecture was taught as an authorial and eminently practical object-oriented activity that could progressively generate solutions and heroically transform the world. As a young architect, representations of something to come, proposals for something new, were expected to come from her design exercise. The expectations were high.

A brutal accident destroyed years of accumulated references and proofs of her expertise: all of the young architect's belongings and personal archives burned in a fire after graduation. Books and documents, models, drawings and portfolios, and every material and technical piece evidence of this person's training as an architect was abruptly wiped out, disturbing the material and legal signs of affiliation in knowledge. Never before had the notions of ***production of space***[1] and ***bodily presence in knowledge production***[2] become so clear. She barely remembered anything new, and she inhabited her scholarly research background with ***ordinary affects***[3], with memories, aural stories performing an embodied notion of materiality and connectivity. And, invested with contingency, she embraced her new-found attraction to ephemerality.

Space became increasingly discursive, forever complicating "architecture". Ephemerality, transiency and processual transformation were made manifest through her spatial installations and exhibition designs; and appeared as a mode of curating. Spaces were not only physical, material and conceptual objects, but were entities partially built in language and in affect. The projectual determinism and anticipation of an architecture design proposal was complicated and reversed by looking at it sideways. Her spaces enunciated the routes, affects and encounters amidst all fleeting transience.

Paradoxically, **Building sites**[4] in action and the ephemerality of literal structures, incomplete and permanent, offered powerful metaphors for the processes undertaken. But the inhabitation of construction processes went beyond a literal understanding of space; and beyond a metaphorical concept. Language started resonating and would bring dissimilar dimensions of space, undoing the centrality of architectural construction. Often, only traces, remnants or partial translations of these ephemeral events could be read. Absences started permeating presences, producing multiple processes of encounter.

A certain physical heaviness decelerated the free-fall of virtual freedom that had permeated the late 1990s contemporary theory of architecture in which she had been educated. **Interdisciplinary**[5] studies of architecture had already begun, and an intellectual debate around experimental **laboratorial research**[6] was using "continental philosophy" to provide frameworks and a vocabulary for architectural "theory-oriented practices". Folds, surfaces, planes and topological structures, were transferred into the discourse of "digital and technological revolutions", and were translated into enthusiastic spatial experiments with dematerialization, space virtuality, and interfacing. Informed by a "smooth" understanding of architectural space, theoretical research was oriented towards composition, representation and object production, within non-Euclidian geometry, information flux and modeling processes, producing parametric design, paradigmatically synthesized as "blobitecture".

While this particular notion of space was virtually **smooth**[7], her concept of research on space had become *striated* by practice, and by the loads on and conflicts between social assemblage and material manufacture. The sophisticated spatial, aesthetic and technical experiments rapidly entered the field of entrepreneurship and creative management and started to leave the social, cultural and political dimensions behind. Away from the abstract fields of speculative thinking and experimental laboratorial practice, the actual and material dimensions of everyday practice emerged as non-polished concerns.

Something started to tip the balance: her archive was not visual and textual, it was composed of spatial concepts, empirical fragments and material instantiations, and a singular concern with space had emerged from the field of practice. Spaces were no longer plastic bodies that were architecturally designed yet heterogeneous unstable entities demanding an altered modality of research. The question was no longer about defining an authorial approach to space, a *"what can I do/produce with this space?"* but instead it was about acknowledging the immanence of combined research and practice in/on space: *"what is research and practice on space producing with/for us?"*
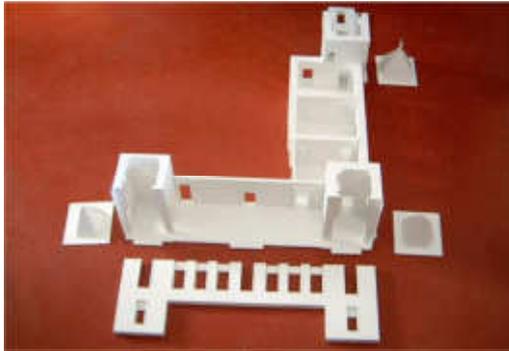
Left column [top-down]: the office, white cardboard model, existing column, stucco decoration
Right column [top-down]: the container, plaster workshop, layered wall, damaged ceiling
Photos by Eduardo Aroso and Inês Moreira

Letter 1 _after March 2000

"For six months my internship was spent inside a prefabricated second-hand shipping container, set on cement blocks in the muddy grounds of a historical palace undergoing drastic renovation. Inside the container, a simple conference room was used once a week for technical meetings, and a two-computer draft room was our work space – our meaning I and the other intern who was working with me as the office contacts for the construction site. A simple white 12m² cold and sterile facility was the technical extension of the architect's office inside the building site. The cement blocks slightly elevated the container, physically separating the space of conception from the site of construction. Only our feet would step on both spaces (white office and muddy site) and a mat would help to keep the interior surfaces clean and isolated.

Outside the container an inhospitable and active environment followed its own course. Construction work had begun a couple of years earlier, and it was now behind schedule and was continually being interrupted in different ways. The reconstruction of the baroque palace had been extensively studied and designed, approved by heritage services and was controlled by different organizations as it was a national monument. Although it had been carefully planned, technical contingency, historical layering and human, or atmospheric, interferences have kept interrupting the work.

A few beautiful baroque tempera paintings by Nicolau Nasoni, the 18th century architect, were revealed behind the wooden door covers, a surprise that demanded consolidation, recuperation, and, of course, the need to bring in new teams and people. Archeological teams monitored the mechanical movements inside the palace and gardens, as the smallest movement could have unveiled an earlier structure, bringing new information. An old stone duct was found in the garden, former sanitary structures were found behind a wall, a water supply system was found beneath the wooden dance floor, and, as different teams were called on to intervene, fireplaces, old tiles and plenty of stones and historical details appeared.

Over that rainy winter of 2000, the waters softened the layered material ground as the bordering river had flooded a few times and invaded the city and the gardens on which we stepped. The ground was a striated surface: time, soil and a collection of small histories were conjoining and collapsing. As the site, activities and people unearthed new information, this generated conflicts. The muddy, wet and complex half-building kept redirecting and demanding attention. The building site kept inverting the traditional direction of "sketch to building": the building kept interrupting the construction work, and the site kept producing a building and a construction. The building had to be considered, discussed and accessed, and drawings had to be redesigned.

The disciplinary container distributed black on white blueprints and collected noted and stained documents in order to reprocess them. Interdisciplinary came from the outside, a visible field, and only a certain performativity and dialogic approach to space and to the dissemination of information could begin to clarify the intentions codified in the drawings on the floppy disks and boxes inside the container."[1]

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[1] The "container residence", as I like to recall it, was an internship practice period in an architecture office. It was part of architectural design education at Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto, and happened from September 2000 to March 2001 at F. Távora and J.B. Távora, architects, an influential architecture office in Oporto, Portugal, specialized in public buildings, restoration and in the articulation of old/new structures. The internship practice was possible with the support of Prodep Scholarship Program.

"*What can I do in this space?*" was no longer the focus of the question. The ventures at stake were no longer functional and technical, and were no longer the re-presentation of an external proposal to be transferred to a space. Contingency, scarcity and tension were processual instantiations of the social, cultural and economic dimensions of space production. The immaculate technical drawings, virtual representations and accurate scale models were oversimplifications of a complex conundrum of subjects and themes that became audible. Each time the abstract spaces represented in the folded blueprints were spread out on a construction table, something unpredictable occurred. A painter died from lung cancer; several workers were fired; a construction company went bankrupt; a new building was destroyed; a particular material became too expensive to be used, or could no longer be sourced.

Thingly[8] qualities of practiced spaces started to penetrate the limpid surfaces of representation and to inhabit its interstices. Objects, places and people could not be dismissed, and categories that disciplined and oriented her thinking (such as structure, function, building, and composition) kept eroding, only to reappear materially and discursively inscribed as a different space. The complications of daily practice, and institutional and economic restraints reconstituted the world she inhabited and in which she operated. Experience affected her *modus operandi*.

The world became a ***messy***[9] place overlaying her projected plans. Dust, oily finger prints or a pair of work gloves would regularly cover her design sheets, a small bit of disorder articulating the connections of abstract proposals with the implications of their production. When followed closely, the hands, the bodies, the instruments and the actions that generated this veil of dust acted as windows onto the social, cultural and economic fields of production. A barbarian, impure language arose from the seemingly awkward ***assemblages and networks***[10] of materials and techniques, and from the human and social aspects inscribed in the drawings of future authored spaces. Acting bodies, odd narratives and partial objects would escape from the planning paperwork. Slowly, the silent/silenced subject-matters folded inside those white labelled boxes (enclosing abstract technical schemes and myriad maps of new spatial proposals) and started to speak to, infect and transform her understanding of architecture and space production.

Space came to be considered in terms of its processuality, relationality and semiotics. The central questions were inverted and became reflexive and inhabited: "W*hat is the inhabitation of this space doing to us? How can we perform and read its processes?*" The idea of a *practiced space* kept opening notions of relationality and material performativity, and bringing partial "objects" back to a discussion of the curatorial. Performing research processes became a kind of curatorial knowledge that emerged from a practice revolving around space. Her design practice and research on space became a mode of curatorial practice, where different knowledge emerged, constituting a hybrid mode of **work**[11]: in-between

art/architectural space, in-between production/appropriation, in-between creative work and knowledge production. Her approach to space became a mode of **_field work_**[12] located in-between space design, cultural production, theoretical research and event/exhibition making.

Her practice became impure. Instead of resisting or withdrawing from the world, she embraced a **_processual engagement_**[13], which instigated a two-fold project. Firstly, there was a mode of field work practice *in* space, to generate exchange between the projected/designed and the conditions and circumstances of the project itself. Secondly there was a more deferred and reflexive meditation *on* space, that included the conditions of its production. In short, she would become a practising architect-curator.

As an architect and curator, the representation of space was no longer within the realm of her practice. Designing, constructing, funding, moving, transporting, and assembling were elements on one side of a continuum, and organizing, coordinating, problem solving and conflict management were at the other. Multi-tasking (design, construction, production management) would complicate and expand her design/construction activities and take them from speculative design and material/technical endeavours to the non-representational spheres of performativity and discourse. Production management expanded the network of the *production of space*, and re-inscribed invisible and ordinary aspects of fabrication. Her notion of spatial design was extended through production processes and relational modalities, thus embracing non-technical knowledge and *bodily presence*. Her long-term, **_patient research_**[14] on space began to address the temporal, the contingent and the discursive within the spatial, while at the same time producing it.

She called it curating, not contemporary art, or architecture, but *curating space*. She experimented with a work methodology that would reformulate disciplinary boundaries between architecture, museum studies, and cultural production/management, and had no intention of finding a method to systematize it. Research became a journey through an amalgamation of all sorts of materials, from newspaper cuttings to video instantiations, sound recordings, and academic texts; and it also included deeper inquiries that used the city, the museum, and other spaces as resources and deployed different kinds of research methodologies.

Discourse complicated the seemingly technical flatness of representation, blurred disciplinary boundaries and expanded the architectural understanding of space. A few unexpected or non-technical questions had the power to erode limits: "*Who is beyond that wall? Who owns that fence? How long has this box been standing here?*" Listening became a strategy to un-map what had previously been known.

It took time to map. Space became a connective fissure that moved and processually allocated all kinds of parts, pieces, materials, and stories and which shattered her disciplinary design background and recomposed it as an unfamiliar, thick and messy field. Representation was provided as a technical service: a 3D wooden model, a small archive of digital images, a commissioned group of analogical pictures, a 3D digital model, a cardboard box containing perfectly folded drawings awaiting approval, or a table across which plans were spread. Slowly, she even stopped photographing as it seemed to immobilize the process.

The process was long. Little by little, she became immersed in her field of practice and observed the intricate interweaving of the authorial with the social, cultural, material, and later the personal and even fictional/poetic dimensions. The conjunctions of **spatial practice**[15]expanded her lexicon and grammar of architecture in multiple directions: from design to criticism; from production to appropriation; from technical activity to field work, and led to methodological concerns emerging from this deviation from a normative discipline.

With time she became aware of **obliqueness**[16]. Experimenting with a series of *oblique movements* served to redefine a method. Approaching space as a story, and not as an object (whether by its shadows, or by its affects), would produce entrances to a diversity of questions, and practices and stories revolving around space. The oblique position enabled the articulation of a series of slanting movements and entrances into space, which un-mapped architectural procedures and made things speak and resonate, thereby materializing space as a dense site rather than detracting from it as a concept The technical abstractness of space was inhabited by absences, and research could now address its messiness, incoherence and vagueness. Inhabiting the *production of space* highlighted the unproductive and wasteful aspects beyond design and authorship.

One day, with regard to her research methods, someone asked: "*Why are you interested in what is unproductive? Why do you keep trying to rescue what is unproductive and make it productive?*"

This interpolative question about the **unproductive**[17] helped to disambiguate the on-going research. Awkward cases and events, micro stories and oddments, strange objects and ill-fitting anecdotes were found to be prolific instantiations that brought anxieties back to research, like monsters do in amateurs' curiosity cabinets. Finally, the unproductive disturbed disciplinary knowledge. Addressing it (the messy, the non-technical, and the everyday) had become an intuited means of considering the **non-representational** in the *production of space*.

Images: My daughter Violeta and I, analysing the walls of the house before construction started.
Photos by Paulo Mendes, her father.

Letter 2 _after July 2009

"My house is my office and home, and maybe one of the most complicated and convoluted endeavors with which I have ever engaged. It represents not only an architectural reconversion project, but also a complex extension of our intellectual concerns with space, urban micro-politics, and the overlapping professional and economic aspects of our lives. Over the months, what was believed to be a technical task (remodeling an old apartment building into a house) became a complex entanglement of architecture, construction, relationality and personal territory. This building site story may have begun with the search for a house to buy, or may have even started before that, with the selling of the previous one. My fantasy/dream of a house was as a place to encounter spatial, urban, financial, legal, constructive and temporal questions. The internal space was only one of the parameters.

A low-rent post-industrial neighbourhood, a certain state of dereliction, and the property inheritance transfer permitted by the court, were all just as important.

The house and the construction affected every sphere of our lives. The affects of a process of construction, and our affective relations as technicians, owners, future dwellers, and clients of the building work would intermingle intensely for the duration of those 15 months. Different activities were conjoined, which helped to limit costs such as financial and legal paper-work. Also, field research for particular second-hand pieces and materials led to a more analytical understanding of the historical and social circumstances behind the old 19th century post-industrial neighbourhood of former workers' dwellings and abandoned factories. Nowadays, most of the former workers continue to live there even after the factories have long since closed, and the former owners have gone bankrupt or moved on to more prosperous areas. Most houses were, at some point, subdivided into small apartments, rented as single rooms or transformed into hostels. The neighbourhood is now crossed and punctuated by a significant transport infrastructure (train, subway, high-ways) that disrupts territorial, technological and historical continuity.

Our lives became extensions of this building site. To rebuild would mean undoing property divisions, re-structuring, re-consolidating, while still trying to maintain/incorporate the memories of the previous occupants. The delicate process of rebuilding a traditional stone and wood house (with technical detailing, planning and design) meant our affective projection into the space, as owners and inhabitants-to-be. This would become a painful daily rehashing of what a conceptual approach to collaboration with workers is, or is not. The building process failed as an experiment in relationality, and forever undid our notion of what a relational project was. Conversationality, dialogue, and open gatherings[18] were all experiments I was following in my curatorial practice, and that I had wished to experiment with in the house as the personal project of an architect-curator.

The reality check/shock of the processes of material culture and the processes of 'un'-collaboration with the technical team, were against every theoretical approach to collaboration that we had experienced as curators and authors. The house construction failed to correspond to a discursive sphere of aesthetics, as budgets, timing, and profit ended up ruling the work. The continuous contingency plans and processual transformations; the accidents, unexpected events and *détournements* prolonged the suffering of waiting, and increased the expense. After a certain point, the process became so overwhelming and painful that we could no longer film or take pictures. Densification occurred: we talked for hours, trying to articulate and rationalize the violent process. Alternatively, sometimes we simply couldn´t speak at all. "[2]

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[2] The house is situated in Oporto eastern end, at Bonfim. It was built in the early 1900, registered in the 1930´s as one family house, subdivided possibly in the 50´s in three apartments and subsequently rented to different families, until it was rented to us in August 2008 and rebuilt between September 2008 and February 2009, delayed on to July 2009 (when it was sold by court intervention) and a few works remained to be finished still in November 2009. Contingency took over historical continuity.

The problem was in ***depicting***[19]. Where did the objects of study begin and end? Odd stories and events were *depicted, or* curated*,* to expand one-dimensional, linear notions of architectural space and design, yet were based on disciplinary understandings of objectual design. Instead of clarifying, simplifying and cataloguing, depicting the "unproductive" exposed the absences and resonances within productive presences. The questions then became how to relate productive-unproductive or presence-absence in architecture and space production, and how to expand the limits of curating space.

Working through ***relational conjunctions***[20] (no longer understood as slippery case studies or simple "oddments") the articulation of *productive and unproductive* came to inform the search for new methodologies. Undoing projectual clarity with messy *processual* research in space produced a modality of curatorial field work on space and informed a critical approach to curatorial research.

Different ***bodies of knowledge***[21] supported her approach and the definition of research-tool-and-case-figurations to formulate and deliver interdisciplinary questions. The experimental conjunction of questions and processes and methods brought her to an elsewhere, a point from where she could sustain the fragility of a ***modest position***[22]**.** She neither announced it, nor was she self-effacing; however, by producing a slippage and spillage of different kinds of expertise, and thus destabilizing the ground, she slowly began to inhabit the authorial and technical realms of her practice with an awareness of her ***situated knowledge***[23]. Theoretical concern with performative methodologies agitated the disciplinary architectural background, and did eventually ***undo***[24], or undiscipline it as a new research field. Her critical approach would now *conjoin* social, cultural and political fields of architecture and space, and questions of *positionality* in the *production of space*, the production of a field and the production of knowledge.

Material semiotics would drag space through the fields of techno-cultural critique, and reassemble it in a different field from that of its departure. A *quasi-methodology* would reformulate her approach to the *production of space*: addressing entangled figurations. Through a set of ***densifications and diffractions***[25], a conjunction of *matter and concerns* and the performances of spatial practice pronounced space as a kind of discursive *matter-iality.* This did not embody the qualities of pure materials, or the virtuosity of technologies, or the references for space composition, rather, the *field* would both inform research (collecting densifications) and progressively enact work (performing diffractions), nourishing the redefinition of on-going curatorial research on space. This would draw awareness to dissimilar modes of practice, to events of material productivity, and to counter-productivity (or unproductivity) as integral parts of production: undoing as doing, unbuilding as building, and

indulgence as self-infliction. She was addressing the processes of becoming, the dislocations and the half-existences of partial objects.

As the intricacies of design and expertise expanded through language and everyday production processes, the notion of heroic authorship and the centrality of object-hood in architecture became *minor*[26]. Her *processual engagement* in back-office activities, performatively undid the hegemonic centrality of the author in design. The *thingly* notion of the fabrication of space redefined her conception of space production. Space was no longer simply designed but appropriated and self-generated with socialities. Space became an event-full relational device - the trefoil of abstract, symbolic and appropriation interrelated in the *production of space.* Spaces were *things,* in-between the technical approach to construction and the performative event for discursive writing.

After mapping and reassembling the multiple pathways between design, architecture and non-coherence, there ceased to be a recognizable disciplinary background to her practice. Her notions of *space, architecture* and *curating* were redefined, eventually *altering*[27] the nodal positionality of the author, the object and of disciplined knowledge.

One day, opening an old folder, she re-read her first PhD research questions:

"*Which curatorial tactics may intervene in architectural research and nourish architectural thinking? If exhibition spaces are privileged places for spatial research, then in what ways can these experiments be matured and intensified? Can the architect-curator assume the role of a catalyst as curating becomes the breeding of architectural experimentation and knowledge production?*"

Frozen in time, these words printed on stapled white paper sounded too unequivocal, and now far too distant. *Processual engagement* in design and in research work had brought her to *out-there-ness*, to the exteriorities of the representational processes of exhibiting architecture or art, which were located prior even to the model of exhibition itself. Curating architecture was articulated as a wider and thicker understanding of space (technical, design, social, cultural, economic. and the personal and even fictional or poetic). Experimentation had occurred, not within the visible space of the exhibition, nor in the private disciplined space of the laboratory, but through the course of working and reading and writing: it had come through the practice, through the material and through **curatorial**[28] research.

Letter 3 _after January 2007

"To create the *architectural design* for the display of the exhibition *Depósito* [Storage] and simultaneously *to be the producer* of an exhibition involving almost two dozen university museums are a *priori* two incompatible tasks, considering the obvious distance between creative work – architectural design – and the executive, technical, and eminently practical tasks of production management. Both have archetypes: in Architecture one thinks of the architect/artist as an introspective and passionate author, isolated in his/her atelier, producing sketches and outlining solutions in the languages of authorship, with their unrepeatable and unique forms. Little is known as for cultural production; it is situated in the process of producing itself and it is reinvented in every new project. It is a more or less prosaic post-modern activity that consists of negotiating with the different actors involved in any given project in order to exchange solutions and find alternative answers to theoretical and practical problems that emerge from curators' and artists' proposals. Cultural production is a hybrid, semi-intuitive and clearly "adisciplinary" activity.

In this exhibition project, *producing architecture* - "what to create?" – is inseparable from the symmetric "how to do it?", or "how to undertake the *architecture of this production?"*. The design was a long and unexpectedly performative process of field work within several university museums, their spaces and practices. The design of the spatial display for the Storage exhibition included various *layers* and knowledge in its *process*. Triggered by the concept of the curator, it refers to the history of the University, some general principles on Museum studies, the history and stories of most of the 570 objects on display, and the *input* and direct collaboration with most of the 15 contemporary visual artists who were invited to participate. However, in indirect ways, the space embodies several underlying questions and open-ended answers which consider the context (and vicissitudes) of each of the museums. This extends from the concerns of the curators and from several of the *what-and how-to-do´s*, which include the present and the future of university museums and the spaces used to accommodate them. Design and production management were made possible by collapsing the borders and "un-disciplining" both activities.

In order to produce a *Storage* from the store rooms of the Museums at the University of Porto it was necessary to "un-discipline" the ways one thinks about collections, museum conventions and architectural processes. The long process of acquaintance with the different collections and displays, and the indirect contact with the objects selected – a weak but dynamic process of stabilisation as collection - also unveiled and helped to unravel several invisible, processual and symbolic paths that crossed between the museums and their storage rooms. These paths refer to informal procedures, to a functionality shaped by everyday life, to the sharing of personal references transmitted orally and to emotional reasoning that conceptually transforms a short routine visit to a "neutral" storage room into long and passionate experiences of production of meaning. (...) The display of this exhibition was an exercise in exploring the more unpredictable qualities of the store-rooms, the informality of their practices, and the personal e. As in the store-rooms, the exhibition would require time for visiting and an openness to embrace these different experiences.

As the curator points to in his text: *"This exhibition is the installation of a store-house of several museum store-houses. While not rejecting its status as an exhibition it should primarily be seen as a storage space."* The design of the space shapes one´s will by embodying the important experience of access, and even intimacy, to the most private territories and to their production processes. Just as the university store-houses are not limited to their strict functions, the *space* of this store room attempts to condense different forms of knowledge in its diverse densities."[3]

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[3] This letter was first published as an article on the Architecture and Production of the exhibition *Depósito*, in the exhibition catalogue. Original essay: Inês Moreira, "Architecture and Production in Storage: on the project of collaboration with the Museums of the University of Oporto" in Paulo Cunha e Silva, ed., *Depósito: Anotações sobre Densidade e Conhecimento* (Porto, Universidade do Porto, 2007), 155-172.

Top four images [by André Cepeda]:
Interior spaces of store rooms at University Museums [Architecture, Engineering, Medicine and Science]
Lower four images [by Produções Reais (the carpenters)]:
Wood and metal construction, transportation and assemblage of materials to build the display for the exhibition

[1] *Production of space*

Production of space is the title of a fundamental book by Henri Lefebvre. Expanding the notions of how space is produced, practiced and represented. Lefebvre approaches space from different fields of knowledge, from art and literature to architecture, economics, and politics. Lefebvre addresses the *Production of Space* in a conceptual triad, triangulating around *representations of space*, *representational spaces* and *spatial practices*. Briefly, it could be simplified as forms, symbols and uses. The concept of a spatial practice as an on-going practice of everyday activities generating social space has been critical to different knowledge fields. The triad enunciates and dissociates the apparatuses of physical, mental and social space: design/proposal, image/symbol and use/appropriation.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson Smith. Oxford, OX, UK; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1991 [1974].

[2] *Bodily presence in knowledge production*

Bodily presence in knowledge production, in place, in time and in affects is an important notion from feminist studies of social science, and techno-science. The presence of the body undoes the distance of universalizing the visual (and mental) gaze of knowledge production and includes mediated relations in power structures. This term refers to critical positionality (in physical presence) and to individual subjectivity and vulnerability in research. A "bodily present witness" (as enunciated in the notion of the *implicated witness*) would be the one who simultaneously acts, reflects and confirms, and is informed by the notion of the *modest witness*, as proposed by Donna Haraway in her book of the same title.

Haraway, Donna J. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_ OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.

[3] *Ordinary affects*

Ordinary affects as a concept developed through the writing of American anthropologist Kathleen Stewart. A depiction of *ordinary affects* is better described through the construction of the book, as it is constituted and written in a performative mode that enacts in text the same disturbances and event-fullness it is mapping in everyday USA. A piece of ethnographic and autobiographic writing, it performs by means of instantiations - some

fictional and some from the author´s everyday life - a relational textual mode of perception, which Deleuze called "affect".

"*The ordinary throws itself together out of forms, flows, powers, pleasures, encounters, distractions, drudgery, denials, practical solutions, shape-shifting forms of violence, daydreams, and opportunities lost or found.*

Or it falters, fails.

But either way we feel its pull." (Stewart 2007, 29)

The notion of *affectivity*, or *intimacy* in the personal sphere, enters instantiated in invisible practices, enunciated in the term "ordinary". Along the text, the author addresses and sparks the affective potential of the banal and the everyday. The book is not argumentative, but a textual activation of philosophical concepts in worldliness, generating in descriptive short stories the intensities of encounters it describes in worldly things, and has a capacity to affect along the reading. The author enunciates some books informing her writing: fragmentary instantiations of thought processes and objects in modernity in the book "*1999 Arcade Project*" by Walter Benjamin; the poetics of writing and the attention to fragments and the detailing in Roland Barthes´s "*S/Z*" and "*Lover´s Discourse*"; the fictio-critical writing of Michael Taussig and Leslie Stern, the latest embedding the text of a theoretical approach to the networks articulating the ephemeral and un-meaningful action of smoking "*The Smoking Book*"; and Lauren Berlant writing in the affects and in an "affective attunement" of writing, concepts and the scenic.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007.

[4] *Building sites*

Building sites is a conceptual model, our companion in reading and writing an approach to curatorial research on space. *Building sites* are generated by power and representation; they enunciate tectonic proposals. Building sites are literal spaces: they are the intersected fields of design, construction and research complicated by the social, economic and political dimensions of spatial practice. They are assembling actors (the mediators of projected futures and built projects) and in-between spaces (ephemeral places, semi-clandestine platforms, precarious conditions). Building sites are conjunctions, assemblages, *middle things*; they are contingent locations inhabited by temporal activities, improvisation and social and material conflict. At building sites the projected is interrupted by the unexpected, opening the space for "processual" or "contingent" experimentation. For building sites are processual entities, as fields are crossed and practiced; they keep acting/working (building), and continue generating fields (sites). Building sites are our companions to research on

space. Performing building sites produces buildings and produces sites. Performing building sites, along as companion, is a mode to address curatorial research. This notion is developed in Chapter 2 of this research project.

[5] *Interdisciplinary studies*

Interdisciplinary studies were born from the urge to bring together questions and bits of knowledge traditionally dispersed in different disciplines. A brief introduction to my academic background will systematically introduce the context and origins of some of the references, authors and knowledge structures in/with which I have been educated. In previous study of Architecture at Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto (Portugal), we completed a six-year design-oriented architecture education. This architectural object-oriented education was transformed by a scholarship from the Erasmus/Socrates European Union Mobility Program to study for a year at Universitat Politècnica da Catalunya (Barcelona, Spain). The 1999/2000 academic year was very transformative: aesthetics, contemporary thinking and culture, theory of architecture and history of contemporary art, to name a few, were among the disciplines expanding the objectual notion of architecture into a more reflexive and insightful approach. Among those whose work served to introduce contemporary critical thinking into architectural research were Ignasi-Sola Morales, Felix Azua, Jose Maria Montaner, and Jordi Oliveras, to name a few. Searching for continuity with the interdisciplinary intellectual environment of Universitat Politècnica da Catalunya, my interdisciplinary studies of architecture were developed with a post-graduate degree from Metropolis Master Program in Architecture and Urban Culture (2001/2003), a taught program based at CCCB and FPC (The Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona / Fundación Politécnica da Catalunya). Tutors and guest lecturers included such names as Manuel Delanda, Beatriz Colomina, Xavier Costa, Stan Allan, Mark Cousins, Michael Speaks, along with Suzanne Strum, and Martí Peran, among others. (Research project supported by scholarship programs of Portuguese Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia).

[6] *Laboratorial research*

A thorough study of science and technology laboratory research as knowledge spaces for artistic and architectural practices was developed in different moments of my previous academic work. Art and architecture practices using digital and biological technologies were analyzed and can be found in my Mphil Thesis research where three levels of insight into technology were addressed: laboratory research as metaphor for methods, concepts and composition; laboratory research on the human body as translation or metonymic with architectural spaces; and the literal

incorporation of technologies and new materials into architectural spaces. Later, this theoretical interdisciplinary research was applied to the program and cultural policies of the Laboratory of Experimental Art, a Department of the Ministry of Culture (Institute of Arts), which I coordinated from 2003-2005. After this experience, I curated several exhibitions of visual artist Marta de Menezes who is working with art inside biology laboratories. In the curatorial approach to "*Retrato Proteico _Proteic Portrait*", I introduced the cultural and social dimensions of her projects into relations within the laboratory space, and later, in "Decon", I opened up the possibility for contamination in the "outside" world - not in metaphorical terms, but by actually observing and questioning the material and epistemological continuities of both fields.

Mphil thesis presented in Metropolis Master Program in Architecture and Urban Culture, 2003 [CCCB – The Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona / Fundación Politécnica da Catalunya]:
Moreira, Inês. *Bio[tecno]logy in Architecture. Converging Body and Architecture in experimental practices*. Original title in Portuguese: *O Bio(tecno)lógico em Arquitectura. Convergência de Corpo e Arquitectura em práticas experimentais*.
(Research project supported by the scholarship programs of Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia)

Book on laboratory research in Marta de Menezes work:
Moreira, Inês. *Retrato Proteico _Proteic Portrait.* Badajoz: MEIAC Museo Extremeño Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporáneo, Spain, 2009.
(Spanish/Castilian and English, 120pp)

Articles on laboratory and contamination:
Moreira, Inês. "Why Decon at petit CABANON? + What happened in petit CABANON?" In Menezes, Marta de and João Urbano. *Decon: decontamination, deconstruction, decomposition*. 44-51. Lisboa: ITQB, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009.
(English/Portuguese)
Menezes, Marta de, Luís Quintais, João Urbano, Aida Castro, Joana Costa and Inês Moreira. "*petit Think Tank #1.*" In de Menezes, Marta and João Urbano. *Decon: decontamination, deconstruction, decomposition.* 82-119. Lisboa: ITQB, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009.
(English/Portuguese)

[7] *Smooth space and striated space*
Smooth and *striated* are two concepts enunciated by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in chapter 14 of their seminal book "*A Thousand Plateaus*". *Smooth space* is a continuous surface traversed by intensities and events; it is perceived as an experiential space, surfacing within nomadic drifts. It is space navigated by its textures and surfaces, and measurable in qualitative terms, by haptic and sensuous perceptions of relations between zones and areas, and the changing bodies that cross and occupy it. *Smooth space* is both navigated and permeates the navigator – it is the nomadic space of desert, sea or continuous extension. Striated space is the normative space of state regulation, measured in quantities; and its

properties are translated into geometric and arithmetic systems, which create homogeneity and translatability. *Striated space* is the discrete space of Euclidean geometry, of abstract representation, and numbers, to be differentiated against notions of topology, drifting surfaces and intensities in *smooth space*. *Striation* comes from acts of representation that discipline and separate spaces; it is a formulation homogenizing space and reducing it to information (property, uses, and value). *Striated space* stabilizes and rigidly fixes all fluxes, drifting bodies and fluids that permeate *smooth space*.

"*Smooth space is filled by events or haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties. It is* haptic *rather than optical perception. Whereas in striated forms organize a matter, in the smooth materials signal forces and serve as symptoms for them. It is an intensive rather than extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties. Intense* Spatium *instead of* Extensio. *A Body without Organs instead of an organism and organization*." (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 524)

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. "1440: The Smooth and the Striated." In Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. London and New York: Continuum, 2004 [1980].

[8] *Thingly*

"*What in the thing is thingly? What is the thing in itself? We shall not reach the thing in itself until our thinking has first reached the thing as thing.*" (Heidegger 2001, 165)

A highly influential text by Martin Heidegger, "*The Thing*" has been central to diverse strands of research, from philosophy, to history, to material culture. The proposed notion of *thingly*, side-steps the centrality of the materiality of formal objects, the symbolic representations of objects, and the understanding of an objective presence of objecthood. From anthropology to archeology to art, thinking around objects and material culture has been transformed by this text. Heidegger describes objects as what "*stands before, over against, opposite us*". His conception of thing is not of a technical and objective being, or scientific evidence of knowledge, or a universalizing notion of the understanding of what is present and in front of us. Things are not graspable, or defined, as objects; and Heidegger suggests a two-fold approach to *thing*. First, a thing is what *stands forth,* from a process of production and materialization, whether being "self-made" or produced by a third entity; and, second, it is also standing forth into the "unconcealedness of what is already present" (Heidegger 2001, 166)

According to Heidegger, a *thing* is not reduced to its representation or objecthood. He writes: "*The thing things. Thinging gathers.*" And, differing from the notion of the object (of science, of design), the *thing* brings to presence the absences that representation (of objects) cannot reach. I interpret this passage as a shift from a static notion of the object (and its functions) to an active reading strategy of its performances. Thus, to understand the thing we shall not consider it as a noun but as a verb, as in "*the thing things*."

In a longer passage, Heidegger elaborates on the nature of the objects of science, and their reduction to technical representations, further clarifying the limitations of objects and the potential for thinking things (or bringing forth) in research:

"*Science makes the jug-thing into a non-entity in not permitting things to be the standard for what is real. Science´s knowledge, which is compelling within its own sphere, the sphere of objects, already had annihilated things as things long before the atom bomb had exploded. The bomb´s explosion is only the grossest of all gross confirmations of the long-since-accomplished annihilation of the thing: the confirmation that the thing remains nil. The thingness of the thing remains concealed, forgotten. The nature of the thing never comes to life, that is, it never gets a hearing. (…) That annihilation is so weird because it carries before it a twofold delusion: first, the notion that science is superior to all other experience in reaching the real in all its reality, and second, the illusion that, notwithstanding the scientific investigation of reality, things could still be things, which would presuppose that they had once been in full possession of their thinghood. But if things ever had already shown themselves qua things in their thingness, then the things thingness would have become manifest and would have laid claim to thought. In truth, however, the thing as thing remains proscribed, nil, and in that sense annihilated. This has happened and continues to happen so essentially that not only are things no longer admitted as things, but they have yet at all been able to appear to thinking as things.*" (Heidegger 2001, 168)

A few key notions underlying our research were *brought forth* through the reading of this text. Heidegger´s analysis of the vessel and jug as object or thing is a fundamental text for our understanding and conceptualization of *performing building sites*. The thinking of things as things displaces the understanding of an "architectural design object" and of our research operations. The notion of a thing as verb, and later the notion of *actor-network* by Bruno Latour, further expand the limits of objecthood and present the question of depicting the limits of a processual "self-made" and "unconcealedness" in objects. Under the lines of this text the practice

of curating architecture is displaced from a "scientific knowledge" of authorship and objecthood; or disciplinary reduction of a case and its authors, to a bundle of absences and presences, where the concealedness of things is *brought forth*.

Heidegger, Martin. "The Thing." In *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. 161-184. New York: Perennial Classics, 2001 [1971]

[9] *Messy*

Mess is that which is not grasped within the pre-established protocols of science, research and knowledge. Mess is what is usually left outside the clear-cut delimitation of an object-of-study. If a certain vagueness and imprecision underlies research and project-making, such as the present PhD research project, mess is that which is not considered, a strategy to clarify what is to be considered. An extensive chunk of the non-coherent world expresses itself as *mess, confusion and relative disorder*, as John Law calls it, outside the predetermined limits of research, of laboratory experimentation, and of disciplinary thinking. John Law describes this vagueness and incoherence as exteriorities of knowledge, research and disciplines.

He writes: *"Parts of the world are caught in our ethnographies, our histories and our statistics. But other parts are not, or if they are then this is because they have been distorted into clarity. (…) Of much of the world is vague, diffuse or unspecific, slippery emotional, ephemeral, elusive or indistinct, changes like a kaleidoscope, or doesn´t have much of a pattern at all, then where does this leave social science? How might we catch some of the realities we are currently missing? Can we know them well? Should we know them? Is 'knowing' the metaphor that we need? And if it isn´t, then how might we relate to them?"* (Law 2004, 2)

So, how can we address *mess*? Through productivity? Through unproductivity? *Mess* is a mode of vagueness and expresses itself through absences and presences. *Mess* is manifold and manifests itself in diverse ways: from interruption and distortion of the previously set (and known), to undoing the previously produced, to propelling improvised solutions. The "*messy*" to which we refer arises from aspects of practice, not from disciplines. *Messy* is what disciplinary knowledge tends to leave "outside", as it cannot be reduced to knowledge by protocols. *Mess* escapes protocols, and *mess* escapes disciplinary knowledge production. It is a kind of non-knowledge, a practical know-how, stemming from practice. *Mess* is articulated in kinds of new-knowledge skills. It can be a path to understanding certain interdisciplinary practices.

Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. London: Routledge, 2004.

[10] *Assemblages and networks*

Assemblages and *networks* are figurations of conjunctions and articulations, deeply informed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari´s formulation of the *Assemblage*, in *Anti-Oedipus*. *Assemblages* and *networks* are articulating/ed methods, tools and the language to address complexity, hybridity and confusion. Both science and technology studies, social sciences, and especially their intersections have been using it to conceptualize and think its objects, methods, and practices. They represent the theoretical base of *Method Assemblage*, among whose founders and most prolific writers are John Law and Bruno Latour.

"*We live today in the age of partial objects, bricks that have been shattered to bits, and leftover. We no longer believe in the myth of the existence of fragments that, like the pieces of an antique statue, are waiting for the last one to be turned up, so that they may all be glued back together to create a unity that is precisely the same as the original unity. We no longer believe in a primordial totality that once existed, or in a final totality that awaits us at some future date*". (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 42)

"*Method Assemblage (...) [is] a process of building, of assembling, or better of recursive self-assembling in which the elements put together are not fixed in shape, do not belong to a larger pre-given list but are constructed at least in part as they are entangled together*". (Law 2004, 42)

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Athlone Press, 1983.
Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. London: Routledge, 2004.

[11] *work*

The notion of *work* (what is produced) is a complex entanglement of the actors (research / object / researcher) in relation (process / situation / implication). *Field work* marks an "external referent" and it works in relation to the field. So, *work* is a constant interaction of all the interventions. *Field work* at work is a triangulated relation of research process, situated object and implicated researcher. *Field work* works the field, the notion of *work* and the one(s) working. The notion of an *actor-network* offers dynamic insight into the possible functioning of a field-object-work-and-worker relationship. What then is knowing (or working for knowledge), and what kinds of knowledges are gathered? *Field work* could be and engagement with an object of study, a certain situation (the spatial and cultural position of the object of study) and/or the reconstitution of what the knowable. We understand it as a performative engagement with research itself and with the previously known as "objects of study". *Field work* may re-conceptualize and re-embody the

object with the spatio-temporal conditions of a situation, and of research. In this understanding, *work* re-constitutes the field: the field of research, the modes of research and the "objects of study".

"we are in that phase when all of the work goes into the constitution of a subject for the work. We have a set of concerns, of issues and we have a set of nagging doubts about what lies behind the manifest, and we have a certain investigative freedom and we set those to work and wait to see what comes up. (…) unless we can rally to repackage all of that uncertainty into a set of plausible questions, methods and assertions and perhaps the work is really in this translation between the twin poles of doubt and certainty." (Rogoff 2004)

Rogoff, Irit. "What is a Theorist?" *KEIN.ORG / Irit's Blog* (April 2004)
[http://www.kein.org/node/62] (10 January 2012)

[12] *Field work*

The notion of *field work* is central to this research project. Conceptualization of the term proceeded from a paper by Professor Irit Rogoff, where *field work* was a model borrowed from anthropology and set as a dual position of the observer and the observed: *spatially on an inside* (the field) and *paradigmatically on the outside* (of the object). And in this tension is produced the notion of *field*. This notion of *field work* proceeds from a driving preoccupation with *contemporaneity* and the temporal situation of the "object"; the *field* is proposed as the *confluences and connections* of the taking place, beyond disciplinary limits or the negotiation of those borders; and it evolves around notions of *mobility* (against origin or destination) in tension with that of *location*, propelled by a witnessing voice (against neutrality or universalism).

"'Field Work' then, connotes an anthropologically informed model in which there is recognition of exiting one's own paradigms in order to encounter some form of difference and of doing so with an articulated sense of self consciousness about who is doing the encountering and through what structures and languages and interests. Similarly 'Field Work' connotes the convergence of fields of activity; intellectual disciplines and methodologies with forms of artistic and other cultural practices, none of which can exist in discrete bounded isolation. Rather than interdisciplinarity which produces an intertextuality out of named and recognized disciplines, 'Field Work' suggests that if we focus our well furnished attention on an unnamed something, it might constitute itself as a field." (Rogoff 2004)

Our notion of *field work* is endowed to the on-going discussion of Curatorial/Knowledge (CK) Research Program (Visual Cultures

Department, Goldsmiths College), and has been present from the first CK meeting. Having been informed by seminars and discussion sessions throughout, it is hard to name all of the influences and sources in its formulation, although it is possible to identify the main source of departure.

Rogoff, Irit. "Field work in Visual Culture." Paper circulated in Curatorial Knowledge seminar, unnumbered (2004).

[13] *Processual engagement*

Curatorial research is understood here as a processual and experimenting with processes and which will be transformed over its course. P*rocessual engagement* can be instantiated through particular examples, as it is difficult to project or to clearly define it. Taking the research and exhibition project "*Rescaldo e Ressonância!*" was set as a curatorial project for an existing space and folded to became an experiment on and with space, combining visual art, architecture and sound installations. The project was activated through field and archival research. It is the raw exhibition of physical space, or a fictional speculation on space, following a fire that burnt the fourth floor (and including the flooding of the third floor) of the last laboratory and library remaining in use within the Rectorate of the University of Porto.

Moreira, Inês. *Rescaldo e Ressonância!* Porto: Universidade do Porto, 2009.

[14] *Patient research*

"*Recherche patiente*", or *patient research*, was the slow design methodology described by Le Corbusier, which he practiced at his petit Cabanon hut in the South of France. Everyday life, space and a research atmosphere were integral parts of the research and design processes of his masterpieces. My project "*petit CABANON*" explores this notion by Le Corbusier.

Moreira, Inês. *Opúsculo no. 7: Petit Cabanon*., Porto: Dafne Editora, 2007.
[http://www.dafne.com.pt/pdf_upload/opusculo_7.pdf] (10 January 2012)

[15]*Spatial practice*

Spatial practice can be understood as a non-representational mode of generating space through different practices, it includes every day, social and cultural activities and has been used as a term to convey the work of diverse authors working on, and with, space. Spatial practice discussion includes both practical and theoretical contributions, most are directly responding to Henri Lefebvre´s book on the Production of Space. (Please see production of Space in this Vocabulary project).

This notion has been explored and amplified by other authors and the most comprehensive theoretical proposal regarding its architectural implication, has been developed by Professor Jane Rendell, who coined "Critical spatial practice" in the book *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (2006) and explored Henri Lefebvre's work in relation that of Michel de Certeau. As coined: "*I suggest a new term, 'critical spatial practice', which allows us to describe work that transgresses the limits of art and architecture and engages with both the social and the aesthetic, the public and the private. This term draws attention not only to the importance of the critical, but also to the spatial, indicating the interest in exploring the specifically spatial aspects of interdisciplinary processes or practices that operate between art and architecture.*" (Rendell, 2006)

Rendell, Jane. *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*. London: IB Tauris, 2006.

Other texts:
Rendell, Jane (ed.) *Critical Architecture*, special issue of the *Journal of Architecture*, (June 2005)
Rendell, Jane. *"A Place Between Art, Architecture and Critical Theory"*, Proceedings to Place and Location (Tallinn, Estonia, 2003), pp. 221-33.

The limits and several critical modalities of spatial practice are mapped and expand the small pocket book series titled *Critical Spatial Practice*, especially its first of a three book series edited by Nikolaus Hirsh and Markus, explores the topic: *What is Critical Spatial Practice?* Offering a polyphonic approach, the book covers sixty-four authors of very short texts, spanning from architectural, to political, to social perspectives of the notion of spatial practice.

Hirsch, Nikolaus and Miessen, Markus (eds.) *Critical Spatial Practice 1, What is Critical Spatial Practice.* Sternberg Press: 2012.

Did Someone Say Participate? An Atlas of Spatial Practice, a compilation of essays edited by Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar, extends the notion of spatial practice beyond architecture, exploring the spatial dimension of contemporary political and social conditions, reflecting about representation and non-representational in architecture. The issue of participation stated in the title refers to the space public to the production of urban everyday politics.

Miessen, Markus, Basar Shumon. *Did Someone Say Participate? An Atlas of Spatial Practice. Frankfurt: Revolver, 2006*

Closer to architectural practice and problematizing the politics and processes of self-organization and work, Doina Petrescu, Jeremy Till and Nishat Awan, based at the University of Sheffield, produce active instigations and map diversified spatial practices through individual and collective projects. Two important databases mapping projects around spatial practices include:

Trans-Local-Act: Cultural Practices Within and Across, edited in 2010 by Doina Petrescu, Constantin Petcou and Nishat Awan for aaa / peprav platforms (available online on 01/02/2013 www.urbantactics.org)

Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture, edited by Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till. (Available on-line: www.spatialagency.net)

The projects are edited and published as books:

Petrescu, Doina, Petcou, Constantin and Awan, Nishat. *Trans-Local-Act: Cultural Practices Within and Across.* aaa/peprav: 2010.

Awan, Nishat, Schneider Tatjana, and Till, Jeremy. *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture*. London: Routledge, 2011.

[16] *Disturbance*

Disturbance provides us with a reading writing strategy for research, that anticipates depiction. It is a non-confrontational model for critical analysis, deliberately addressing complex and contradictory questions. As part of a manifold reading/writing strategy it formulates a tool for a critical curatorial research and practice on space. This notion is further developed in Chapter 7.

[17] *Unproductive*

The question of the *unproductive* was posed by Monika Szewczyk in a Curatorial/Knowledge Seminar at The Showroom in London in Spring 2009. Two authors and their ideas were central in informing an approach to the *unproductive*: the otherness and non-coherentness of John Law; and the worldlyness (and juicyness, or fleshyness) in Donna Haraway. Writes Haraway: "I am drawn like a moth to the flame to those kinds of knowledge-making endeavours where that messiness is inescapable. Some kinds of knowledge-making endeavours are tremendously insulated by the kind of messyness that I am drawn to. Particle physics, for example. (…) It is different in all its materialities." (Haraway 2005, 117)

Joseph Schneider and Donna J. Haraway, "Conversations with Donna Haraway," in Joseph Schneider, *Donna Haraway: Live Theory*. 114-156. London/New York: Continuum, 2005.

[18] *Relational aesthetics, conversational practices and collectivism*

A few of the most relevant reference books on aesthetics and contemporary art are:

Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational Aesthetics*. Paris: Les Presse Du Reel, 1998.

Kester, Grant H. *Conversation Pieces: Community + Communication in Modern Art*. Berkeley, California / London: University of California Press, 2004.

Stimson, Blake and Gregory Sholette, eds. *Collectivism After Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination After 1945.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

[19] *Depicting*

Depicting is a foundational act in curatorial activity (art, design or architecture). Traditionally it is understood as disjunctive - framing, cutting, isolating or clarifying. Some curatorial activities focus on objects and are mainly directed to collections, monographs and authors, having

its research objects mostly defined by nature (one artist, a group of buildings, a collector). Other curatorial activities, focusing more on processes, hybrid objects and concepts or topics, tend to be processual and define their objects along the work. Whether in advance or in the process, to *depict* is to define the limits and extent of what can be considered a clearly addressed story, object, case, author or event.

In this research project, *depiction* is a "curatorial endeavor" that complicates the isolation (clear-cutting) of case-studies. The notion of *field work*, the processual engagement and recognition of an inhabited field, brings forth a *performative* method of *depiction*, and the openness to address non-predictable objects. *Depiction* is a practice understood as the blurring of object caption and the redefinition of its borders. Along oblique reading and writing approaches, it provides tactical tools for *curating*.

[20] *Relational conjunctions*

How to expand an "oddment", how to address relational conjunction? To create research-tool-and-case-figurations is a strategy to depict complex objects and things. *Depicting* is a fundamental endeavour of curating; therefore the curatorial resides in the strategies to produce, read and write *depictions*. Different authors use different captions of the objects and actors they address: Bruno Latour and John Law´s *actor-networks* are processual and descriptive tools to address heterogonous material, technical and social entities and their relations. John Law´s *performative allegories* are partly represented and partly written through absences; Donna Haraway´s proceeds through *literal metaphors*, figurations partly material, partly built in language, are condensations of stories, facts, and knowledges diffracted by multiple literacies. We suggest *obliqueness* as a strategy, partly processual, partly material, partly built in language.

[21] *Bodies of knowledge*

The field of critical studies of science and technology, informed by material-semiotic theory, offers prolific ground for epistemologies and methodologies for interdisciplinary research. It essays critical readings of intersections of disciplinary science and technological fields of research (from biology, to biotechnology, cybernetic or information technologies); it essays systems of inscription of hybrid objects; and generates a cultural, social and political reading, in the public domain, of broader reflexes of science and technology in society.

At a philosophical level, Assemblage Theory, as formulated by Deleuze and Guattari in *"Anti-Oedipus"*, is a fundamental reference for articulations of bodies, machines, knowledge and production:

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Athlone Press, 1983.

Two main critical epistemological models have informed our own research, establishing a mutual dialogue. The first, which we could call Method Assemblage, is encompassed by the collaborations of Bruno Latour, a theorist of science and technology, and John Law, a social scientist. As a main source for this research, we closely followed Law´s book "*After method: Mess in social science research*". The main theoretical texts are:

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. London: Routledge, 2004.
Law, John. *Aircraft Stories: Decentering the Object in Technoscience*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002.
Law, John, and Annemarie Mol, eds., *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002.
Law, John and John Hassard, eds., *Actor Network Theory and After*. Oxford: Blackwell and Sociological Review, 1999.

The second epistemological model is informed by feminist theories. Its main author is science and technology theorist Donna Haraway, whose work is a good reference for broader interdisciplinary studies. Haraway´s work builds on language, metaphor and figurations, and is committed to issues of gender, race, class and species. Her education as a biologist brings her to notions of body, physicality and flesh, as well as concerns with psychological and subjective perceptions of pain, feelings and suffering. Additionally, as Haraway´s work is informed by feminist theories, it introduces the position of the "man of science", questioning scientific knowledge as a cultural, political and gender construction. The two books which have been most influential in our research are:

Haraway, Donna J. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_ OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.
Haraway, Donna. *How like a leaf: an interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

[22] *Modesty*

Modesty is a proposal to embody, understand and testify modes of implication in knowledge production. Modesty is a modality of implication with *the middle*: the in-betweeness and incompletion, and the eventfulness and becoming. The figure of a *modest witness*, as proposed by Donna Haraway, is simultaneously disciplinary, scientific, personal, and worldly and from the conjunction of its situated position, produces valuable testimony. A *modest witness* is a political actor, standing publicly

for a valuable accountability, aware of his/her weakness and fragility. Again, Haraway writes:

"I am interested in this precise kind of witnessing because it is about seeing; attesting; standing publicly accountable for, and psychically vulnerable to, one´s visions and representations. Witnessing is a collective, limited practice that depends on the constructed and never finished credibility of those who do it, all of whom are mortal, fallible, and fraught with the consequences of unconscious and disowned desires and fears. (…) My modest witness is about telling the truth – giving reliable testimony – while eschewing the addictive narcotic of transcendental foundations. It refigures the subjects, objects, and communicative commerce of technoscience into different kinds of knots." (Haraway 2000, 158)

Haraway, Donna. *How like a leaf: an interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

[23] *Situated Knowledge*
Situated knowledge is a relational epistemological model informed by feminist studies, considering the body of knowledge, the witness, the objects, the situation, and a set of relations and interplays which reconsider and undo the universalizing perspective of *knowledge production*. Donna Haraway suggests *situatedness* as a mode of knowledge tuned to resonances, which considers the space and place of relation. In the context of this research, *situated knowledge* is a hybrid mode of participation in processes of *production of space*, *production of a field* and *production of knowledge*.

"It is very important to understand that 'Situatedness' doesn´t necessarily mean place; so standpoint is perhaps the wrong metaphor. Sometimes people read 'situated knowledges' in a way that seems to me a little flat; i.e., to mean merely that your identifying marks are literally where you are. 'Situated' in this sense means only to be in one place. Whereas what I mean to emphasize is the situatedness of situated. In other words it is a way to get at the multiple modes of embedding that are about place and space in the manner in which geographers draw that distinction. Another way of putting it is when I discuss feminist accountability within the context of scientific objectivity as requiring a knowledge tuned to resonance, not to dichotomy." (Haraway 2000, 71)

Haraway, Donna. *How like a leaf: an interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

[24] *Undo*

Undone is the situation of a "theorist undone by theory", a situation recognized not externally from peers and disciplines, but from the process of stretching the field and complicating the entanglements that cross and connect it, so as to inhabit it: "*[T]he work of unfitting ourselves is as complex, as rigorous and as important as the work that goes into fitting within a disciplinary paradigm or that of expanding it in order to accommodate our concerns*," (Rogoff 2004) as Irit Rogoff writes. Proposing a performative notion of critique, Rogoff identifies enactment, or the affects of the work in the world and in the theorist him/herself, as the responsorial moment of work: *"[M]y understanding [is] of a response that has changed. Perhaps it has moved from response as affirmation of what you have said, which is what happens when someone quotes your work, to response perceived as the spur to make something as yet nonexistent."* (Rogoff 2004) Undoing would, therefore insatiate criticality, differing from critique´s analysis, and from criticism´s judgments. It would be a performative implication in research, "*a cultural inhabitation that performatively acknowledges what it is risking without yet fully being able to articulate it.*" (Rogoff 2004) Rogoff proposes a constant re-writing of the field of Visual Culture, and of research subjects, reshaping and evolving through the deployment of research. Rogoff notes, "I*n a sense that is what I wish for us in Visual Culture, that we become a field of complex and growing entanglements that can never be translated back to originary or constitutive components. (…) That we produce new subjects in the world out of that entanglement and that we have the wisdom and courage to argue for their legitimacy while avoiding the temptation to translate them, or apply them or separate them.*" (Rogoff 2004)

Rogoff, Irit. "What is a Theorist?" *KEIN.ORG / Irit's Blog* (April 2004), [http://www.kein.org/node/62] (10 January 2012)

[25] *Densifications and diffractions*

Densifications and Diffractions seek kaleidoscopic reflections and resonances, grasped, thickened and amplified by language. They come in writing and producing resonances and in keeping complexity, acting against taxonomy and clarification. Densifications and diffractions are performative as well, re-writing back. Roughly, it implies pushing a double analytic/interpretative movement; a performative/resonant movement; and to inhabit the in-betweens. The conjunction of these approaches constitutes a *quasi-methodology*.

[26] *Minor*

"*How many styles or genres or literary movements, even very small ones, have only one single dream: to assume a major function in language. (…)*

Create the opposite dream: know how to create a becoming-minor.”
(Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 27)

The seminal Deleuze and Guattari text on Kafka´s literature is an essay addressing minor languages that subvert power structures from within. Kafka was a Jewish author writing under German occupation in Prague and, according to Deleuze and Guattari, his literature took flight on a "line of escape” from German language and took it to a critical space, undoing the dominance of German occupation. Kafka´s *minor literature* undoes the dominance of German language, politics and even power, acting within its structure. His literature produced three moves: deterritorialization of dominant language; political enunciation; and enunciating collective values. From Kafka, we understand a *minor* position which is creative and political, not as an individual authorial affirmative position, but as a gathering, enunciative and constituent space of appearance of collective concerns.

Chapter 3 further extends:
“*A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather what a minor constructs within a major language. But the first characteristic of minor literature in any case is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization. (…) In short, Prague German is a deterritorialized language, appropriated for strange and minor uses.*
The second characteristic of minor literatures is that everything in them is political. In major literatures, in contrast, the individual concern (familial, marital, and so on) joins with other no less individual concerns, that social milieu serving as a mere environment or a background (…). Minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics. The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it. (…)
The third characteristic of minor literature is that in it everything takes on a collective value. Indeed, precisely because talent isn´t abundant in minor literature, there are no possibilities for an individuated enunciation that would belong to this or that 'master' that could be separated from a collective enunciation. Indeed, scarcity of talent is in fact beneficial and allows the conception of something other than a literature of masters; what each author says individually already constitutes a common action, and what he or she says is necessarily political, even if others aren´t in agreement. The political domain has contaminated every statement (énoncé). *(…) It is literature that produces an active solidarity in spite of skepticism; and if the writer is in the margins or completely outside his or her fragile community, this situation allows the writer all the more the possibility to express another possible community and to forge the means*

for another consciousness and another sensibility; just as the dog of 'Investigations' calls out in his solitude to another science. (…) *There isn´t a subject;* there are only collective assemblages of enunciation." (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 16-17)

Minor literature deterritorializes dominant language and enacts its becoming-minor. In the context of this research project, we understand it as a tactical position for writing. *Minor literature* becomes a political position for a reading and writing strategy, undoing the centrality of individual authorship and the inscription of objecthood in the field of curating architecture.

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

[27] *Altering*

Altering, or becoming other, is a critical and constructive notion. *Altering* is critical, creative, technical and constructive, and puts forward the micro politics and the powers of personal relations, as a resource to implement a design and spatial practice. "*Altering practices*" is the title of a book on spatial production edited by Doina Petrescu presenting practices which *alter*, or are other, to the dominant idea of professional design practices. The book opens an interdisciplinary approach to architectural criticism and offers theoretical insight to theories and practices of space, with a feminist-informed perspective on architectural practices. It involves setting space as a set of relational practices of inhabitations, where designers, users, and producers organize the means and ways of production.

Petrescu, Doina, ed. *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space*. London: Routledge, 2007.

[28] *Curatorial research and practice*

If the concept of *curatorial research* differs from the *practices of curating*, we underline a possible distinction in its approach to space. The curatorial takes place as a critically engaged mode of research on space in its multiple dimensions. The curatorial is therefore a reading and writing strategy for research on space. This differs from curating spaces and practices (producing modalities of spaces as art events or exhibitions); and it differs from curating architecture and display design; or from monographic research on authors and objects to produce exhibitions.

We suggest the *curatorial* as an altering mode of research and practice following an oblique reading and writing strategy. Curatorial research and practice evolves around *field work*, opening both possibilities to what the curatorial work and a *field work* can do. The understanding of *curatorial*

instantiates, and enunciates, the confluence of different kinds of knowledges and experiences in which research is produced. The discussion of the *curatorial* has been unfolding along Curatorial/knowledge research group conversations, and is deeply informed from lectures chiefly by Professors Irit Rogoff and Jean-Paul Martinon.

[29] ***Middle word***

Middle word is a slanting allusion to fragments of private and intimate stories, such as personal letters and photos, doodle drawings, or the space in games such as cross words, or the physical remains of a relational game, such as cat's cradle. Most are fragments and elements, bits or pieces, which have accumulated over time. Others are memories of childhood, of relations, or of game playing. The use of *middle words* introduces non-rational or non-technical aspects into the *production of space*. …Like a personal letter saved in a book (half documentary, half story, half promissory or partially secretive) the middle word became the solitary place where a personal fiction could be told.

Chapter 2 : BUILDING SITES
Manifesto. Iberian building sites.
Starting from the middle.

MANIFESTO ON BUILDING SITES

Building sites are literal spaces. They are practice-based technical and mundane knowledge that is activated to become material buildings. *Building sites* are processual entities. They are messy, noisy and relentless in their achievement. *Building sites* are (in)visible. They are assembling actors and tangible in-between spaces, the mediators of projected futures and built projects. They are also ephemeral places, semi-clandestine platforms with precarious conditions. *Building sites* are figurations and places of announcement. They are generated by power and representation; they expose architectural progress, the construction industry's achievements and economic power. They enunciate tectonic proposals, while being inhabited by conflict. They are also fragile and constituent locations.

Building sites are *middle things*; they are inhabited by temporal activities, improvisation and social and material conflict. At *building sites* the projected is complemented by the unexpected, and by contingent experimentation. *Building sites* keep acting, working, generating buildings, and, as fields are crossed and produced, they continue to generate sites. *Building sites* involve a mixture of opportunity, chance and suffering and are bewildering spaces of permeability, cross-cultural expertise, and alternative access.

Building sites are *performative* entities: not a project and not yet a building but something in the middle, where material, technological, economic, employment, personal and authorial questions collide. They are the products of the intersected fields of design, construction and technical detailing, which are complicated by the social, economic and political dimensions of spatial practice.

Building sites participate in a much broader range of activities than the construction of a single structure: going from national policies to the flow of global economies, from miscegenation and migration to hospitality, domesticity and the commonplace. They are financed by different markets; they are empowered by legal/illegal relations; they are subjects of public/private discussions; they intervene in public life; and they are the stages of everyday activities. *Building sites* are messy; they extend to outskirts, to peripheral places; they play double games, and hearken to various voices.

Building sites are literal and metaphorical places for interdisciplinary practice. In short, *building sites* are *performative* para-objectual, physical, material and discursive locations, which are under the pressures of rendering actual a virtual authorial proposal. *Building sites* are places of intense experimentation, improvisation and inventiveness. Their discourses are simultaneously specialized (through expertise) and mundane (through the quotidian) just as is this research project.

The *building site* is encompassed in plans, blueprints, designs, calculations, and a highly technical proficiency. In addition to following strict methods, *performative building sites* escape from and continually reinvent the systems that keep them connected and functioning; they perform the processes and the dislocations that continually generate them. The site's performance is constituent, playing with the planned and improvising ways out of it; it is processual and continually escapes classification and prediction.

Unlike traditional architectural/art studio practice, building is a collective activity. From site to site, there is an embodied collective knowledge shared by collaborators/participants/workers that evolves through negotiation, conversation and improvisation. Banal routine activities and connectivity to social and public life expand sites' limits. However, even though sites produce physical objects, there is no formal resemblance in language or composition to objectuality. They are hybrid, connected and evasive objects.

A *building site* is an ephemeral work piece with no authorship and widely shared responsibility. While it is not completed, no one dares to sign it. When work comes to an end, the site disappears, and authorship becomes visible and articulable. The distinction is highlighting the processual nature, the in-between states of incompleteness and the processes of becoming. This processuality keeps actively pushing the processes of interaction, pushing for and demanding our constant awareness of myriads of agents and actors, undoing the powers of the first and immediate act of production: building buildings.

The *idea* of *building sites* in action activates our thinking. *Building site* is not meant here as a metaphor, nor is it the strict technical and managerial aspects of building a building. To make a conclusive shift away from the *grandeur* of the individual, authorial finished-design-work-of-art building, *Building Sites* must be addressed in action or, more precisely, as Performing *Building Sites*.

Building sites are performing, but what are they up to? What is being played out? Only a systemic answer can grasp their totality; beyond the immediate ontology of authorship or urban development one must also consider national economies, sites as social structures, and the personal stories activated by them. One must observe inhabited *building sites* in order to see their performances. In Portugal and the Iberian Peninsula, the set of *building sites* is multi-layered, and articulates different scales, stages and levels:

Economic indicators – In most Southern European countries, construction and building activities are indicators of a country's economy. Civil construction and the real estate sector make up a large part of the economies of Portugal and Spain (10% of employment is related to construction industries). *Building sites* are places where invested capital becomes visible. *Building sites* mirror stock market activity: when construction decreases, the economy retracts, when it increases, capital is rising. The global burst of the real estate bubble in 2008 has profoundly shaken Iberian economies, devaluating property, limiting construction and pushing unemployment rates up to 10% (in addition to witnessing the relocation of businesses to Asia and Eastern Europe).

Social thresholds – *Building sites* shape the lives of individuals living separate realities. These parallel universes shape the lives of temporary workers: precariousness, forced relocation and illegality coexist within and alongside temporary worker settlements, with extended shifts (working 24 hours), in a landscape of container cities where men may live for months. Many jobs are mobile and require travel through the construction process, such as in road works. *Under construction* can be an allegory for the social conditions of many workers and their families.

Geopolitical platforms – A profusion of *building sites* dictates the need for low-cost workers, which, in turn determines opportunities for illegal immigrants to the country. On the Iberian Peninsula, *building sites* have serves as welcome stations for immigrants from former African and South American colonies since the 1970s and from Eastern European countries since the 1990s. *Building sites* are nodes of distribution in networks of illegal human traffic, separated from the outside

world. While they are para-dystopias with their own rules, they are also utopian shelters blanketed from immigration policies which the authorities tend to disregard (consider that even public buildings are built by these workers).

Socio-demographic movers – Since the late 1950′s, European *building sites* have attracted millions of Portuguese men, and later their families. During the dictatorship there was an exodus in the sixties and seventies, as young men from rural areas emigrated to France to work as builders, to escape poverty and colonial war, and to improve their families' economic prospects. Luxemburg, Switzerland and Germany were also popular destinations for construction work. Overcoming extreme poverty, some builders established small construction companies, and settled in their new countries. Today, with unemployment rates rising (as small industries go bankrupt), this phenomenon is changing once more with young adults moving to the Middle East or to northern European *building sites*. There are an estimated 100,000 Portuguese workers on *building sites* in Spain, but with a struggling Spanish economy, some 40,000 workers are expected to migrate further afield.

Territorial nodes – Both cities and buildings act as terminals in networks of distribution of all kinds of materials, machines and support structures. The clean and restored city centres are the last stop in the movement of materials. Their work force comes from smaller, more rural cities; materials come from the storages and department stores in the cities′ outer rings, and circulation was until recently structured along national roads. EN1, the motorway connecting Porto and Lisbon, is a complex platform of production, distribution and storage of raw materials, particularly for construction industries. Clay, stone, ceramic, wood, and other industries are found in different areas of the country and support local economies. The roads connecting small villages allow these raw materials to be distributed. Imports have changed the centrality of these nodes, but it is important to note that the territory is still structured by the construction material industries.

Political battlefields – Construction and real-estate business are the building blocks of local and central administrative power, as local and national interests depend on public investment and planning permissions. Building permits,

corruption and political interests go hand-in-hand. Infrastructure such as motorways, the TGV or the new Lisbon airport, foment public debate and are seen as political indicators.

Physical and material connectors - *Building sites* are not necessarily fixed places, most workers live nomadic lives moving from site to site along with materials and equipment, as their jobs are postponed, interrupted and completed. Strict calendars govern different specialized tasks within a construction site (for example: foundations, concrete, stone, brick, plumbing, electricity). The site is crossed by many different specialists and workers. Clients, architects and investors concentrate their time and money on a small group of buildings, and workers participate in the construction of many *building sites*, moving from one to another.

(Un)education responses –Many lower-class teenage boys who drop out of formal education start working as builders. Construction and sometimes industry, especially for boys, replaces school education, and failure in school is followed by low-paid work. A gap in Portuguese law, where in education is compulsory until 18, and employment is prohibited for those under 16, leaves many young men attending professional/technical education after they turn 16 or working illegally.

Social and private spheres – Many workers live inside the building site for the duration of their work and everyday activities. Sociability/conviviality, companionship and personal relations form inside these places. A particularly male camaraderie is shared by those who shift from site to site, from contractor to contractor, linking family members and close friends with work networks.

Lastly, *Building sites* are profound **transformers of landscapes**, from temporary settlements of all styles, to the planning, landscape and demolition industries.

FROM BUILDING SITES:
STARTING FROM THE MIDDLE?

As a point of departure, a *sendoff*[1], starting from the middle is expanding from one fixed position, and exploding simultaneously in many directions, activating multiple topographies and trails. To be at a *building site* is to stand in the middle: partly undone, partly to come, partly replicable, partly inscrutable. Starting from the middle includes the background; incorporates the previously known; and instigates new processes of research on, and on behalf of, adventurous territories. Starting from the middle, means allowing space for that which has "just" been found; that which is about to be found (but not yet recognizable), and entails embracing all action and gathering it in reconfigured whole maps, with the bits, the parts, the blueprint, the energy, the matter, the work, the accidental, the mess, the disorder and all the other aspects, that we are empowered to see from the middle. Thus, from the dispersed pieces, bits and fragments, and from actively rebuilding and relocating, rather than seeking a reconfiguration of that which was previously known, or seeking change, we allow for recomposition and reassemblage within a multi-dimensional and heterogeneous actualization (social, political, geographical, material and personal), one that enables connected networks of concepts and materials. To address *building sites* it is to start thinking of middle things, with every social, technological, representational and material conflict implicated in/by a designed proposal. Starting from the middle is, therefore, embracing a form of research from practice. It is not yet a methodology, but is the quest for a new venture.

[1] Jacques Derrida, "Sendoffs" in *Eyes of the University*, translated by Thomas Pepper (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004): 220-224.

"Building" (Construção) is a resistance song by Chico Buarque, a Brazilian musician who was part of the cultural counter-movement against the country's military dictatorship. The music tells the story of the last day in the life of an anonymous working class labourer on a building site, leaving his family at home to work on the Saturday he fell from the scaffolding, dying on the pavement and interrupting the "public normality" of passersby on a weekend It is a tribute to those anonymous workers who sacrificed their lives for their country for little recompense, leaving their numerous children and family without support, and it refers to alcoholism, a common problem in the working classes.

Building, by Chico Buarque, 1971

He loved that time as if it was the last
He kissed his wife as if she was the last
And each child of his as if they were the only ones
And he crossed the street with his timid step
He climbed the building as if it was a machine
He raised four solid walls up from the floor
Brick by brick in a magical design
His eyes were dulled by cement and tears
He sat down to rest as if it was a Saturday
He ate rice and beans as if he was a Prince
He drank and sobbed as if he was a castaway
He danced and laughed as if he could hear music
And stumbled into the sky as if he was a drunkard
And floated in the air as if he was a bird
And fell onto the ground like a limp package
He twisted in agony in the middle of the pavement
He died holding up the traffic on the wrong side of the street
He loved that time as if it were his last
He kissed his wife as if she were the only one
And each of his children as if each one were prodigal
And crossed the street with his drunken step
He climbed the building as if it was solid
He raised four magic walls up from the floor
Brick by brick in a logical design
His eyes were dulled by cement and traffic
He sat down to rest as if he was a prince
He ate rice and beans as if they were the finest
He drank and sobbed like a machine
He danced and laughed as if he was the next
And stumbled in the sky as if he could hear music
He floated in the air as if it was a Saturday
And ended on the ground just like a shy package
He twisted in agony in the middle of the wreck
He died in the wrong lane holding up the public
He loved that time as if he was a machine
He kissed his wife as if it was logical
He raised four flaccid walls up from the floor
He sat down to rest as if he was a bird
And floated in the air as if he was a prince
And he fell on the ground like a drunken package
He died in the wrong lane holding up that Saturday
For this bread to eat for this floor to sleep on
For a birth certificate and permission to smile
For letting me breathe, for letting me live,
God bless you
For the rum of grace that we have to swallow
For the smoke and disaster that we have to inhale
For the hanging scaffolds from which we have to fall,
God bless you
For the wailing women to worship us and spit
And for the screw-worm flies to kiss and cover us
And for the ultimate peace that will finally redeem us,
God bless you
*Lyrics translated freely, no permission

Material back offices

Though it may appear mundane, material and unattractive in comparison with erudite architecture or major engineering works to understand building sites it is vital to look at what goes on behind the scenes. The first national motorway in Portugal, the EN1, still spans the 300km between the city of Porto and the capital city Lisbon, which is where Km 1 is. The EN1 runs through district capitals and smaller cities, and is now a 271km disrupted structure, conveniently bypassed in the largest city nodes, and mostly absorbed by the IC2 motorway, and paralleled by the fast lane A1 highway. The EN1 was the main artery of the old national road system from 1889, which was complemented from the late 1980s with a dense national highway infrastructure (about 3000km) subsidized by European Community Funds.

The EN1 is busy, but not as much as before, as it is mostly used for local traffic or for cargo distribution between mid-sized cities. The EN1 is a proto-European union structure, with varying widths, pavements and siding (sidewalks, passages) and traffic lights, roundabouts, and other structural elements that change according to each town's preference, and to how a wealthier or more deprived town chooses to invest in its maintenance. Many small towns, such as Mealhada, grew along the road virtually in-line with it. Surrounded by partial urbanization, and formerly rural roads, their many uses (housing, fields, small industries and for debris) coexist.

These in-between cities, these road extensions, are those most productive to talk about in terms of building sites. Here one finds a scene of material dispersion, assemblage in a semi-productive landscape, organized to support the logistics of real-estate development. The EN1 offers a fantastically material figuration of what a back office is, as the road is both a back office that supports transportation and distribution platforms networked with highways and other territorial roads, and also a material backstage where materials, machinery and different small manufacturers for construction industries gather around the main cities and towns. Construction material warehouses and depots, small distributors and local chemists, construction sites and lorry parking lots, tyre shops, mechanics' garages, second-hand car dealers, and local cement workshops, are all distributed along the 270km stretch.

There is an economic relation between the geography (and topography) of the old road with the geological resources below the ground and other natural manifestations of the land it crosses and connects. If we mentally superimpose two maps (geological charts and road maps) a clear relation of the origins of raw materials, industry types and distribution systems starts to appear. The road articulates and links the places of the exploration (and severe exploitation) of natural resources with those of the construction material industries. The EN1 feeds large and small manufacturing workshops, generating an assembly line of the bits and pieces, which, from earth, stone, sand, and wood, among others, become the material resources for the national construction industry.

As the soil quality changes from site to site along the 300km, there are different industrial conglomerations gathered around the different ground characteristics. Assorted types of clay are used as raw material in the region from Águeda to Mealhada, which has a dense concentration of clay industries. This is an area of production of ceramic sanitary ware, and for the tile industry. Red, yellow and white clay is extracted along the road, which is then used as a distribution platform. Near Coimbra, in Souselas, a cement factory and incinerator is positioned by a limestone quarry to produce concrete, a complementing in the central region of the country to the southern cement industries of Gândara, Alhandra, Setúbal-Outão and Loulé. Limestone quarries are still active in the mountains of Serra de Aire and Candeeiros (scattering the surface of what is now a national park), where decorative paving stones are extracted. Chalk mines are active in the Rio Maior region, producing components for glass industries in the neighboring Marinha Grande region. A massive pine-tree plantation in the regions of Leiria provides wood and provided the energy for the glass industries in the past. Further south, in Vila Franca de Xira, a second cement factory is along the road and the river Tejo, both of which are used for distribution.

Far from its former key centrality, the EN1 has become a secondary road. The newly-organized zoned "industrial areas" on the fringes of most cities now condense industries in a less dispersed way along accesses to the A1. The EN1 can be accessed from the A1 highway, intersecting it or linking into it. Bypassed by the IC2, and also by the A1, the towns that grew along this flux of goods and people are now isolated from the main networks, which underlines the second-class condition of the road.
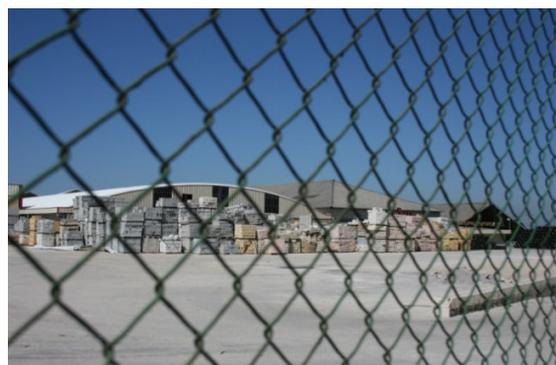
These images were taken on a data collection field trip on the 29th August 2009. From top: intersection of A1 and EN1 at Carvalhos, near Porto Soares da Costa, carpentry workshop and logistics centre; Barbot paint factory; logistics and transportation companies such as Luís Simóes and Tracar; timber industries; cement and reinforced concrete industries; brick and cement workshops. Photos by Inês Moreira and Paulo Mendes

Containing

Sea containers are hermetic outer casings, protecting valuables like industrial materials and commercial products, and other goods. Their size has been internationally adopted and refers both to their sub-multiples of industrial standardization (industrial product, transportation euro-pallet, container), and the many circulations within international trading routes. Sea containers circulate over land and sea, using terrestrial networks of motorways and railways which are included in the dimensions of TIR trucks, IRR train wagons, train systems and seafronts of maritime terminals. The dimensions of port cities, and lamp boxes can be explained (and are included) in the dimensions of a sea container.

The size of shipping container ranges from the small pixels information that define maps of streams of post-industrial goods, to urban and metropolitan road width, exceeding its physical size. National histories are also defined by these elements, inside which circulate prosperity, production and goods. Containers became icons of flows of consumption in industrialized societies. Due to containers' universal presence, ease of transportation, total opacity and water-tightness, in addition to transporting objects, they may also hide, house or protect illegal products. There may even be illegal immigrants in these boxes. Containers actually do on occasion temporarily house immigrants (as in Porto airport), or workers (on building sites), or are used for utopian refugee camps (as seen in several architectural/NGO´s competitions to shelter war refugees, or people made homeless through natural disasters).

After their useful life is over (due to rust or damage) sea containers lose their license plates and registration codes, and become scrap metal. The after-lives of containers may vary, and possible adaptations are creative: from beach bar huts, to ticket booths, to fancy designed entertainment spaces. Often used on medium/large building sites as functional units, a pile of adapted second-hand containers may function as a manager´s office, or as locker rooms, worker's canteens, tool stores, security booths, or even dormitories. Supervisors, architects, engineers and other "white collar" workers may have offices adapted from containers as well, and the adaptations may include windows, doors, insulation, air conditioning, toilets and other facilities. The outer corrugated shells may work as campaign banners for new buildings (with architectural computer-generated images), as stands for models and commercial details, or as advertising hoardings for the contractors or companies working inside (as with DST in Braga, Portugal).

Image at top: Containers at Leixões seaport cargo terminal, (reference and provenance of containers for some of my projects).
Next three images: Painting, transporting and installing our newly transformed containers to create the scenography for the Terminal Project, Oeiras, Portugal. Photos: Paulo Mendes archive

Scaffolding

"Scaffolds are temporary — they are erected at a building site to support the construction of specific elements. They typically exist for the duration of the project (or less), and are dismantled once the elements are completed or are self-supporting.

Scaffolds are flexible — they are constructed *in situ*, and are adapted to fit specific local conditions; as such, they may be erected in many different situations.

Scaffolds are portable — they are relatively quick and easy to assemble, modify, and dismantle, as needed, on different building sites.

Scaffolds are varied — there are many different kinds of scaffold: scaffolds that allow people to walk along the outside of buildings, scaffolds that suspend workers from above, scaffolds that serve as structural columns to hold up slabs until the poured concrete is cured, and scaffolds that serve as reinforcing formwork that then becomes integrated into the final built element.

Scaffolds are heterogeneous — they are composed of multiple different components that reflect both the requirements of the element(s) to be supported and the materials at hand.

Scaffolds are emergent — they are erected over time, changing in form and function as needed to continue supporting the changing scale and scope of the element(s) under construction.

While in place, scaffolds afford a certain temporary stability to the disparate assembly of people, materials, and space that are bound together.

Scaffolds are dangerous — as temporary, emergent, and rapidly constructed assemblages, they are vulnerable to damage and failure.

Scaffolds are generative — they serve as the basis for other (creative) work, facilitating the performance of activities that would be impractical without material aid.

They are constitutive of both human activity and outcomes, shaping the kind of construction work that is possible, and the construction outcomes that emerge (e.g., scaffolds enable the construction of skyscrapers).

Once a building is complete, the scaffolds involved in its construction are no longer useful or required. The building, however, could not have been built without them. One could even argue that it is the scaffolds that critically structure the production of the building".

Wanda J. Orlikowski, "Material Knowing: The Scaffolding of Human Knowledgeability" *The SeeIT (Social and Economic Explorations of Information Technology) Project at MIT Sloan School of Management* (October 2005)
[http://seeit.mit.edu/Publications/Orlikowski_OKLC_write-up_2006.pdf] (accessed 10 January 2012)

Images: metal structures scaffolding the walls to-be structures, construction of the space, and the completed scenography, using scaffoldings as walkways to structure the flow in the scenography of Terminal Project, Oeiras, Portugal
Photos: Paulo Mendes archive.

Unproductive sites

Building site remains are neither places nor objects: they are multiple and productive sites between production and creation, abandonment and disposal. Where do the material leftovers of building activities go? In what sites do they end up? There is a mass movement of rubble, debris and wreckage through different circuits, some of which are more profitable than others, and some of which become unproductive or are absorbed into new cityscapes and landscapes.

The archeology of old building-materials adds a multiplicity of spatial and temporal dimensions to a building site. The transformational process of building sites remains active long past the actual generation of a structure. From small skips used for minor domestic renovations, to trucks on the road loaded with debris from major demolition sites, to illegal or sanitary landfills, to simple postponements of planned removals, or abandoned objects along a hilly road in a national park, there are leftovers scattered everywhere.

The remains, the leftovers, complicate the one-dimensional Lego vision of building activities. The physical and material dimension of building sites extends beyond what is assembled. Debris is the reminder of what came before the finished object.

An example is a particular geological residue from the construction of a pier on the Atlantic Ocean, by the Somague Construction Company, which can be found in the town of Espinho. After having been abandoned for 10 years, "nature took over" an old landfill, which was transformed into a dangerous lake. The construction of the pier required the relocation of stone from the quarry to the pier by road, which leaving virtually no material debris. An accidental mechanical perforation occurred in the quarry from which the giant granite stones where sourced. The perforation damaged a main waterline (do you mean a water mains – as in an artificial pipeline, or do you mean an underground watercourse?) which then filled the crater. The resultant flooding halted work at the quarry and the site became a geological scar. What remains is a new 50 meter deep artificial lake that is both beautiful and dangerous (why is it dangerous?), with its clear running water that is surreptitiously used as a beach, a fishing hole and a jet ski training centre. There are no rusting old machines, no spare stones, no signs with compromising (why compromising?) names. Rumour has it that the water is piped to a neighbouring concrete factory, and that three people have already drowned in the lake. None of these activities are officially sanctioned and the site is fenced off by corrugated steel gates with "no trespassing" signs.

Public hygiene, safety and the aestheticism of the built environment require the removal and relocation of accumulated rubble, which can become an ecological threat and create risk areas (such as mines and quarries in national parks). Archeology works with remains, excavating multilayered sites to chronologically reveal prior human activity. Yet the remains of building sites are atomized and dislocated to external locations, and have therefore merited little attention. An archeological approach would thus focus not on material cultures but on procedures and side-effects.

Former-quarry, São João de Ver, Portugal
The quarry was accidentally flooded and became an un-natural lake. It is said the water is pumped to a concrete block factory

Chapter 3 : PROCESSUAL SPACE
Storage, a research/production experience
Backstage and processuality: curating installation sites

Processual Space, Chapter 3's title, proposes curating and intervening in space as it goes through transformation. As chapter 2 exposes, building sites are ephemeral and processual entities bringing projects to life, processualy constructing other, more permanent, structures. During a project's processes of becoming, whether a permanent building or an ephemeral project, building sites instantiate incompleteness, fragility, contradictions and suffer some improvisation. Focusing on spaces under construction, or under the process of becoming a project, offers an unstable and transformative idea of space, beyond (or before) its physical, or authorial definition.

We want to explore this condition of space and the potentialities they offer to curatorial activities and for research on space. Our chapter focuses on curating and exhibition making as processual activities, to discover instability in the intersections of thinking and doing, of project and construction. We find that the production of ephemeral projects and spaces (exhibitions, installations or events) can obviate the contradictions and tensions at stake at *performing building sites*. The proposal is to learn from spaces inhabited by curators, artists, cultural producers and architects, to find altered modes of relation to (artistic or museum) objects, to authored works, and to the actual institutions (museum, gallery).

The first section is a document produced from field work during, and after, the research and production of the exhibition Storage (2007), using images from the process of setting-up the scenography I have designed for Storage exhibition[1]. The text offers an open insight to secondary spaces of museums, away from galleries and from meeting rooms, into its storage rooms and processes. Written as a reflexive report from practice, it offers the acknowledgement of non-representationality and the observations from a confusing processual position. The text grasps contradictions and limitations, and poses the possibility of rethinking relations of curating and exhibition making as a practice *in* and *through* spaces.

Section 2 proposes a modality for curatorial research focusing specifically on processual spaces and engages in observations of backstages, or the hidden building sites of exhibition and scenographical production. The piece is illustrated with photos of the set-up of a scenography I designed for an art exhibition in Barcelona[2]. The text explores the processes of exhibition making, both the material and the logistics, and tests it as a mode of generating curatorial projects.

Chapter 3 learns about spatial processuality *in* space, *through* field work and *through* projects reflecting on space and poses the possibility of curating space from within production, engaging the potentiality of building sites as a part of the curatorial research/practice.

STORAGE, A RESEARCH/PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE

The research project for the exhibition "*Storage: notes on density and knowledge*" (2006/07), developed at the University of Porto under supervision of chief-curator Professor Paulo Cunha e Silva, was a collaborative project with the University Museums of the University of Porto which I integrated as an architect and producer. The exhibition was a vast display of objects rescued from storage, as well as of artworks commissioned from around a dozen visual artists who had been invited to think of museums and knowledge production. The exhibition established a dialogue with diverse material and visual traditions: material culture (archeology, anthropology, paleontology, mineralogy, zoology); visual art and museum architecture.

My collaboration was as both architect of the exhibition space and production manager for the research project and the exhibition. "*Storage: notes on density and knowledge*" ("*Storage*") called for research into curatorial projects and the design/spatial installations of exhibitions. My own method is to embrace a processual approach to fieldwork through the many museum spaces (it is not quite an academic methodology, rather it is an empirical way of entering a territorialized and highly disciplined/specialized terrain), informed by institutional critique and offering a critical reading on the state and the future of the university museum spaces. The project was an interdisciplinary experiment around issues of curating from very diverse traditions: contemporary art (guest artists) and material culture (heritage and objects); museum and collection studies; and exhibition display and spatial concepts.

The research consisted of a reading of the potentiality of the spaces, the collections, the historical display (and on occasion the micro-histories) of the eighteen University Museums. In contrast to most museums, these are varied in their space and their displays; while some collections are organized as museums, others are stored in boxes and shelves waiting to be referenced, and yet others are partially dismantled or have been destroyed due to time or abandonment. This multiplicity, diversity and dispersal required 9 months of fieldwork, opening the doors onto museum storages, observing their processual evolution and stagnation, and listening to the human backgrounds of the university museums – outside the exhibition rooms, classrooms and offices. The research brought us closer to a partial history of (academic) knowledge production; to the stories of artifacts, technical objects, and artworks; and to notions of personal affects in museum collecting and management.

Thus, after exploring the museum spaces and registering their rooms, objects and informal activities, the project became an interdisciplinary experiment, which, through its curatorial statement and spatial concept, proposed an immersive experience of museum storages.

Display/storage with the 570 objects from the collections.
OSB wood, scaffolding, tempered glass and light.
Photo: André Cepeda

Storage and objecthood

> *"Starting from the selection process, for some, the notion of storage averts memory (collected objects become souvenirs), for others history (collected objects become information). Yet for others, storage is a provocative show of material culture that applauds the virtual as an ideal way to relieve the ongoing problem that is what to do with all things."* [3] Ingrid Schaffner

The study aimed to over-turn notions of auratic objecthood and sacralised museum practice. The concept of storage offered an entry point to the over-saturated and highly-historicized museums, and to hyper-categorized and codified notions of collecting. Storage offered us the neutrality and modesty of watching an opera from *backstage*, or a museum from the back-office. *Storage* here refers to a *space* or *place* where something is stored, and can be the *object* itself (in storage), as well as the *act* of storing. In all three senses, storage is temporary; it implies a time of delivery (and of its reception) and a foreseeable duration of stay. Storerooms, or warehouses, are the centre stages for logistics and stock management. Warehouses are usually organized according to cold, neutral, technical and functional flowcharts which define storage areas, usually made of simple structural systems – *dexion*, L-profiling, metal tubes/brackets, or shelves. Storages are platforms in the movement and flow of the tertiary services, allowing the reception, storage and management of a product; they play a central role in the distribution of goods and commodities produced in industrialized societies. From an economic perspective, the term *storage*, or deposit, refers to an operation on an object and

the sort of immobility exerted upon it (short term, a year, five years), and at its delivery establishes the ties and freedom of an object over a period of time. It also refers to the risks in its circulation to other markets during the agreed deposit period.

Storages undo the reification of objecthood, and defer its aura and uniqueness. The *object* is the center of the circuit, setting the system, but it is almost always concealed (wrapped, boxed) and is only visible from its packaging and according to the information on its physical characteristics (fragility, weight, insurance value). Taken to its limit, a stored object can be overlooked and only referred to by its outer packaging.

Storage at a museum differs from other kinds of storage. Although in a spatial sense they may resemble run-of-the-mill warehouses – routine places organized in runners of shelving constructed in *dexion*, L-profiling or plywood, museum storage distends in and through time, and tends towards permanency. Mathias Winzen[4] identifies three paradoxes that are intrinsic to collecting and collectors: the paradox between *available material, unavailable future* (collecting reassures and crystallizes the past, though does not guess at or produce the future); the paradox of what he calls *similarly dissimilar* (a unique object, which only shows its singularity when juxtaposed to other similar, yet different objects); and the paradox contained in a *destructive protection* (to protect an object is to isolate it and to destroy its sense and meaning). Items in collections succeed one another in families, chronologically or according to other scientific taxonomies. Items in museum storerooms are immobilized, protected, catalogued and indexed in collections; and a university museum is an archive of research memory, preserving items and reordering the past and the known through its collections. Like the lives of objects in museums, so too the activities of collectors are projected through time, and result in storage. This means that the storage space of a living collection is always insufficient; its nature is to grow and expand to receive new pieces.

The storage of artworks and objects in museum collections consecrates artists and memory, and affirms the "definitively historical" by suspending objects from the everyday. The act of exhibiting existing objects resynchronizes objects with their time and halts this suspension. The rescue process that an exhibition entails allows a repositioning and re-rendering of objects and artworks as "temporarily contemporary", once they are out of their crates and off their shelves.

Contemporary artists have explored the reflection on the procedures and codes of exhibiting and collecting. By dislocating the position of artworks from exhibition spaces, or from storeroom space, visual artists have engaged on personal storages collected and systematized

in subjective ways. Marcel Duchamp, or the Fluxus group, produced miniature museums in boxes, drawers, *bôite en valise*, cabinets and portable museums focusing on objects, ordering and organizing objects instantiating a material mode of critique of collecting and of the art system. Offering a through inside to personal storage, archives and serial objects, as to the rough materiality and invisible life of storage, the book "*Deep Storage – collecting, storing and archiving in art*"[5] is an archive of artists whose work diverts attention from the singularity of the auratic object, and from conservation. Becoming curators and commissioners of peculiar/personal storages and archives, and researching on the very idea of collection, visual artists offer a creative insight to objecthood; artists have reinterpreted modes of storing, as Joseph Cornell´s first boxes which, like the first "collector's cabinets", arouse curiosity and expectation, reordering taxonomy and epistemology, or how we "know" through collecting.

Pine wood, cardboard and stranded wood crates for transport, on top of palettes.
Images for reference.

Backstage and frontstage

> *"The process of storage is always a process of reflection and self-evaluation. Whether the entity is a cultural body, an eccentric individual, or a Citizen Kane, you are what you preserve".*[6] Ingrid Schaffner

This exhibition and research project became a reflection on the processes of storing throughout the museums of the University of Porto. The research involved fieldwork through the backstage areas, the more humble places, and the most hidden and least representative spaces in which the museums´ collections are stored. Generally, museums are based on departmental collections; their places and displays are as heterogeneous and differentiated as the disciplines and knowledge of those actors who started them[7]. The constitution of the collections and the museums has happened with the activity of the Colleges[8], their foundations were not declared; instead the research centers engendered[9] a vast quantity and variety of often unique objects which had been brought together through academic research, or due to

the obsolescence of objects and technical equipment. Therefore, these spaces reflect this constitutive policy: from object, to collection, to storage, to museum.

The project had to work on the foundational premise that University Museums differ from other organizations. University collections do not start from a curated concept, from a plan, or from a continued policy of acquisitions. Rather, they depart from the time and interests of a number of actors who were personally involved in gathering and collecting things[10]. The collections also emerged from the assemblage of objects from academic research and teaching, which had become obsolete with technological progress and the passage of time. Some objects were culled, others were stored, and others were "institutionalized". Some objects (and entire collections) are in ambiguous states, still waiting in storage to become part of a museum. These museums depend on the personal effects of certain agents (professors, alumni), which determine different moments of their growth. Over time, they reflect the specialisations in the fields of academic knowledge, the gradual creation of new colleges, and their subdivision into courses and departments. Some older collections a have split up (like academic genealogy), and branched out (into new academic generations), and entirely new collections have been started. For decades there have been different kinds of economic and human obstacles at the University of Porto, and even a lack of departmental interest in museum activity, which have hindered museological concerns and public visibility. Only a small group of museums have been recently modernized.

The University Museums´ buildings and exhibition rooms are as diverse as their storerooms. The image of accumulation in storerooms crystalizes the notion of density and is intensely (visually, spatially, and intellectually) stimulating. Whether this intensity comes from the succession and diversity of images, from the strong sense of material culture, or from the physical presence of knowledge (accumulated until it becomes visible) the storehouses of the University of Porto activate the imagination.

The Natural History Museum (Mineralogy, Anthropology, Paleontology, and Zoology) has several permanent exhibitions; its spaces were designed to accommodate the collections and have transformed little over time. These are perhaps the most fascinating places in the university. In addition to telling the stories of their endless collections, they also preserve the history of 19th and 20th century museums and exhibition displays. The Anthropology room is one of the highlights, with a double height ceiling and iron balcony revealing the original museum. There are also the Zoology halls in a double height gallery, with fitted wooden cabinets and 19th century display cases where a "Piranesian" accumulation of collections

alludes to Victorian museums; and the black Mineralogy showcases which were designed in the 70s by the architect Fernando Lanhas. These spaces are supported by a former science laboratory, and by several reserved areas where the collections are stored on shelves and cabinets of exceptional quality. The Medicine Museum is an enclosed area which exhibits its entire collection over a succession of rooms, like a diorama. Objects are deposited, accumulated, and piled up in every available space. It is structurally very different from the Fine Arts Museum, where an empty "white cube" exhibition gallery, devoted to temporary exhibitions, is separated from the art storage, organized into a canvas room, sculpture room and a room for drawings.

Medicine Museum and Fine Art Museum
Photos: André Cepeda

Some of the other Museums have strong storeroom features but lack exhibition space, and are methodically organized to accommodate serial collections: the Architecture Documentation Centre is an archive dedicated to paper and framed documents; the Museum of Science (waiting for exhibition rooms) is currently housed in the Old Chemistry Laboratory, where its several collections on the counters and in the cabinets and adjacent rooms are being reorganised; the Museum of Engineering has different cores that are symbolically disseminated over systematically and carefully organized warehouses, and in closets and cabinets in the corridors of the buildings that house its courses. Botany has a giant herbarium (closed and protected) which has been gathering specimens for about a hundred years, as well as cabinets that feature model collections distributed throughout the building. In opposition, other high-quality historical spaces, as the Meteorological Observatory (1883), are still operating as in its original preserved condition, bringing it to a "museum like" status.

Unexpectedly, the very plurality of informal functions that these museums (and their storerooms) have acquired while awaiting wider access to the public and to the present time,

have brought them closer to contemporary thinking on museums. They can potentially be understood as a "Museum of Museums", though they are not articulated as such – and as a three-dimensional history of eras, techniques and concepts in museum display over time. However, this potential has come to fruition, they are frozen in time and to visit them is to be surprised by their contingent institutional and human stories. Some of the collections and objects are visible and used in history classes, becoming part of everyday university life; others share space with services or space with different uses (warehouses, workshops, informal canteens, bars, bathrooms) with collateral dialogues that trespass on the strictly disciplinary institutions (museum, school, warehouse). These spaces seem to be open, flexible, temporary structures with temporary programs and complementary activities that approximate them to audiences. The routine and everyday informality of these spaces offers an extraordinary opportunity to reinvent the very idea of a university museum.

Processual research: knowledge and non-knowledge

> "*In design discourse, 'field work' collects assorted understandings of the real. The term embraces material objects and epistemological subjects, pointing to constructs at once intangible, empirical, discursive and experiential. It too may be best described as a thick concept. Similar to the concept site, field work begs for our attention precisely because it straddles so many domains. Setting up an oscillation between reflection and action, this saturated term highlights the essential inseparability of design theory and praxis in the daily routines of design professionals as well as design scholars.*"[11] Andrea Kahn

In the process of this research project, it was necessary to deal with concepts of knowledge and non-knowledge in order to produce an exhibition on knowledge production. The research process and the exhibition are inextricably linked in the specific "tasks" I was involved with: to create an *architectural project* to install the exhibition "*Storage*" and, also to *manage the production process* of an exhibition that articulated visits and objects from nearly twenty university museums. From the start, these are two hardly reconcilable activities, if we consider the manifest distances between the design of an authored piece (*architectural design*) and the plainly executive, technical, and essentially practical task (*production management*).

The processual research for this "storage" has undisciplined and fuzzy borders. Designing the spatial installation was an unexpectedly long performative process that worked through the many museums and their spaces. Architectural design has been consolidated in the growing trend for professionalization, technical expertise and power definition, and it represents power and has become somewhat corseted as a practice[12]. It was immediately clear that all the existing museums had their own architectural/construction plans to remodel/refurbish their spaces and buildings. Generally the museum curators were pro-conservation of their museum

spaces and in favor of the constitution of a "Museum of Museums"; this meant they tended to disagree with a "modern" or modernising refurbishment of their spaces, and were resistant to architectural intervention in their exhibition rooms.

In general, architects have the authority to coordinate and also to represent the powers behind transformative projects. Contrastingly, architectural designers are expected to be introspective, and to stay in their studio, drawing original and unique buildings and spaces. My position was neither, and was therefore quite ambiguous: I was an architect disempowered by field research at the museums, therefore outside the safety of a studio and, yet, the field work was the place to formulate the architectural question for the exhibition. I was an architect exercising non-knowledge as a means of research and not imposing previously defined methodologies; rather than imposing a new design for museum display I was instead learning from the existing places and stories.

Set-up for the spatial installation with scaffoldings. In the foreground the "Geni" crane used to transport the objects. Set-up by Produções Reais. Photos: André Cepeda

From the opposite perspective, very little is known about *production management*, which is a processual operation that leads to new creations. It lies in the very process of producing each project, and it reinvents itself in every new project. It is a "more or less" postmodern activity that consists of organising the different actors in a project (directors, curators, artists, conservators, carpenters, electricians, and so on), bringing together difference knowledge areas, proposing technical and aesthetic solutions, and finding alternatives to new problems which arise both theoretically and practically from the implementation of each project. It is a hybrid, intuitive and clearly "adisciplinary" activity that could provide the foundations from which to operate.

At "*Storage*", producing architecture ("*what to do, to create the space?*") became inseparable from the symmetrical "*how to do it?*" or "*how to architect this production?*". We faced numerous open questions considering the spatial context (and events) of each small museum, the concerns of their curators and also several along the lines of "*what to do*?" and "*how to*

do?" that comprised the present and the future of the museums and the conservation of heritage spaces. The concept of the spatial installation for the exhibition "*Storage*" embodies several layers of knowledge, though only a few are physically represented in the material space.

Storage – notes on density and knowledge

To produce a curated "storage" with the objects from the museums of the University of Porto was to "indiscipline" thinking about an exhibition space, the conventions of museum practices and the processes of architecture. The long process of understanding the different museums and the contact with the set of selected objects made it possible to discover the multiple paths between the museums and their storage. The dynamic process of stabilization on which curators depend for a balance between high conservation, insurance and low knowledge of the collections opened up unpredictable routes. These referred to informal procedures, the operativity cast in everyday practices, the sharing of personal preferences transmitted orally, and the emotional reasoning that conceptually transformed the "neutral" visits to storerooms into passionate experiences of meaning production.
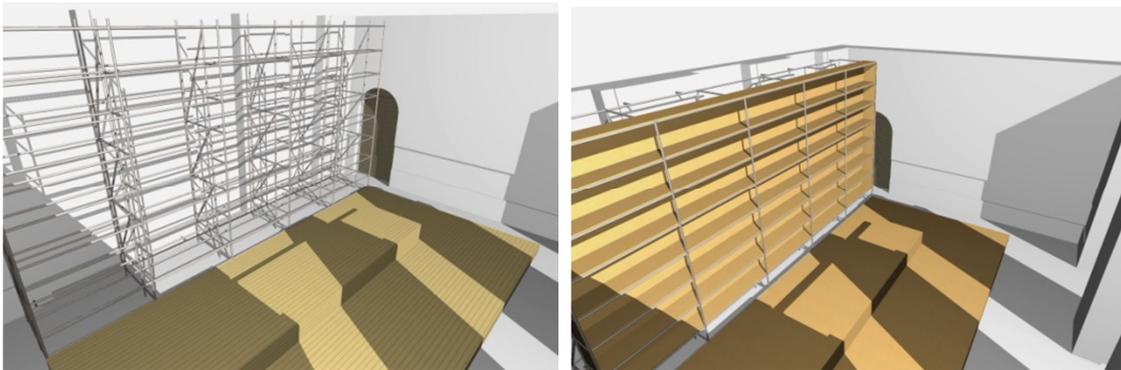
Structural Model to calculate the weight and resistance of the structure, so as to be able to insure the collection objects. Renders: Tiago Costinha

The materialization of the spatial installation was also influenced by artists who, in exercises of restraint (and from a temporal distance[13]) have synthesized memories and diverse material cultures in personal storages to form heterogeneous objects. There is the obsessive research on the nature of knowledge, and the critique of the Museum of Natural History, that Mark Dion materializes in his pieces and delineates in his closets and dioramas with ironic titles like "*Great Chains of Being*" (1998), or "*Scala Naturae*" (1994); the many museum-boxes of personal memories that Joseph Cornell created in the 1940s like "*L'Egypt de Mlle. Cleo de Merode Elémentaire Cours d'Histoire Naturelle*" (1940); and the miniature taxonomic work by

500 contemporary artists which Herbert Distel fitted into 20 tiny drawers for the small piece "*Museum of Drawers*" (1970-77).

The spatial installation of "*Storage*" explores the most unpredictable qualities of the storehouses: the personal experiences of those occupying them and the informality of their practices. Like a tour through one of the storerooms, the exhibition has a time for its visit and tries to enhance the different experiences. The technical report for the spatial installation can be structured in a relatively succinct text:

> *The exhibition "Storage" has been installed in the halls of the Rectory of the University of Porto. In the Main hall, a large platform introduces the exhibition and the subject, and serves as a platform for a set of unique large-scale museum pieces. The stage is backed by a high wall, which turns the neo-classical atrium into a more technical space.*
>
> *The main focal point of the exhibition is the Chemistry Hall. Two walls of a large white room with a black and white tiled floor are illuminated by six arched doorways, with two monumental gates on the other two sides. The Hall was kept intact by creating an exhibiting device that respects and preserves all the particularities of the pre-existing space.*
>
> *As a big open box/case, the exhibition takes place on two planes: the horizontal is a flat stage with an uneven platform accommodating artists' work; on a vertical plane at the edge of the platform stands a metal shelving unit 12mx7m tall which displays and exposes the museums' objects. The large scale and oversized shelving structure allude to the morphology of the storage spaces, and monumentalise the invisible spatiality of collections and storerooms.*
>
> *Two speeds are offered over the exhibition: from a static position at the entrance, we are able to visualize the whole; then on the journey along the platform, crossing it, we are able to view the exhibits themselves, and are invited to establish associations.*
>
> *The spaces were assembled using metal structures made of tubes/brackets, and with formwork beams covered with OBS plywood – used in the building industry and for the crates to transport works of art. These followed the industry standard common to both metal and wood plank of: 2.5mx1.25m. This solution aimed to recreate a technical space, dry and orthogonal, that was moderated by the choice of wood. The color and texture of the wood lends a warm atmosphere to the gallery space, and provides a background to the objects as its colours are blended with the technical structure.*
>
> *Two elements bring a sense of welcome and hospitality to the exhibition: in the Main Hall, a long foam bench invites and brings comfort to the visitors to the Rectory throughout the six months of the exhibition. In the Chemistry Hall, there is a chain curtain with 20 hanging pairs of binoculars which welcome visitors and provide a tool with which to visualize the giant metal shelves.[14]*

The curator's statement was that "*This exhibition is the installation of a storage out of several storages. While not rejecting its status as an exhibition, it intends to be essentially understood as a storeroom.*"[15] The spatial design embodied this desire, and constituted an important

experience of access to the *backstages*, as a means of curating museum spaces through an exhibition.

Right and left view of the exhibition rooms, with storage at the back,
the platform and row of binoculars in the foreground. Photos: André Cepeda

Critical distance

Five years later, self-reflection on the work has led to the consideration that a more rigorous critical position towards the numerous stagnated museum practices would have been useful, and could have been further explored through the research process and more explicitly transmitted in the book. The formulation of the critical position that emerged from the process and access to the many interlocutors was surprising. The institutional framing of the project actually impeded its open transmission. While initially the requirement for the project was for a laudatory event celebrating the magnanimity of the University Museums, the institutional request was toned down and the requirement obliquely readdressed. The exhibition that initially intended to bring the auratic "treasures" in the collections to public visibility was "*detourned*" into a critical insight into the museums' *backstages* and conservation processes. Consequentially, the space for an open critical reading (and voicing) was exhausted.

The audiovisual (photographs and film) records and soundtracks produced in the process of field research are basic, and of low technical quality. As the project had been oriented towards producing an exhibition, the fieldwork focused on objects, collections, and displays. However, the experimental nature of the research, the dialectic process of getting to know each institution, and the "virginity" of these places halted in time, also unleashed a certain curiosity and potentiated a kind of informal knowledge of the museums, based on the micro-stories that inhabit them.

One of the museum pieces brought from the Fine Arts Museum was a video which conceptually opened the exhibition. The audience was to be welcomed by a *video-art* piece produced by Fernando José Pereira, a visual artist who had been invited by the university to create a film to publicly present the museums. The video is a short, repetitive piece showing hands on door knobs, as well as hands holding keys to open different doors. Its narrative is sequential: opening a closed door, and opening another closed door, and opening a different closed door. The arms and hands always belong to different people, and the gesture corresponds to the movements of each of the curators of each museum opening the doors of those historically situated and physically inaccessible museums. The video symbolically opens these museum doors, while ironically revealing their repression and inaccessibility to the general public. Instead of communicating the precious collections, its critique was provocative and seen as damaging to the institutional image, and was therefore never shown before the exhibition "*Storage*".

Other potential paths for development have also been identified with "*Storage*". The fieldwork within the museums (to select the objects and conceptualize their display) has led to dialogic practices and interdisciplinary debates between a hybrid team. The encounters and conversations with the museums' staff, directors, and other actors involved, opened up a very special insight on the institutions' every day and effective lives, which went beyond the simplistic scepticism of an external critical viewpoint. It is a missed opportunity that the documentation produced (to curate an objectual exhibition) did not explore other kinds of materials, such as interviews, or the informal practices or subjective interpretations of institution making, which could have opened the oral and performative dimension of the *backstages* and production of space in these peculiar museums.

Nevertheless, although intended more as artistic interpretation than research material, two of the artists invited to intervene in the project documented the storages with photography and with video. The first set of works is by André Cepeda, and is named "*Depósito*" (2007). It consists of 19 images of each of the storerooms, and was presented in a box file for consultation in the exhibition, and was reproduced in the catalogue. The video piece "*Illuvie*", by Eduardo Matos, consists of three videos produced in the storerooms of the Engineering Museum, where computers and other sophisticated machinery are shown out of use in empty storage spaces. Human agency and material and technical activity are absent in both works, and the old spaces, the accumulation and heavy materiality suspended from contemporary time, make us curious to know more about these collections.

Model of the exhibition, by Inês Moreira

Model of the exhibition, by Inês Moreira.

Post script

Just as the actual storerooms are not confined to rigid functions, so has this "storage" attempted to reignite discussion on the University Museums in Porto. From a temporal distance, it became clear that a more acute reading could have been enabled through introducing documentary testimonies and broader visual statements. This restriction however is a clear indication of the potential for a future (?) project on museum spaces and practices, which would be able to explore materials and documentation in a less formal project.

An approach that was more explicitly informed by Institutional Critique would have brought this project up to another level of entering the *backstage*. A broader record of the research process would have offered a rich contribution to Museum Studies, and a step towards curating spaces through verbal testimonies. The "processual" research project was born out of the curatorial/exhibitionary exercise and its framing as an institutional commission defined its limits to an open critical position, as well as to the exposure of less than positive aspects in museum practice.

The research for the curatorial and spatial project, and the introduction of production management as part of the project, exposes how research for an exhibition goes beyond its mere statement, experts' discourses, plain material production, and access to a public. The processual nature of curating and exhibition-making produces knowledge well beyond its immediate visual perception.

[1] The images illustrating section 1 are part of the set-up of the exhibition Storage, Porto 2007, to which I designed the scenography in 2006-7. Some images were taken by the production company, Produções Reais, some images were taken by the commissioned photographer, André Cepeda, the models and the 3D models were produced by me and by Tiago Costinha.

[2] The images illustrating this section are part of the set-up of the exhibition *Art for Life, Art for Living* in Swab Art fair, Barcelona 2011, to which I designed the scenography with Paulo Mendes for *petit CABANON*. Some photos were taken by Paulo Mendes, other by me, and some other by the curators.

[3] Ingrid Schaffner, "Digging back into 'deep storage,'" in Ingrid Schaffner and Matthias Winzen, *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing and Archiving in Art* (Munich, New York: Prestel, 1998), 10.

[4] Matthias Winzen, "Collecting: so normal, so paradoxical," in Ingrid Schaffner and Matthias Winzen, *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing and Archiving in Art* (Munich, New York: Prestel, 1998), 22-31.

[5] Ingrid Schaffner and Matthias Winzen, *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing and Archiving in Art* (Munich, New York: Prestel, 1998), 21.

[6] Ingrid Schaffner, "Digging back into 'deep storage,'" in Ingrid Schaffner and Matthias Winzen, *Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing and Archiving in Art* (Munich, New York: Prestel, 1998), 21.

[7] Their contents include the history of disciplines and research, the evolution of professions, and the history of the University and its faculties, told through educational models, study specimens, and academic exams, and also include collections of tools, instruments and work-related equipment, furniture and technical appliances, as well as other rare and singular items.

[8] To know more about the history of the university, see chapter "Museus, Colecções e Bibliotecas," in Cândido Santos, *Universidade do Porto: Raízes e Memória da Instituição* (Porto: Reitoria da Universidade do Porto, 1996), 355-377.

[9] There are between 15 and 20 small museums, the actual number depends on the effective institutionalization of these museums, or on the potentiality of the existing dispersed collections.

[10] The museums include donations from researchers and personalities who have often given their names to the collections - e.g. Montenegro de Andrade, Augusto Nobre, Abel Salazar, and Marques da Silva. Other museums have received donations such as war spoils from Germany.

[11] Andrea Kahn, "Field note 1: on inhabiting thickness," in Suzanne Ewing, Jéremie Michael McGowan, Chris Speed and Victoria Clare Bernie, eds. *Architecture and Field/Work* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge 2011), 56.

[12] This idea is updated by the technical version of a management agency between the interests of the project and the client, with technical specialists and builders, local authorities, etc.

[13] See the exhibition catalogue: Harriet Schoenholz Bee, David Frankel and Jasmine Moorhead, eds. *The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect* [Exhibition Catalog] (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1999).

[14] The descriptive document of the exhibition display was published, along part of this essay:
Inês Moreira, "Arquitectura e produção no Depósito: sobre o projecto de colaboração com os Museus da Universidade do Porto" in Paulo Cunha e Silva, ed., *DEPÓSITO: Anotações sobre Densidade e Conhecimento* (Porto, Universidade do Porto, 2007), 155-172.

[15] Extract taken from curator Professor Paulo Cunha e Silva´s statement in a photocopied text handed out to the public during the exhibition.

In the moments that anticipate every opening, the sounds of vacuum cleaners dictate the end of setting-up messiness and herald a new state: the complete project. Photo: Inês Moreira, Gdansk, May 2011

Exhibition-making is an important aspect of curating; it is a technical, pragmatic, and non-discursive extension of curatorial projects. Most of the times, exhibition-making is considered a "poor relative" of research, and an uncomfortable material and practical annex. Exhibition-making fundamentally resembles other processual exercises – planning, logistics, setting-up, installation, and construction. Its processual condition is reminiscent of a *backstage* area, which are both a production space and a non-representational practice. The processuality of the making, the materiality of space and the performativity of production, all perform exhibitions in invisible ways. This leads to the belief that *backstages* can offer oblique entrance points for exploring curatorial methodologies.

A set-up (the *backstage*) supports the construction and realization of projects. The *backstage* disappears before the completion of a project, sharing the same condition of building sites in architecture and engineering. They are spaces of profound processuality: the building sites of ephemeral architecture. The notion of *backstage* (as in theatres or concert halls) refers to the technical and logistical support for a show (whether performative, visible or spatial) encompassing storage, improvised meeting rooms, or warehouses. A *backstage* also refers to states of incompletion where "the making" takes place. It generates exhibitions, extends artist's studios, and generates other exhibitionary structures - from spatial installations to scenography.

As suggested with *Performing Building Sites*, to consider an event from the middle is to think of states of becoming, of procedures and of partial objects. A search for readings of processuality intervenes in the process as an extension of curatorial projects. Processuality and *backstages*

invite an inversion of traditional expectations. Different levels of engagement with the *backstage* arise from a practice of exhibition-making (and spatial design) which involves generating new objects and the systems to create them, thinking of the processual dimension of exhibition-making as part of the concept of curating, and depicting the exhibition space and the technicalities as layers in the symbolic constructions of the curatorial project. This exposes the importance of field-work practice (in exhibition making and production) as a mode of steering through object-process-space relations. To be more precise, this is an attempt to describe modes of depiction through the processuality of material processes, to offer a mode of thinking about curatorial projects. Exhibition *backstages* are entry points for the understanding of exhibition-making as a material-semiotic entity.

The processual and the material

"*That is, practice necessarily entails materiality. And just as materiality is integral to practice, so is it integral to the knowing enacted in practice. Put more simply, knowing is material.*"[1]

Wanda J. Orlikowski

To look at curating through its making requires one to expand on the questions of processuality and its relation to materiality. The first step is to unfold and analyze the "processual" and the "material". The central concepts of this research come from on-going discussions in social science studies. One attempt by this field is to consider technical objects beyond an immediate reduction to technical schemes of representation or to their primary functions. It is possible that such studies could provide tools for considering the processual condition of exhibition- making. Amidst the on-going debates in these studies, there is a long line of authors who have put forward concepts that engage with processuality and materiality. Some concepts provide a network and/or framework of ideas for the objectual, the processual and the material, and which propose a precise vocabulary: *things* [Heidegger[2]], *technical objects* [Simondon[3]], *partial objects and assemblages* [Deleuze[4]], *quasi-objects* [Serres[5]], *literal metaphors and figurations* [Haraway[6]], *actor-networks and actants* [Latour[7]], or *complex performative allegories* [Law[8]].

Can we rethink the intersections of *curatorial research and practice*, *processuality* and *materiality*, *objects* and *agents*? What if we understood exhibition-making not as the inevitable practical side of research, but as an extension of a conceptual and discursive project?
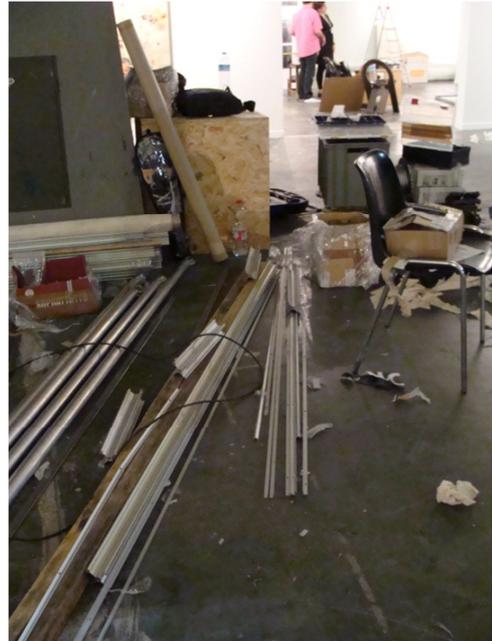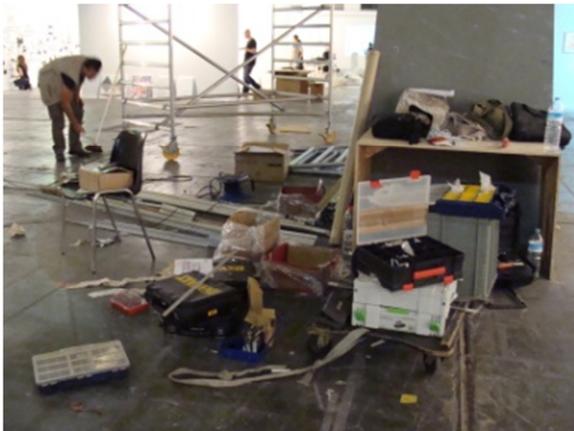
Bits and pieces, materials, tools, boxes, scaffolding and tape
for the set-up of an exhibition.
Photos: Produções Reais

Processual notions[9]

A sensitive conceptual approach to the processual dimensions of space can be found in the work of two authors in close theoretical proximity: Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva. Bruno Latour provides the foundation from which other authors, here Albena Yaneva, explore diverse fields of study. Latour´s text "C*an We Get Our Materialism Back, Please?*"[10] is an essay that provides us with the core argument for Yaneva's text "*When a bus met a museum: following artists, curators and workers in art installation,*"[11] in which she expands the argument by addressing questions of exhibition-making.

Both Latour and Yaneva are concerned with materiality, processuality and with a critique of the objectual (and of conventional knowledge linearity). Their thinking asks one to consider a critical approach to the hidden processes in exhibitions, which I could be called the *processual production of objects*, or the *process of staging objects*. If the *production of objects* (art, machines, scenography) is not a *thin* but a *thick* reality, as Latour proposes, then objects perform diverse networks which actively assemble other actors and networks. Latour invites us to think of a horizontal interconnected networks of agents and actions, as in science laboratories or in technical constructions, which Yaneva explores with *Actor-Network Theory* as a detailed ethnographic approach to practices in creative fields, from the making of architectural models, to the making of an art installation.

The setting-up of an exhibition offers conditions to observe the ambiguous/unclear situation of the construction of art installations (object, space and process) providing an oblique entrance to museums (or galleries) as institutions, as collection or as representation. Yaneva explores the gap*: "Institutional theories and material culture studies have rarely addressed the fact that the museum before the opening ceremony of the show is a strange messy world composed of heterogeneous actors with a variable ontology. I seek to describe this world, and to explore the daily life of an exhibition's preparation, and its effects on both the routine and the more unusual aspects of a museum. 'Museum' is here understood as a quasi-technical network involved in art fabrication work: it is both an installation site and an installation setting. (…) The study of installation practices allows us to step aside from the dilemma of treating the museum either as a process or as a structure."*[12]

Yaneva´s field report addresses the exhibition from behind (not from an audience point-of-view or a conceptual premise), and from the perspective of its construction and setting-up, along with its contingencies and other inter-relations in no particular hierarchy This opens a

space between the strictly conceptual and processual nature of production, and the more rigid notion of a structure behind the formal curatorial plan and the institutional frame of the museum. Ethnographic field-work inside an exhibition set-up, following the process of creation/installation of a new artwork, opens up a new field in exhibition studies to engage with the processes of making.

In ethno/anthropological fieldwork researchers are critical witnesses, and it is through their reading and writing records/registers and critical reports that one can gain access to a processual condition. A report depicts and frames the object observed and therefore the mode of reading, writing and thinking may provide more than a merely objective testimony, it draws together the object and observer. *Actor-Network Theory´s* reading, writing and thinking (through field-work, field-work reports, and the critical reconceptualization of relations) is a vivid, complex and intertwined writing that is not reducible to synthetic overview. Writing tends to be detailed and extensive, and performs processualy.

Tracing the entrance of a bus off the street and through the meticulous technical phases in which the heterogeneous team "turns" the street object into an art installation in a museum gallery, Yaneva states: "*Following the actors through the object's tribulations, one can expose the materialization of all these successive installation operations, and show the appearance of a whole collective acting in the space. (…) Instead of being situated in a single artistic mind, in the imagination of a genius, the artistic process is instead seen as distributed within this visible collective.*"[13]

The stabilization of the object on a "stage" is a long processual path in which the object is not stable and whose definition is shared by a collective of agents and actions. Through the formal and casual encounters, the technical difficulties, the conversations and even the affects (gestures, expressions, emotions) of a team inside a museum, one may engage in a project from within, beyond the discourse of art studies, or the curatorial statement.

Ethnographic field-work at the set-up of an art installation brings two very productive notions about the conditions in "exhibition making" that upholds one's thinking. The first is the set-up as *the process of becoming art*; the second is production as performing *the unstable state of the art object*. Both lead to a thorough description of the materials, technicalities, contingencies and the human daily dimension of the processes of making.

The set-up of an ephemeral exhibition space draws together the process of constructing the new space with the simultaneous installation of the art works.
Photos: Paulo Mendes archive, Barcelona, May 2011

Before going further into these notions, it should be made clear that they are separate from certain other concepts in the visual arts: *détournement* and *objet trouvées*, the authorial artistic actions and the question of ontology of the condition of the art object (as Duchampian conceptual gestures or avant-garde compositions), and the notion of *precarious* in recent contemporary art criticism explored by Hal Foster[14] as an enunciative concept for *the state of uncertainty* evoked by political readings of the contemporary in the art of the 2000s. These are concepts in close relation to the specialized discourse on art theory, and are fundamentally different from the notions here explored.

The process of becoming art is a notion that refers to the relations which are human, material and technical in exhibition making and articulating art installation as a collective and heteroclite activity: "*A small collective is formed in the situation or moment (…). The collective is composed of bus, wooden platform, workers, technicians, their tools and mutual jokes, their small controversies and negotiations. It is composed of technical managers and curators, their conversations, notebooks, doubts and security precautions. (…) When the artist orders the displacement of the bus from the left to the right and all the way back again, he displaces this collective in a momentary and reversible way. The bus is in* the process of becoming art."[15]

The process of becoming art has an imprecise time span (the extension of art making – beyond the atelier – and as a prelude to audience participation – before the opening), and is variable in its relational geometry.

The second notion is confusing and appears to invite a definition of the objects that comes from its actions, agencies and procedures. The *unstable state* is therefore not possible to define or clarify; it can only be defined in its many performances. "*To analyze the bus's displacements on the platform, the cleaning procedures and the small temporary events in the*

94

Dufy hall, I tried to show the numerous series of infinitely small repetitions of elements and movements, deployed in the uncertainty of art production. This approach allowed defining objects not only by their components (material or symbolic) but by the peculiar ways they are opened and closed, proliferated and black-boxed, multiplied and rarefied. (...) [A]rt in the making can be followed by depicting the course of its installation"[16]. The un-stability at stake is close to the notions of *mess, confusion* and *relative disorder* introduced by John Law[17] as modes of knowing, describing and creating new realities.

Technical team setting-up a metal / textile structure to complete the construction of the exhibition space, while the artist Isabelle Le Minh installs her work on a finished wall in the background. Constructing a scenography and installing art works intermingle on the same stage. Photo: Paulo Mendes archive

From the front: New spatial installation for exhibiting, Aníbal working on some screws and other details, mobile scaffolding and a finished artwork in the background by Isabelle Le Minh Photo: Paulo Mendes archive

Call for Materialism

Bruno Latour calls for a *thick* notion of objects, and specifies that a technical construction is more than the strict sum of its parts. He posits a *material materialism* as opposed to the Cartesian notion of *idealist materialism*. Undoing the reduction of objects to its technical

representation is one of the central questions in the short essay "*Can we get our materialism back, please?*": "*For any piece of machinery, to be drawn to specs by an engineer, on one hand, or to remain functional without rusting and rotting away, on the other, requires us to accept two very different types of existence. To exist as a part* inter parts *inside the isotopic space invented by the long history of geometry, still-life painting, and technical drawing is not at all the same as existing as an entity that has to resist decay and corruption. Obvious? Yes, of course - but then why do we so often act as if matter itself were made of parts that behave just like those of technical drawings, which live on indefinitely in a timeless, unchanging realm of geometry?*"[18]

Latour´s *materialism* is more than just bits and pieces and parts assembled together as objects. It is important to understand that the technical calculation for the concrete beams or metal trusses that structure a building, plywood walls, and wooden staircases in an exhibition is not in itself able to represent the entirety of the concept and its meaning as a technical object. In the process of assembling (or setting-up), some of the many dimensions of the *material* are the experiential dimension of its inhabiting and producing, along with the lives of repairing, maintaining and disassembling.
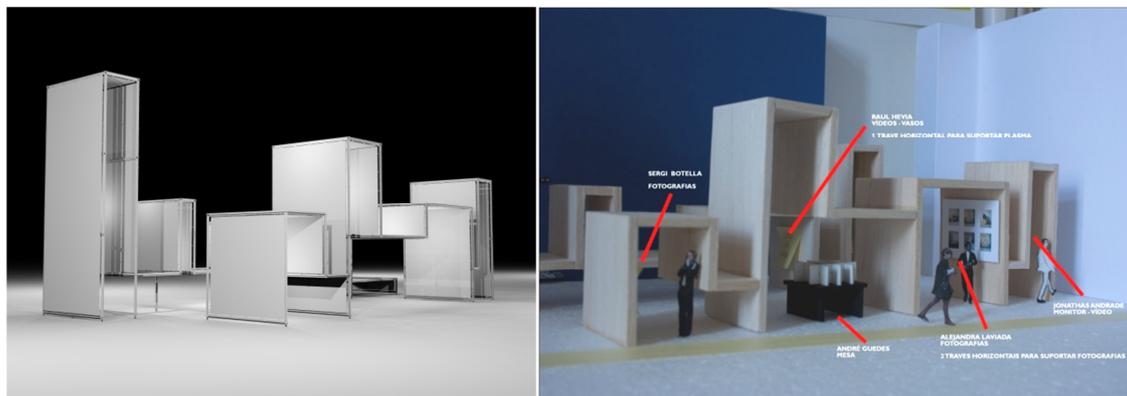
A 3D model of the installation detailing the components of Pila Petit metal structure system (Designed with a ready to use program in use at the rental company). Image: Produções Reais.
A rough wooden model made at the studio to experiment with volumes and to study the location of artworks at the exhibition.
Image: petit CABANON @ Paulo Mendes archive

The key passage in Latour's *call for materialism* touches upon two concepts that are familiar to curatorial activities; the act of e*nframing*, as an act of depicting an image by fixing its limits, and the more abstract concept of *opacity,* referred to by Nina Montmann in her proposal for a

critical revision of institution making in contemporary art, which advocates for the right to be opaque as a mode of generating space for experimentation within institutions[19]. They act antagonically; one freezes objects, the second potentiates processes, thus linking the question of *material materialism* more closely.

What Latour calls *enframing*, initiates bridges to the terrains of curatorial studies: *"What is so promising about extricating material materialism from its idealist counterpart— of which the concept of 'enframing' is a typical example — is that it accounts for the surprise and opacity that are so typical of techniques-as-things and that techniques-as-objects, drawn in the* res extensa *mode, completely hide. The exploded-view principle of description makes it possible to overcome one of the main aspects of bringing an artifact into existence: opacity. In other words, it draws the object as if it were open to inspection and mastery while it hides the elementary mode of existence of technical artifacts — to take up Gilbert Simondon's title. Parts hide one another; and when the artifact is completed the activity that fit them together disappears entirely. Mastery, prediction, clarity, and functionality are very local and tentative achievements that are not themselves obtained inside the idealized digital or paper world of* res extensa — *even though it would be impossible to carry them forward without working upon and with technical drawings and models. But, again, it is not the same thing to work* upon *a model - mathematical, analogical, digital - as it is for a technical assemblage to* be *a model."*[20]

The call for *material materialism* introduces a certain negation of (or resistance to) a technical thing being fully exposed, keeping *experimentation/contingency* within its very opacity. Somehow, materialism is opaque, hides a "secret" (cf. Derrida), and is performed and conjunctive, proceeding as a thing (cf. Heidegger), and not as pure bits and pieces of abstract matter. *Opacity* is where *thick objects* perform their materialism, via which they escape reduction to objective representation. This potentiates concerns with exhibition-making and the spatial dimension of curatorial projects.
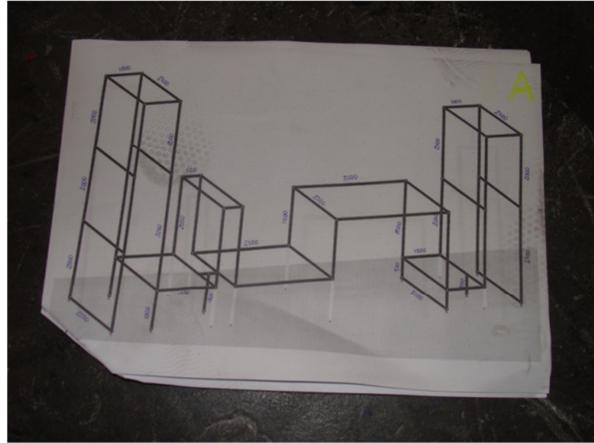
Art exhibitions, architecture exhibitions, design exhibitions, cultural events,
spatial installations and scenography deal with materials, objects,
techniques and their representations
Photos: Produções Reais

Material performativity

"Knowing" is an immersive experience, along with the accumulated succession of ephemeral events taking shape, coming together and transforming through time, and the processes of composition, manufacturing and setting-up an event/exhibition. Latour´s *thick objects* are not reducible to two-dimensional technical planning or to representation. Thickness differs from a thorough description of all the components in a technical assemblage (wall, wood, light, cable, frame, nail and others), in that it demands a mode of thinking processually (*the process of becoming art* and *the unstable state of the art object*). Thus, to explore "processuality" is an invitation into thickness that is beyond idealized or abstract notions of materiality and contains certain opaqueness within.

The concept of *material performativity* embraces a processual and somewhat opaque notion of materiality; it engages with instability and becomes and offers an entrance to thinking about production. The concept is an invitation to intensify the possibilities of reading and writing *exhibition-making* in order to explore a conceptual mode of practice beyond the immediate technical and practical goals (assembling parts to create a new show). We believe that thinking of materiality and processual activity as parts of *material performativity* at installation sites is a way of expanding the potentiality of curatorial projects.

Performativity emerges, and cannot be designed as an attribute of Cartesian technical objects or as a chemical composition or other discrete matter. Rather, it is the set of pieces, operations and experiences that come together and cohere (object, installation, and exhibition) which simultaneously disturbs and depicts its many layers. To consider *material performativity* is a way of thickening the uninterruptable networks and conjunctions in production (art, exhibition, and event) and to go beyond the ephemeral and contingent processuality (the making, the set up) of exhibition making. *Material performativity* can be understood as a way of finding/allocating other coats of *thickness* to the technical assemblage of the set-up.

Wanda J. Orlikowski has criticized *Actor-Network Theory*´s equalization of human and non-human (the technological) and has experimented with the terms *human agency* and *material performativity* to explore the roles of materiality and technology in "knowing". With a focus on the field of *Organizational Knowledge*, researching the intersection of the social and the technological and looking at how human agency is mediated through technological objects so as to understand the role of materials – which she calls *material knowing* - Orlikowski states:

"*My preference is not to speak about 'material agency' as that seems too similar to actor-network accounts and may inadvertently lead us into the same difficulties of not adequately distinguishing differences between human activities and technological doings. Instead, I find the notions of 'human agency' and 'material performativity' more useful, helping us to recognize the power of both without equating them. In this view, material performances and human agencies are both implicated in the other (human agency is always materially performed, just as material performances are always enacted by human agency), and neither are given a priori but are temporally emergent in practice.*"[21]

Material performativity intertwines materiality with *human agency*, and encompasses the entanglements which help to debunk craft creativity, ephemerality, and the experience of the making, all of which are important to spatial and exhibition installation. "*A practice view of knowledge leads us to understand knowing as* emergent *(arising from everyday activities and thus always 'in the making'),* embodied *(as evident in such notions as tacit knowing and experiential learning), and* embedded *(grounded in the situated socio-historic contexts of our lives and work). And to this list I want to add another critical dimension, and that is that knowing is also always* material*.*"[22]

The aim were is to specifically explore production processes in which the witness is participating in the process of making, is an actual doer in the field, and takes a step forwards to explore *material knowing*, which goes beyond the observer in Yaneva´s field-work position. Orlikowski´s concerns focus on knowing through practicing and making, and she emphasizes its material and practical dimension - "knowing is always material". Materiality not only mediates, it builds knowledge.

Ethnographic field-work on exhibition-making has enabled an understanding of some processual notions, and the question is whether it can be pushed further. Can participation allow reading, writing, thinking and intervening in space (exhibition, installation) from a performative engagement with materiality? Can the actual participation in production process be used to redefine some traditional terms in curating?

Unfolding installation sites

"That´s when the plot will really thicken".[23] Bruno Latour

The period between the vernissage and the ending is the most stable and most objectual period of an exhibition. The unstable definition of scenography, installation and technical elements, and the confusing set-up processes, tend to be erased from the show itself, though their documentation may be parallel in other platforms. The generalization of access to real-time information and dissemination (through social media, media, and communication devices) offers a growing platform for diverse modes of communication on cultural events.

The process of the making of exhibitions and installations may now be disseminated through representation (short videos, photos, live-streaming, commentaries), and provides new images of the production process of events and their logistics and aesthetics, and communicates a curatorial statement. From simple stop-motion videos of the whole process, to more complex productions, most representations mediate public access, but do not interfere in the curatorial project itself. The documentation of the construction of the Serpentine Summer Pavilions in London[24] with cranes, machines and building site movements, and the "mechanoo" model of assemblage of Jean Prouvé´s Maison Tropicale in front of Tate Modern in London[25], both instantiate the installation process of ephemeral structures in (outdoor) exhibition spaces as extensions of the communication of the exhibition. The strategy behind this mediation explores the everyday fascination with construction processes, in which passersby are "peeping toms" on construction sites, and thus piques curiosity. Materialism is here understood in an idealized[26] and playful game[27].

Installation sites have been explored by collectives of artists, architects and curators in numerous hybrid cultural projects, which meld exhibition, installation and DIY construction. To understand this, one should consider an exhibition as a *performative stage* or as a *processual entity* (before, during and after the opening). The modes of performance differ from project to project; some explore its *becoming*, others its *rhetoric.* And others more specifically explore the *qualities and the stories of materials* in the thinking and making of the spatial. A few projects explore backstage processuality through its material becoming installation [Uglycute], or the rhetoric of support [Pedro Bandera], or through the qualities and stories of pre-existing reused materials [Koebberling & Kaltwasser].
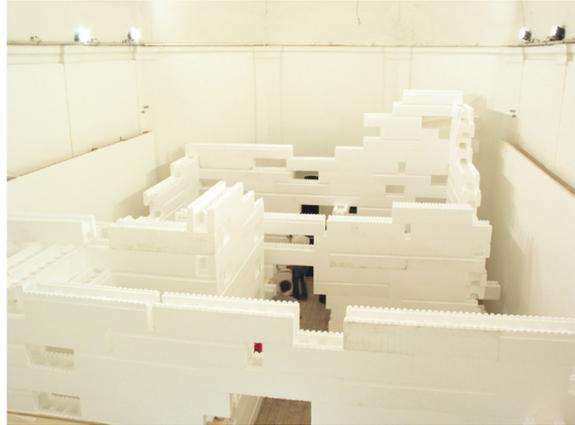
Uglycute´s[29] installation settings assemble low-cost industrial materials used in construction industries, to create spaces (OSB, plywood, industrial carpets, Styrofoam, wallmate, fences, and others), which in most more conventional exhibition spaces are usually plastered, painted white, or otherwise concealed. The roughness of these standardized elements is combined with more subtle and emotional materials like wool, felt, cloth or other natural materials. (The name of the collective can be understood as a pleonasm of these two families of materials – ugly cute). The functional programs of their installation projects are mostly cultural, as exhibition scenography, design stores and other ephemeral sets, as well as workshops and conferences that explore the construction process of small-scale objects. Their work embodies traditional craft skills, small-scale objects and certain handiwork, and results in a comfortable language combined with the contention of resources. The formal "composition" of the spaces explores the dynamics of materials and the process of construction, with spaces that are sculpted out of ramps, benches, stools, tables, fragile partitions and bookshelves that bring a sense of transiency and ephemerality.

At the level of representation, most of the projects ("People´s Park" in Istanbul, or "Dreamland burns" in Budapest) include images of the "making" of the space, as well as images of the "using" of the space, and thereby opening the space of production as one of the dimensions of the project. The presence of the bodies of visitors, and artists (and their everyday objects) in the space undoes the sterility of a contemporary art exhibition. The idea of *material performativity* and *human agency* are part of the unfolding of these installations.

Emergency Entrance, São Paulo Architecture Biennale, 2005, Pedro Bandeira[30]

Pedro Bandeira[31] adopted the infrastructure/structure of building sites construction and its visual rhetoric to create an ironic installation proposal for the Portuguese Pavilion at the São Paulo Biennale of Architecture (2005). His proposal consisted of an industrial metal scaffold (and its blue "demolition buckets/ducts") in juxtaposition to the Biennale´s modernist building designed by Oscar Niemeyer, and which intercepted it through the façade and offered a tortuous alternative entrance into the Portuguese pavilion. The installation plays with the notion of emergency exit (which was next to the installation space), with modern architectural ideas of interior-exterior, with the glass façade and its proximity to a green luxuriant garden, and with the functional division of space and its accessibilities. Inside the pavilion the piles of earth/soil on the floor showed that the tropical garden beyond had entered the Portuguese space through the "ducts", inverting its normal disposal use and turning it into a sucking device, metaphorically importing the earth from the garden. It was the "emergency entrance", which gave the installation its name.

The installation was a static metal structure, a metaphor of the rough materials on building sites. Building site materiality and processuality was explored spatially and rhetorically, referring to building industries and providing an evocative position from which to think of other social and political concerns. Though not explicitly articulated in the textual components or in the artist´s statement, this spatial installation, in that exact location and at that specific moment in contemporary history, was performing, through materiality and through its title "*Emergency Entrance*", a concern with the situation of Brazilian migration to Europe in the early 2000s. This installation may be understood as the articulation of a political concern with the Brazilian immigrants who were at that time entering Portugal and taking up low- paid jobs in the construction industry. The materials of the installation, its contextual presentation and the actual temporality of the exhibition opening enunciated and materialized a level of reflection that may go beyond a curatorial statement[32].

Folke Koebberling and Martin Kaltwasser[34] are an artist and architect pairing who develop exhibitions, installations and ephemeral urban interventions. They question societies' uses of construction materials as a resource, and the politics and the economics of the new. From collecting discarded materials from streets, backyards and sidewalks, to sharing and exchanging collaboration with other *bricoleurs*, the artists explore and openly use traditional everyday practices of repairing, adapting or self-building, which seem to be disappearing from today´s cities, whether because of newly adopted consumerist behaviors (buying new), or because of the implementation of municipal laws on waste disposal in "cleaner" cities (as in *Barcelona posat neta*), or through more efficient waste-collection services.

As a critique and intervention in the system of found/reused materials, Koebberling and Kaltwasser collect a diverse range of second-hand materials, recycle construction site materials (wood, windows), and reuse industrial materials from large-scale events such as commercial exhibition fairs. Their art installations may bring together materials found in public spaces and recycle them to form new public structures (pergolas, gazebos, bus stops, plaza), may reuse materials from fairs in new exhibition pavilions and stands, or may also generate new art objects that explore the expressivity and materiality of the found materials in a critique of environmental exploitation and expenditure. They adopt, transform and produce large-scale installations through DIY techniques and aesthetics using their own hands, the help of fellow volunteers and occasionally other skilled craftsmen. Part of their research explores the policies of the making that can be found in self-built environments. The legal borders of *gecekondu* procedures for illegal construction in Turkey are a conceptual model which they adopt and experiment as method and a technique.

The collection, organization and storage of found materials led to Baustoffzentrum – a warehouse that stores their found materials and resources for building, organized according to types of wood, colour, shape and other categories, to transform into art installations, exhibition spaces, and urban interventions. The project "*IFA*" (2007) at Art Forum Berlin was the stand for the Galerie Anselm Dreher, which represents their work. The artist/architect duo designed and built a representation space for the gallery reusing the found materials from the previous commercial fair on electronic appliances. The materiality of the art fair became an extension of the cycle of "set-up/dismantle" "set-up/dismantle" typical of fairs, and thus embodied in its own space a critical revision of the economic cycles in which these fairs are a part. Koebberling & Kaltwasser transform the position of the experts (whether architect, artist, or curator) through the setting-up.

To engage in a project through its production processes and materials demands active participation. This position differs from most *idealized* projects - in architecture, scenography or in curating - as this mode of work generates projects which, in some cases, do not precede the set-up of the exhibition – either as a represented idea, or as a literal transcription to materials.

In most "designed" spatial installations or scenography, there are professional technical teams involved (museums, galleries, theatres); the protocols are expected to follow and apply plans, and the margins of contingency are usually fairly tight in the contract. The involvement of the curator, architect or artist in the set-up process is a common characteristic of self-organized cultural projects such as artist-run-spaces. The involvement of spatial designers in constructing and producing projects tends to occur mostly in experimental participative projects with communities (in self-built settlements there is usually no design involved), and it is a common practice in more sculptural objects, or in art installation. By underlining the complex and multidimensional activities around curating and space (design, production, materiality and the processes of assembling), we may approach the "processual" nature of space and spatial production and thereby grasp the described modalities of practice, which we may designate as curatorial practice in/on processual space.

Engaging in field-work through "the work" as an active participant differs from the passive and observational witness position of field-work research. Uglycute and Koebberling & Kaltwasser have developed their conceptual approach as a mode of "curatorial thinking" that is important to note; they organize events, workshops, conferences, educational platforms, and expand the

limits of what a scenography or a spatial installation can be. Their projects, and the making of their projects, become extended cultural and curatorial projects engaged in processual and material activities.

The theoretical framework for *processuality, material materialism* and *material performativity* sets the table for an approach to curating. Processuality can be explored as a mode of making and of thinking about curatorial projects. Different practices that generate *material objects and spaces* lead to different levels of engagement with the "backstage". Alongside the objects, there is another layer of a project which structures the *processes* to create it. Focusing on the *backstage* invites an inversion of traditional terms as curatorial practice is a mode of participation, an oblique journey through object-process-space relations. Backstages invite reflection on the exhibition as a material concept and on the curator as practitioner.

Processual thinking allows one to engage with the dimensions of making as part of the concept of curating, and to depict material space and its technicalities as the differing layers of a curatorial project. Engaging in work as an active participant differs from the supervisory and passive observation methods of conventional research. As a coordinator and a critical observer, curators may get closer to the position of doers and may reach beyond the position of witnesses (reading, writing and thinking), as they may intervene in the material processes, open space for participation and explore experimentation/contingency as a modality of research and practice.

Curators may act as scaffolds to the process of making, as conceptualizers, coordinators, and also as doers, participating actively in a deep awareness of the production processes. Curating can become a mode of work-in-between-object-process-idea-materials-text-transportation-concepts-logistics that conceptually explores the practicalities of its own processes. The processuality of exhibition-making, the materiality of exhibition spaces and the performativity of production processes could all be further explored as modalities of curatorial knowledge.

[1] Wanda J. Orlikowski, "Material Knowing: The Scaffolding of Human Knowledgeability" *The SeeIT (Social and Economic Explorations of Information Technology) Project at MIT Sloan School of Management* (October 2005), [http://seeit.mit.edu/Publications/Orlikowski_OKLC_write-up_2006.pdf] (accessed 10 January 2012), 3.

[2] Martin Heidegger, "The Thing", in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Translated by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001 [1971]).

[3] Gilbert Simondon, *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Paris: Aubier, 1958).

[4] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Athlone Press, 1983).

[5] Michel Serres, *Le parasite* (Paris: Grasset, 1981).

[6] Donna J. Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997)

[7] Bruno Latour, "On the difficulty of being an ANT: An interlude in the Form of a Dialog," in *Reassembling the Social* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 142-156.

[8] John Law, *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*, (London: Routledge, 2004).

[9] The images illustrating this section are part of the set-up of an exhibition for which I designed the scenography with *petit CABANON. Exhibition: Art for Life, Art for Living, Barcelona, May 2011. Curators: Laurent Fiévet and Silvia Guerra. Space: petit CABANON (Inês Moreira + Paulo Mendes). Artists:* Isabelle Le Minh, Jean Denant, Quentin Armand, Alejandra Laviada, Mauro Cerqueira, Raul Hevia, Jonathas de Andrade, André Guedes (gasworks), Wind Ferreira (Palais de Tokyo), Sergi Botella, Mariana Zamarbide (Hangar).

[10] Bruno Latour, "Can We Get Our Materialism Back, Please?" *Isis*, vol. 98, no. 1 (March 2007): 138-142.

[11] Albena Yaneva, "When a Bus Met a Museum: Following Artists, Curators and Workers in Art Installation," *Museum and Society*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Nov 2003).

[12] Albena Yaneva, "When a Bus Met a Museum: Following Artists, Curators and Workers in Art Installation," *Museum and Society*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Nov 2003): 117.

[13] Albena Yaneva, 118.

[14] Hal Foster, "Precarious: Hal Foster on the art of the decade," *ArtForum International* (December 2009).

[15] Albena Yaneva, 122.

[16] Albena Yaneva, 125-126.

[17] John Law, *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*, (London: Routledge, 2004).

[18] Bruno Latour, "Can We Get Our Materialism Back, Please?" 139.

[19] Nina Montmann, *Opacity: current considerations on art institutions and the economy of desire*, in Nina Montmann, (ed.) *Art and its institutions: current conflicts, critique and collaborations,* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2006), 100.

[20] Bruno Latour, 141.

[21] Wanda J. Orlikowski, "Material Works: Exploring the Situated Entanglement of Technological Performativity and Human Agency," *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2005): 185.

[22] Wanda J. Orlikowski, "Material Knowing," 2.

[23] Bruno Latour, "Can We Get Our Materialism Back, Please?" 142.

[24] The Serpentine Summer Pavilion is an annual project held since 2000 by the Serpentine gallery in London, which involves the construction of an ephemeral pavilion by leading international architects or artists, such as Rem Koolhaas, Siza Vieira/Souto de Moura, Sanaa, or Peter Zumthor.

Inês Moreira, "Temporada de Pavilhões: Londres, Verão de 2008" *Artecapital* (11 August 2008) [http://www.artecapital.net/perspectivas.php?ref=74] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[25] Maison Tropicale was exhibited as extension at Tate Modern of the exhibition "Jean Prouvé – The Poetics of the Technical Object" held at the Design Museum in London in spring 2008.

[26] As an example of a still motion video see the Pavilion by Frank Gehry filmed and edited by Ben Magahy and James Simpson, Accompanied by Frank's Build, 2008, by Simon Fisher Turner, a composition produced by randomly recording the construction of the Pavilion:
"Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2008, designed by Frank Gehry," *YouTube* (18 July 2008) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANuimkRfGiw] (Accessed 10 January 2012).

[27] As an example of a more complex video production on the making of an art installation, see the video Tape Installation by Numen/ForUse [www.numen.eu]: "Tape Berlin / Tempelhof / DMY / Making of." *YouTube* (16 June 2010) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjOIliP0yno&feature=player_detailpage] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[28] Uglycute project: Modern Talking, Galleri Enkehuset Stockholm 2003. "A styrofoam building material was used to create a flexible exhibition architecture that was easily rebuilt in less than an hour. And maybe most important of all, doing it was great fun". Uglycute, "Modern Talking":
[http://www.uglycute.com/architecture-environments/galleri-enkehuset-stockholm] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[29] Uglycute is a Swedish collective of designers and architects based in Stockholm, formed in 1999. Their website thoroughly documents most of their body of work: [http://www.uglycute.com].

[30] See Pedro Bandeira, "Entrada de Emergência"
[http://pedrobandeira.info/#667150/Entrada-de-Emerg-ncia-2005] (accessed 10 January 2012).
"Entrada de Emergência," *Direcção Geral das Artes*
[http://www.dgartes.pt/bia2005/representacao_portuguesa.htm] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[31] Pedro Bandeira is a Portuguese architect/artist based in Porto, Portugal. His work explores Situationist International thinking and visual heritage in ironic projects, mostly through ephemeral installations and the production of images and photography: [http://www.pedrobandeira.info].

[32] The phenomenon of Brazilian immigration has diminished and many immigrants returned to Brazil, as a reflection of the European financial crisis and growth in the Brazilian economy.

[33] Folke Koebberling and Martin Kaltwasser. "Basutoffzentrum":
[http://www.koebberlingkaltwasser.de/baustoffzentrum.html] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[34] For more on Folke Koebberling and Martin Kaltwasser's body of work, cf.
[http://www.koebberlingkaltwasser.de]

Chapter 4 : CONVERSATIONAL SPACE
Cabanon by Le Corbusier
Petit Cabanon: on a conversational project

Chapter 4´s title, Conversational Space, addresses the constitution of space through informal conversational practice. A physical gathering between two or more people generates spaces defined by atmosphericities. Following the ideas of Henri Lefebvre on the production of space, there are relational and social modes of producing space through practice, which are not limited by physical dimension, to communication nor to formal ceremonial verbal presentations. The assertion that conversation creates space is a side-step from most dominant concerns in art, and in architecture. Though, there is a specific field within visual and performative art exploring relationality, processuality or, our main focus, conversationality as artistic productions[1].

Informal and everyday activities evolve around spaces of conversation: the coffee table, the domestic kitchen table, the workers tables at canteens and the contractor´s table at buildings site. In Riff-Raff film, Ken Loach[2] presents construction sites occupied by workers, their struggles and the different inhabitations; besides the spaces, the film is created by the atmosphericities of voices, workers conversations, struggles and discussions. Contractor´s tables, deeply informs our enactment of conversational spaces: the multi-task contractor´s table offers an informal, oral, and performative entrance into building sites, through the performances of spaces. The table allows distributing pay checks, to fire and hire, to holds projects, keys and instruments, to have lunch, to have a nap or a beer. A quick conversation standing around the table may help to unfold a project, to negotiate solutions, or to detain it: the table holds the conversation and it creates diverse spheres within a building site.

Chapter 4 explores the potentiality of conversation as ephemeral space, to understand (architectural) constructions as performed by conversation and, our main objective, to set the grounds to explore conversationality in relation to curating space. It unravels a first propelling text, and another one with the last conclusions, from a curatorial project called *Petit CABANON*" run in a small experimental space in Portugal[3] for two years. The actual propeller of Petit Cabanon curatorial project is the assemblage of building, construction and the many appropriations of the small Cabanon built by Le Corbusier at Cap-Martin. The first part of chapter 4 is a research *on* space, and it finds how a situated author, Le Corbusier, has processualy built a space and collectively performed a conversational space.

Cabanon´s odd and minor histories and oral practices have triggered the curatorial project presented in section 2, taking its name - Petit Cabanon - it evolved through an informal program with a range of activities. Exploring the notion of conversational space, the programme consisted of gatherings, conversations, events along five processual exhibitions

curated processualy. Unfold as a conversational space (as well as transformative and processual space) it lasted uninterruptedly for two years, performing several undoings to more ceremonious curating architecture. The texts reflects retrospectively and assumes a dialogic form, it is the (edited) transcription of a conversation between Inês Moreira (architect, curator) and Gonçalo Leite Velho (archeologist), it revisits Petit Cabanon[4], the space, and problematizes conversational spaces: from the ephemerality of spatial/material settings, the ephemerality of encounters, the questions of a participating audience, and it focuses the difficulties of archiving the event of conversation.

The three images above document a box with material samples of several scenographies developed at my platform, petit Cabanon. The group of photos is titled Cabanière and was shot by André Cepeda in 2009.

CABANON BY LE CORBUSIER

> "*Extérieurement elles semblent plus issues de l'univers prosaïque des loisirs populaires que d'une approche moderne et savante du projet architectural. (…) L'ensemble très contrasté de ces singularités produit des objets d'apparence peu explicite.* "[5] Bruno Chiambretto

Cabanon[6] was a simple wooden cabin built by Le Corbusier (LC) on the coast of Cap-Martin in the French Riviera as a holiday home, around 1950-1952[7]. Although at first glance it could be confused with an anonymous informal structure, or as a hut built with little wherewithal, the *Cabanon* is actually a small project built by and for LC in the golden age of the post-second world war. The cabin was positioned under the shadow of a great tree, in a small, narrow plot of land along a cliff top overlooking the bay, next to a simple restaurant. The site had dense vegetation and remarkable views over the Mediterranean Sea. The walls were made of timber, with a few openings and a sloped roof of corrugated iron. The interior was an open-plan space of less than 15 m2, creating an *existenzminimum* modulated by the metrics published by LC in his book "*Modulor*".

LC´s *Cabanon* is generally referred as a "1:1 scale prototype" due to its undeniable significance on the development of *Modulor*[8], and it is contextualized as a prototype for other influential productions. Some of the themes of this small building are shared by other of LC's buildings, either for experiments with technology (such as windows and ventilation) or the introduction of technical objects (like the Swedish industrial railway metal sink, or the introduction of nautical lamps found on the beach), or the formal language and composition of its interior (panelled wood, coloured surfaces and mirror reflections), or the introduction of visual and pictorial elements in the definition of the space itself.

It was built at a time of reconstruction and development in France, a phase of massive public demand and large-scale projects, which was the moment of ultimate confirmation for the heroic "Modernist Master". It is surprising to note that around the date he built the *petit Cabanon*, LC was involved in some of the most significant projects of his career: he was concluding the "*Unité d Habitation*" in Marseille, starting the design of the mythical church at Ronchamp, presenting the famous drawings of the sculpture "*La Main Ouverte*", and initiating plans for the city of Chandigarh, and also publishing the book "*Modulor*" and exhibiting at MoMA in New York.

The History of Architecture very briefly addresses the *Cabanon* and its influence as a piece of work beyond *Modulor*. LC´s *Cabanon* is considered a "minor" piece in the History of Architecture, hidden in the extensive lists of the great "Modernist Master's" architectural

production. Additionally, the very word "hut" and its various translations ("cottage", "cabin", "shed") minimized its importance and, this chosen vocabulary referred to *Cabanon* as an appendix, or secondary work.

I am interested in two particular aspects of this building: *Cabanon* created a "space of contradiction" with the *Modern Work of Art* (represented by LC), that unfolds out of the everyday practices of architectural space. With *Cabanon*, LC introduced us to an illegal construction with improvised building procedures and non-typical uses of space that were based on the fragility of everyday spontaneous uses. LC outlined and demonstrated the modern theories of Architecture, and yet he built and inhabited it with an anonymous and slightly undisciplined approach that counter-acted the rigidity and functionality of his modern design methods and architectural expertise.

Cabanon invites us to revisit the notion of *minority* as according to Deleuze and Guattari, as it opens up an oblique entry point to architecture, repositions the heroicness of a Great Modernist, the centrality of a piece, and, more importantly, provides a critical tool to understand the micro-stories, economies and effects beyond the architectural space, as it brings forth notions of improvisation, appropriation and performativity in the production of space.
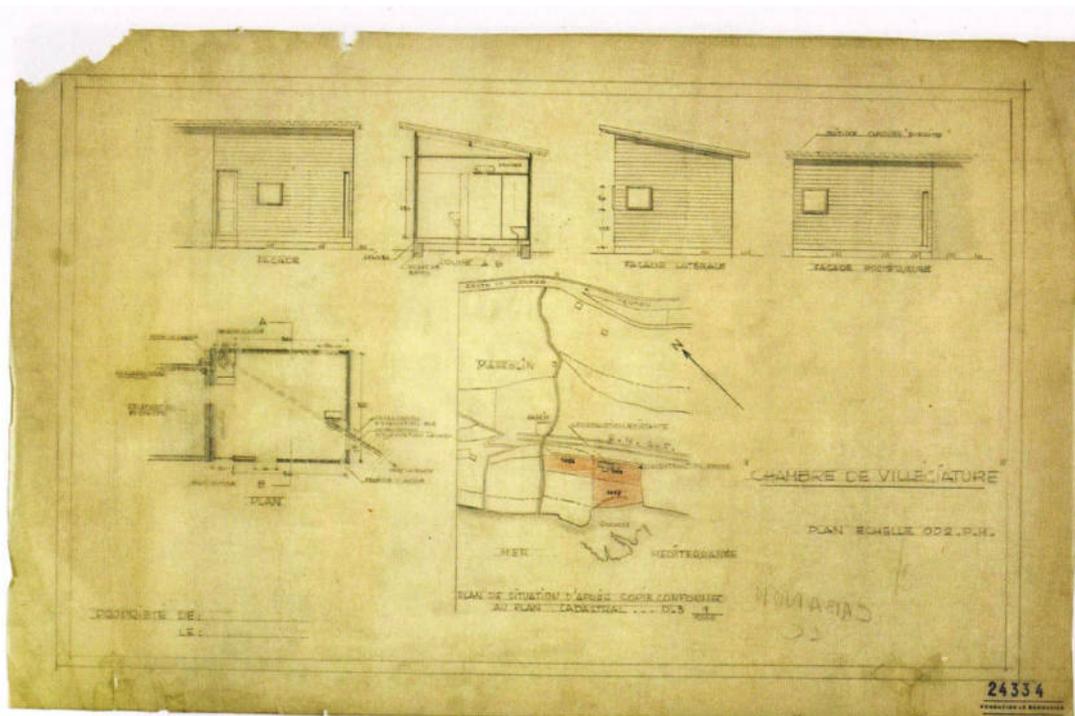
Cabanon? (A few situated and non-extensive micro stories) [9]

The design process of *Cabanon* is synthesized in a brief written passage which relates both its affective and functionalist beginnings: Yvonne, his wife who had been born in the Cote d'Azur, and to whom it was dedicated as the couple's summer retreat, and the *Modulor*, whose design effectiveness would ensure the architectural solution. From the original text:

> *"Le 30 Décembre 1951, sur un coin de table, dans un petit casse-croûte de la Côte d'Azur, j'ai dessiné pour en faire cadeau à ma femme, pour son anniversaire, les plans d'un 'cabanon' que je construisis l'année suivante sur un bout de rocher battu par les flots. Ces plans (les miens) ont été faisan trois quarts d'heure. Ils sont définitifs: rien s'à changé; le cabanon a été réalisé sur la mise au propre de ces dessins. Grâce au modulor, la sécurité de la de marche fut totale. L'intérieur contient toutes les gentillesses quel'architecte peut sortir de son sac."*[10]

The story is situated in relational context: his affection for the Mediterranean Sea; the micro-geography of the Cote d'Azur which was Yvonne´s birth place, and their friendship with an unusual group of companions. Both situations (geographic and human) defined the location of *Cabanon*. In his work LC glorified greenery, sun, light, and air and related it to his identity: *"En tout je me sens Méditerranéen. Mes détentes, mes sources, il faut aussi les trouver dans la mer que je n'ai jamais cessé d'aimer."*[11] The *Cabanon* summarizes the major principles of a modern piece, it reveals the author's personal life, and it is the fruit of (and the place in which he continued to develop) his *recherche patiente*.

Since the 30's, he had been a guest at *Villa* E-1027 in Cap-Martin, owned by Jean Badovici, the publisher and founder of the magazine *L'Architecture Vivante*. In 1927 Badovici and Eileen Gray had designed this famous house on the rocks washed by the sea, known as the "*White House*". It was a meeting point for the Parisien avant-garde, and it "*marque un jalons dans*

l'histoire de l'architecture moderne; lieu de convergence et de confrontations entre plusieurs thèmes clés de la modernité — espace minimal et déploiement du corps dans l'espace, mediterranéitée, purisme, mise en ouvre dés Technologies avancées..."[12]. LC visited the house and developed an obsessive relation with it and its owners, and around 1938, eventually appropriated the walls of the house with a set of controversial murals depicting the women of Algiers, which was an allusion to Eileen Gray´s homosexuality. This act led to a breakdown of their controversial friendship, but not to his relationship with the house, whose design was assumed to be LC´s, and which he would not confirm as Eileen Gray´s.[13]

Conscious of the qualities of the *Villa* and the unique conditions of the landscape, in 1949 LC invited Josep-Louis Sert and Paul Lester Wiener and their workers to occupy the house during the summer, so as to draw up the urban plans for Bogota. As there was a large group to host and feed, the meals were organized in a small picturesque restaurant located in its backyard: the *guinguette*[14]the *Étoile de Mer*. The small restaurant had a large balcony overlooking the sea, and the *Villa* was covered with vegetation and decorated with marine themes. From that summer on, LC and Robert Rebutato[15], the restaurant owner and retired plumber formed a great and lasting friendship.

With a shared fascination for the sea and for coastal leisure activities, Rebutato and LC saw their interests converge: LC had meant to plan the construction for the coast, preventing the phenomenon of "*cabanière*", the self-building that in the 50´s had begun to invade the coastline. Robert Rebutato had wanted to build a series of bungalows to accommodate summer holiday-makers on his plot of land, a "*version populaire du phénomène de la double residentialité*",[16] that was fashionable in the late 40's. LC had imagined plans to order the ongoing informal process of the "*cabanniére*" along the coast, to which, ironically, he was about to enter. His friendship with Rebutato is a central episode in the micro-story of

Cabanon: the hut is (still) located in the garden of the restaurant, an unusually informal "occupation" of property, managed in a co-ownership system. On the basis of a mutual agreement, while Rebutato served meals; LC researched and designed a plan to build a small bungalow hotel on his land. After several proposals, advances and setbacks, the construction of the complex came in 1957, when LC funded a modest five dwelling structure, and thus paid for his share of the land. The unusual process of sharing land ownership and domestic tasks between client-architect-developer-builder can be explained through the pleasure and delights of everyday life in this place.

The episodes and anecdotes around *Cabanon* are what release it from the chains of the History of Modern Architecture. This leads one to repeat Bruno Chiambretto's question: "*LC ne succomberait-il pas aussi à cet attrait des avant-gardes pour le 'populaire', pour toutes ces sociétés en marge, dont les lieux d'élection sont au détour de la 'grande ville'* "?[17]

The family of Le Corbusier, with parents and brother, in a picnic under a tree, at the turn of the century.

Le Corbusier and his wife, Beth Gallis, having a conversation with friends at the Guingette de Rebutato.

What did they do at Cabanon?
It is an interesting point, because we'll never know...
…but one can always conjecture.

The *Cabanon* is a peculiar, contradictory and complex structure. Its most visible contradiction is physical/spatial and lies in the contrast between a stringent interior, and its anonymous and commonplace exterior. As a "luxury cabin", the inside has been widely disseminated, either in photographs or reproductions of drawings and sketches from LC's original notebooks, or in academic reconstruction studies developed by historians and students. Its interior is an *open space* dedicated to private functions (rest, hygiene, reflection), it has little furniture, which consists of two orthogonally arranged beds (separated by a table), a large closet, a "hygiene"

column with a sink and shelves, and a toilet that are only separated by a red velvet curtain. The only non-orthogonal element is a table above a bookcase and two stools for work, reflection and meditation.

The contradiction between the interior/exterior was what instigated a curatorial reconstruction in 2006. Exalting in the beauty of space and the potential reproducibility of the module, in 2006 Cassina (the company that owns the design patents of several modernist masters) rebuilt a *Cabanon* to show at a public exhibition at the Milan Triennial[18]. The exterior, spatial modulation, furniture, materials, windows and accessories were faithfully reproduced. Filippo Alison, the curator of the reconstruction, highlighted the importance of the interior: "*what is lacking on the exterior is made up for abundantly in the interior with its surprising attention to the art of living".[19]* The reconstruction underlines the design and the excellence of the industrial materials.

This reconstruction also helps to support the inter-connection of interior/exterior, to dismiss its exterior reduces the building to a "1:1 scale prototype", and erases the potential of its uses and stories. I believe that the exterior is a fundamental element of understanding the hut, and is lacking in Cassina´s reconstruction. The exterior of *Cabanon* cannot be understood as a "non-essential element" in its conception, as the curator suggested. And neither can the *art of living* be reduced to the 'sophistication' of its interiors.

The argument and reading I propose here is that its *art of living* was not only limited to the quality of the design, but also involved its "spatial *performance*" and the collage of its everyday practices. Renato de Fusco supports and extends this atmosphere: (…) *the singularity of the Cabanon lies in that, in addition to the categories of the useful and the futile, there is a third*

category: an example of this is the best part of this interior, the large mural which is traced with a kind of I-couldn't-care-less attitude: and in the middle of which there is a door that leads through to the adjoining Étoile de Mer restaurant, where the great architect used to take his meals."[20]

Organically, *Étoile de Mer* can be understood as a kind of living room/dining room/balcony/bar extension of the *Cabanon*. They are positioned next to each other and there is a passage between them, as the *Cabano*n had no kitchen but merely a doorway to the restaurant (a radical version of a "serving hole"), where they dined and had group meetings. *Cabanon* was protected under a large carob tree, on a narrow piece of land, facing south, and extended its space outdoors.

Over time, LC continued to invade and occupy freely the grounds across the plot, a technique popularly known as "*avancée*", a mode of "*croissances au vage du cabanon qui, dans de multiples variantes, consiste à étendre la construction, ou son territoire, par à-coups successifs (les avancées) et assez discrètement pour que les autorités ne les remarquent pas, ou bien trop tard.*"[21] The external surrounding elements are part of *Cabanon*. The restaurant, garden, tree, and sea are not divisible, should the abolition of external space reduce this work to a decontextualized container made of industrial/reproducible materials, erasing the Mediterranean character and the improvisation involved in the practice/use.

Finding the place for his *recherche patiente* to be insufficient, in 1954 LC extended it with a practical solution by erecting a 2x3m green painted wooden shed at the opposite end of the plot The two roofed structures (cabin and shed) contained two functional areas, one for living, and another for working. The space between the two buildings was to be appropriated as a "lounge" and its uses changed day by day, in a hybrid interior/exterior space covered with vegetation. Under the tree, LC set up a small writing table and chair overlooking the bay of Monaco, where he could draw and paint. . He called it his "*salon d'été*": when the work shed became too hot, and the *Cabanon* too small, the "*salon d'été*" would offer him the space he

needed. The outdoor shower, a delight for nudist/naturist practices, complemented the setting, and definitively reversed the notions of public and private space.

Gradually, the house extended through the garden towards the rocks and sea, and included the *Etoile de Mer*, its balcony, and all the surrounding land. If one looks at the whole of the structures and their organization (from the appropriation and articulation of the terrain to the inventive improvisation around the free space to the organic and affective relations between the different buildings and their outside) one can take it in as a free space, a not walled non-essential element, though with restricted access.

The aim of this study is neither to reconstruct completely nor to scrutinize in detail all the activities that took place. We know that some of LC's works were conceived, designed or developed there, and that there were several work and personal relations that were linked and formed in the pleasing setting. According to one of his friends: "(…) *at Cap-Martin Le Corbusier could become the noble savage: sunbathing, swimming, painting, entertaining informally. His friends remember him in shorts, a Pastis in one hand, perhaps enthusing about the limpid undersea world he had seen that morning, telling preposterous stories or arguing some fine point of the Modulor. At Cap-Martin the bitterness and defenses were laid aside in favour of the art of friendship.*"[22]

LC told Brassai in an interview: *"Je me sens si bien dans mon cabanon que, sans doute, je terminerai ma vie ici."*[23] To bring the Mediterranean myth to a close, LC died during a swim in the sea in front of the house on 27 August 1965. Yvonne Gallis had died on 5 October 1957 in Paris. Both Yvonne and LC were buried at Cap-Martin. The *Cabanon* remains in Cap-Martin and continues to provoke.
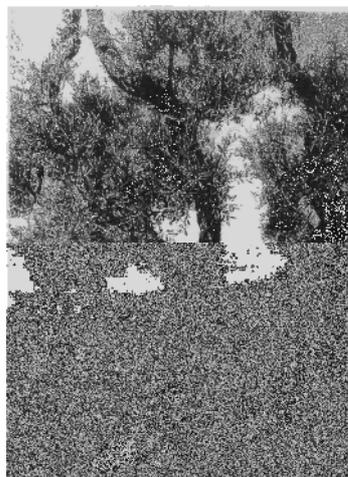
What happened at Cabanon?
It now seems a confined and distant question.
Let's consider, instead, what did Cabanon generate?

Cabanon's disc
concerting micro-stories*, and the contradictions between the universal prototype designed by an architect and the informality and spontaneity of its residents, together challenge a shift from focussing on the reconstruction of the building (whether in the field of architectural history, of biography, or strictly interior design), to engaging with a broader conversation on its potentiality.

At Cap-Martin, we find a parasitic building, extended over a complex and convoluted piece of land, whose representation, language and social conventions have been suspended in favour of spontaneous and improvisational practices. The *Cabanon* brings the fragile concepts of spontaneity and improvisation to the field of modern architecture and design. The idea of spontaneity is beyond the project and the *modern design*; it corresponds "*first of all to a 'practice' of building holiday homes rather than a specific formal object. And it is this 'practice' that was performed by Le Corbusier*."[24]

I believe that *Cabanon* is LC *becoming minor*: through the stories, uses and affects in/on *Cabanon*, his authorship became eroded through the everyday and non-representational practices performed in/close to this small hut. His *becoming minor* was performed through "*cabaniére*", a twice processual *practice*: it refers both to the process of building additions/annexes, and it refers to the possibilities created through its *performance*. The life and work, context and irreproducibility, and history and orality, became inseparable elements that were essential to the lives of LC and Gallis, and to the *performance* of the case study. Prelorenzo evokes the characteristics of the practices of the seasonal holiday-makers: "(…) *the notion of the cabanon does not hark back to an architectural typology, to an officialised programme or to canonic forms (…) the mark of distinction of the cabanon is that it is first of all a way of living, a 'spontaneous' way of occupying both closed and open spaces*."[25]

At *Cabanon*, one can identify a *performativity* of space and time in the micro-stories of construction, the uses and the "being in common" that produced it and kept it from the norms of universalizing modern doctrines. From a modern perspective, this building is an isolated exception to be separated from the work of the architect, *"this way of living did not seem to be an intrinsic part of his doctrine, in as much as it was part of his private, personal life, his own*

context with its own poetry, things that were not to be reproduced"[26]. *Cabanon* is a physical structure, expanded twofold through the modes of its *performance* i: the organic exchange of its functional uses, and the engagement in discursive and relational spaces.

There needs to be a shift from the two extreme interpretations of informality and architecture: a direct interpretation of architecture (with *Cabanon*, LC would displace the *design of modern architecture* to the *performance of modern architecture*) an interesting, yet over-ambitious and speculative, hypothesis. The second direction is a literal reading of these *practices* that would entail advocating self-construction, enhancing contingency, context, improvisation and the work involved in their materialization. This second hypothesis would distort the origins of the construction and would undervalue the complex issues behind self-construction. It is, nevertheless, interesting to note that it corresponds to numerous examples of spontaneous urbanization as an ordinary phenomenon to suppress basic housing needs.

The notion of *situation*, in the critical methodology that Haraway calls *"situated knowledge",*[27] brings an altered centrality to the house. If our knowledge is situated, localized and born from sets of stories, we can then consider that "*cabaniére*" is a specific situated practice of space, extending the architecture and physical enclosure through manifold *performances*. Therefore, in addition to strictly biographical anecdotes (LC's holidays), the notion of situated knowledge and its particularities also expand the understanding of an architect's work and the practices of space.

The modality of construction corresponds to the concept of *work or fabrication* as defined by Hannah Arendt[28] — the human operation on the natural creates an artificial world. In addition to its product, it potentiates the field of *action*[29], human activity through the plurality of singular beings, not mediated by objects, and from whose material expression physical spaces take shape. Beyond the immediacy of the "work" involved in construction for basic needs (as in many self-built settlements, hybrid constructions, illegal occupations, imaginative businesses and negotiations at the limits of legality), *work or fabrication* generates unusual forms of public space and informal meeting places. These have the capability to generate other, more informal modalities of *public spaces* that architectural design cannot produce. *Cabanon* is both a formal shelter and informal gathering space.

A dissident within the group of Parisian *intelligentsia* gathered at the *Villa* E-1027 *salon "d'été"*, LC felt compelled to create another space, one that was expounded on the open air,

the restaurant, the terrace, and the beach. There he held his *recherche patiente*, and hosted hedonistic activities, discussions and gatherings and meetings with friends during the summer. By considering *Cabanon* as a strict "design project", it was kept in a controversial limbo between the precious design module and the picturesque micro-history/geography of its author. It is precisely this conjunction of object and practices that allows the notion of *architectural object*, to be relocated as a relational space.

Cabanon generated two important aspects: the processual nature of its practices, and the enunciative values (and non-representational) of a *minor piece*. First, it establishes a simple practice of space; LC used the modern and illustrated theory of architecture, but inhabited it with a disciplined and almost anonymous approach. It introduced modern architecture within the practices of a non-typical occupation of space based on the fragility of everyday uses and spontaneous practices, disrupting the modern functionality of a house as a "machine for living". It reorganizes functions and activities through improvisation, extending outwards to the garden and the shed, and it is an inventive system of land ownership, resulting from an exchange of services for private ownership. This architecture is intangible and fluid, based on gestures, use, and improvisation, and producing a convivial conflict with the Modern Architectural space (disembodying LC himself).

Furthermore, I see this secondary work by LC as a figuration that condenses several contradictory aspects of his heroic work and life. Apparently anecdotal, futile and secondary, the hut is a self-critical escape for the Modern superhero, through the occupation of a small resonant box. I see in *Cabanon* a clearly stated *becoming-minor* of his work, in the same sense that Deleuze and Guattari also made statements on the literature of Kafka. It involuntarily causes deterritorialization of a dominant language: using an erudite language (the *Modulor* and Modern Architecture) LC performs and condenses it and develops a project which is not representational but performable. *Cabanon* is the "prototype *Modulor*", a tool to rationalize architecture that is tangentially involved in the inscription of the modern language and history of modern architecture. Tangentially, it also has the potential to enunciate another minor collective. It quietly expresses the popular French "*cabaniére*" of the coast by the petty bourgeoisie, which occurred simultaneously without architectural plans or recognizable language, or any special protagonist, and was organized by common practices of self-building, advancing over the land, in a vernacular connection with the outside. It is a micro-politics: converging a desire for space and a constitutive practice of space. Its *becoming minor* asserts

the urge to build, occupy and informally inhabit green and natural spaces as an escape from the suffocation of modern cities, and LC was one of the mentors of this.

C*abanon* was a relational space that wove a fragile and ephemeral spatiality based on what I believe to be improvisation and conversationality. To answer my own question "***What was Cabanon generating?***" this small modernist icon generated a relational and processual modality of space production and inhabitation, and expanded the notion of architectural object. *Cabanon* was a gathering and debating place where the simple construction articulated the platform for intimate conversations and material practices. It resulted from (and was founded on) a set of informal circumstances that empowered what an encounter can be, from the situated geography that generated it and included the place, the materials, the climate, and its uses, discourse and simple pleasant conversation.

As I have already suggested in this text, a critical reading of micro-stories undoes the objectuality and dominance of representation. I would like to posit a position from which to curate *Cabanon* that is different from Cassina´s reconstruction model. *Cabanon* is a building, a relational platform, a conversational space, and therefore, *Cabanon* cannot be reduced to the design of its interior. An oblique perspective of the secondary and the minor in architectural history shows "*cabaniére*" as a mode of practice in, on, and through space. In a similar fashion to Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour rethinking architecture in "*Learning from Las Vegas*"[30], I believe that the anecdotes and affects around this small cabin came to rearticulate a performative modality of writing and curating architectural objects which values performativity, conversationality and improvisation as relational modes of research on space.

[1] Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community + Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley, California / London: University of California Press, 2004).

[2] Riff-raff follows workers performing everyday lives through the city, the building site they work on, their squats, and their political preoccupations. *Riff-Raff* by Ken Loach filmed in 1991, approaching social and economic problems of workers in Britain, the tensions between project/investment and labour/class.

[3] *Petit CABANON* is an experimental curatorial project/space that I have run for two years (from May 2007 to 2009) in a small shop in the art gallery district of Miguel Bombarda, Porto, Portugal.

[4] The conversation was recorded and presented as a sound piece accompanying the installation "*petit CABANON (private version for Wyspa)*" (2011)*, as part of* "*Labour and Leisure*" exhibition, in the context of Alternativa Visual Art Festival 2012 was curated by Aneta Szylak at Hall 90B, Wyspa Institute of Art, in Gdansk, Poland. The spatial installation consisting of the reconstruction of the two sheds that Le Corbusier had: *CABANON* + the Work Shed. The two buildings were playfully constructed with cardboard bricks. The soundscape inside the sheds has evocatively reproduced a conversational summer atmosphere as the ones of Le Corbusier, Eileen Gray and their friends.

[5] Bruno Chiambretto, *Le Corbusier à Cap-Martin* (Marseille: Parenthèses, 1987), 7.

[6] A preliminary, and shorter, version of this text was published in Portuguese language. Inês Moreira, *Opúsculo no. 7: Petit Cabanon.*, (Porto: Dafne Editora, 2007) [http://www.dafne.com.pt/pdf_upload/opusculo_7.pdf] (accessed 10 January 2012). The text has a double origin: it is part of the catalogue of the installation Petit Cabanon, which opened an independent exhibition and gathering space dedicated to Architecture and Visual Culture, at Rua de Miguel Bombarda, Porto, Portugal. [http://www.petitcabanon.blogspot.com], and it was meant for printed dissemination in a collection of short essays (though it exists only on-line in a shorter .pdf format).

[7] The construction date is hard to precise. If the official biography written by Fondation Le Corbusier refers the year of 1950, other bibliography divides it in two dates: sketch at 30 de December 1951, and construction in the year of 1952. Cf. Fondation Le Corbusier [http://www.fondationlecorbusier.asso.fr] and e Jean Petit, *Le Corbusier Lui-même* (Genève: Rousseau, 1970), 105–113.

[8] About the details and importance of the interior design of *cabanon* see the catalogue of the reconstruction by Cassina at Milan Triennale in 2006. Cf. Filippo Alison, *Le Corbusier: L'interno del Cabanon / Interior of Cabanon, Le Corbusier 1952 – Cassina 2006* (Milano: Electa/Mondadori/La Triennale di Milano, 2006).

[9] An exhaustive history focused on the architecture of *cabanon* would concern the relations of the projects *Roq* et *Rob*, and the ulterior *Unités de Camping* and *Unités de Vacances* that Le Corbusier developed between the years 1950/55. These projects would concern the search for private clients/developers to explore the coastal tourism, as well as the approach to the central administration and public investment for the regulation of the territory. Our approach in the context of this research, concerns a smaller more relational scale.

[10] Petit, *Le Corbusier Lui-même*, 112.

[11] Le Corbusier, July 1965, quoted at Varoujan, Arzoumanian and Patrick Bardou, coord.ed., *Le Corbusier et la Méditerranée* (Marseille: Parenthèses-Musées de Marseille, 1987), 7.

[12] Chiambretto, *Le Corbusier à Cap-Martin*, 11. The Villa *E* 1027 was abandoned for years, and its reconstruction took place in the year 2007.

[13] About the relation of LC to Villa E-1027 see Beatriz Colomina, "Battle Lines: E.1027," in Francesca Hughes, ed., *The Architect: Reconstructing her Practice* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 2-25.

[14] The *guinguette* was a kind of popular restaurant extinct in the 60´s, where simple entertainment events took place – popular music, dance and its terraces were used for conviviality in the outside.

[15] Between World War I and World War II, a similar phenomenon took place in the occupation of the coast for summer activities, which disappeared during World War II for clear economic and security reasons. As a curiosity, the lyrics of a popular music of the 30´s, by Vincent Sotto, which subjects correspond with the same as *cabanon*, Cf. [http://www.paroles.net]:

"*Un petit cabanon pas plus grand qu'un mouchoir de poche,*

Un petit cabanon au bord de la mer sur des roches

Pour vivre qu'il fait bon quand la blague à son toit accroche

Son pavillon joyeux qui claque dans notre ciel bleu

A l'intérieur, sur un' table, c'est tout oui sur cett' table"

[16] Chiambretto, *Le Corbusier à Cap-Martin*, 12.

[17] Chiambretto, 13.

[18] About the replica see Alison, *op. cit.* A critical analysis of this reconstruction could trigger a certain discussion that took place in the past around the reconstruction of Mies Van der Rohe pavilion, in Barcelona, in the years of de 1983/86.

[19] Filippo Alison, "Spirituality and Poetics" in Alison, *Le Corbusier: L'interno del Cabanon*, 19-28.

[20] Renato de Fusco, "The original Project and the reconstruction by Cassina" in Alison, *Le Corbusier: L'interno del Cabanon*, 32.

[21] Chiambretto, *Le Corbusier à Cap-Martin*, 79.

[22] William Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1986), 169.

[23] Le Corbusier quoted by Brassai, *Les artistes de ma vie,* Paris, Denöel, 1982, 84-91, quoted by Chiambretto, *Le Corbusier à Cap-Martin*, 5.

[24] Chiambretto, 5*.*

[25] *"Not only for the fact that architects were never all that much interested in the news-stalls, garden sheds, beach huts and building-site shelters that the type of construction calls to mind."* Claude Prelorenzo, "Interiors exteriors" in Alison, *Le Corbusier: L'interno del Cabanon*, 50.

[26] Prelorenzo, 52.

[27] Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_ OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 33.

[28] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1998), 175-247.

[29] *Arendt.* Action is the title of Chapter 5 – Action – (175-247), devoted to such concept.

[30] Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1972) revised 1977.

PETIT CABANON: ON A CONVERSATIONAL PROJECT

Inês Moreira in conversation with Gonçalo Leite Velho[1]

Architect: Our conversation is taking place at the moment in which *Petit Cabanon[2]* is problematizing two or three issues which have become more and more evident throughout the curatorial project and now need conceptualization so as to conclude what has been an experiment. The first issue regards curating architecture and space beyond disciplinary (and representational) limits, the second is on performing space as a mode of curatorial practice, and finally there is the question of archiving work (and exposing the archive) of an ephemeral and processual project. I should clarify that *CABANON* has three instantiations: *Cabanon* was Le Corbusier´s hut in the south of France, a unique cabin where Le Corbusier developed his *recherche patiente* and where he spent his summers. The second instantiation is my *Petit Cabanon*, an experimental curatorial project/space that I have run for two years (from May 2007 to 2009) in a small shop in the art gallery district of Porto, Portugal. The project took off from Le Corbusier's *Cabanon* and enacted it through small temporary events, such as gatherings and conversations, which were called "*Conversation Pieces*" (2007) in the tradition of British painting and of some recent art project spaces[3], like the Metropolitan Complex[4], and that performed the concept of *cabaniére* through a relational space[5] (an attempt to steer a radical curatorial gesture away from architectural objectuality). The third instantiation will be presented as a space and sound installation in the exhibition "*Labour and Leisure*" in Gdansk, under the title "*Petit Cabanon (private version for Wyspa)*", consisting of two 1:1 scale replicas of Le Corbusier's structures (his hut and the shed in the garden). The three instantiations of *Cabanon* are convoluted and intricate: one is the actual building and its stories; the second involves the processual practice of a spatial concept; the third is an installation for an exhibition. The latter, which exhibited *Petit Cabanon* as a space and referred to its archive, became the late synthesis of the project in Porto. So, the matter at hand today is to consider the possibilities of performing the archive of the "*Conversation Pieces*" and other events. The plan is to think aloud, and to produce an audio file (mp3) to enact the spatial installation at the exhibition.

Archeologist: So, where should we start?

_tect: It may be useful, or atmospheric, to help to position this by relating a few of the stories and the practices at Le Corbusier´s *Cabanon*, its micro-politics and the micro-practices that

came about through the inhabitation of space[6]. His project, as I understand and theorize it[7], corresponds to the reversal of what a traditional architectural project is – which is a prediction by design of a future space. *Cabanon* was produced out of the practice of space and the enduring undoing of modern design by practice, and this made me think of how we live, inhabit and relate to an architectural piece[8]. Taken from this angle, *Cabanon* invites one to think of a project through its reversal – which is the approach I´ve taken in my curatorial project. It is more than just playing with notions of a "format", and I would like to test it in terms of archiving as well, visiting an archive through its reversal, not through its accumulation but through its process of making[9].

_logist: As an archeologist, it's hard to produce that reversal, but how are you thinking of proceeding with this conversation?

_tect: We are already proceeding. The fact that we feel like we're killing time having this conversation about the fact that someone else had the same sort of conversations in their leisure time during the summer which itself became the modality of relation for a set of conversations organized between different people as a curatorial project – this fact –, produces a sort of reenactment of both those places and their on-going conversations (*Cabanon* and *Petit Cabanon*). To have a relaxed conversation over a bank holiday, without knowing its result or its course is a discursive mode of practising space, it follows the same pattern that a group of people in Cap-Martin followed, with a gap of 60 years. In a way we are performing the archive… or the spatial concept.

_logist: Could it be possible that the spatial installation of *Petit Cabanon* that will be exhibited in Gdansk could become as virtual as this conversation, i.e., as ethereal as the recorded track of this conversation?

_tect: The installation for the "*Labour and Leisure*" exhibition is a kind of material archive of what the *Petit Cabanon* space was: in addition to its natural thematic connection with the statement of the exhibition, the installation has the anxiety of rendering both ephemeral experiments as materially visible and revisiting them as a space. The piling of boxes/bricks as a construction can be likened to the same obsession as that of archiving files, in a non-metaphorical sense[10]. The storage boxes are a material that has been used in other places, an exhibition space signed by *Petit Cabanon* (Rewind exhibition in France), and they therefore bring back to the present spaces which were relational and ephemeral (in Porto and Cap-Martin). Though the ephemeral *Cabanon* of Le Corbusier has survived time and has entered

history through text and image, its later heritage has happened through its "musealization"[11]; the *Petit Cabanon*/gallery was built out of transient Styrofoam, and could almost only survive in the memories of those who took part in it. It hardly exists as a material archive; somehow it was a project like an ephemeral conversation[12]. There was not much documentation produced (as a DIY structure), its minor program has no historical relevance as an exhibition space (it was an experiment and its relevance is processual), and its oddness as a cultural space for architecture and visual culture (on the outskirts of architecture, in a conversational curatorial practice) has rendered its records almost invisible[13]. The idea of the spatial installation for Gdansk was to bring it back from virtuality, and was an approach to the re-actualization of the material archive of relational spaces (*Cabanon* and *Petit Cabanon*). A sound record is ethereal, and so were these projects to some extent. Though now the issue is how to get it back to actualization.

_logist: And how about relationality and curating space, is it necessary to have a relational space in order to curate space? If we imagine that this conversation of ours is completely virtual and we do not need *Petit Cabanon* at all, or could it be that we are actually inside *Petit Cabanon*?

_tect: It's an interesting question, as it goes straight to the contradictions we can identify in a processual/experimental project after it finishes. The *Petit Cabanon* was a curatorial experiment on architecture through on-going conversational events, and it has evolved and matured over the last 4 years. So at the time of this conversation, there is a tangible difference between the endeavours of the relational space in Porto and its reappearance in materiality with the cardboard installation/exhibition in Gdansk. Over that period, it has become evident that the discursive and the spatial setting neither coincide nor depend on one another (contradicting even Heidegger's hut). While the project was born from the relatively literal objective similarities between a space/shop in a small shopping center, and the geometry and dimension of Le Corbusier's hut (which led to a first installation playing Le Corbusier's composition *Modulor* with Styrofoam) later on after playing with the potential of the space, its scenography and its installations, this "literality" of space and its inhabitation became less important, and eventually came to limit the possibilities of the project.

At some point, performing space became central to the project (and not only conversational or relational)[14]. The project played out the concept of *Cabanon* and the practice of *cabaniére*[15], and its change and evolution, like in the south of France. This transformation created a certain atmosphere around the conversations which became an extension of discursive space. Later,

physical space was made redundant in order to perform the relational project, and the potentialities of space were exhausted. Starting from an architectural object, the relational project performed the space through relational practices, and eventually did away with the need for space. While visiting the original hut in Cap-Martin was never necessary to depict the concept, the shop in Porto was fully performed to exhaustion (and has been now taken over by a commercial art gallery) and later ceased to exist as a place. Concept and discourse overcame the physicality of place, the materiality of the hut, and the dimensions and contexts. This leads us eventually to the virtuality of a voice recording.

The project produced a process of curatorial grieving over architectural objects, and departed from a historical (ephemeral) architectural structure that today still exists after having been restored as a cultural artifact (heritage overcoming the natural obsolescence of summer cabins in the south of France). It went through the performative manifestation of an independent cultural/art project with a relational program, and then became active as a spatial concept and, as you have suggested, can now be performed through a conversation. What exists today is not the relational space as a place and object, but the relational space as a concept of space[16]. Therefore, getting back to your question, the relational space is no longer necessary, but it was fundamental as a process. Today, curating *Cabanon* as a concept differs significantly from its objectual origin and from conservation, it skirts around the ideas of curating architecture, of the architect as author[17] and of the architectural piece, towards the processual and the discursive, towards a mode for a conversational curatorial project.

_logist: Returning to the notion of archive, which is central to our conversation; in the context of the exhibition in Gdansk, would you consider the archive to be the re-activation of those conversations in the context of the exhibition, involving the audience and the people from Gdansk, or do you consider that the archive of the project is the group of soundtracks and records that you have in Porto? Which of these would be the closer to the archive of *Petit Cabanon*?

_tect: The existing audiovisual archive is a heteroclite set of videotapes, soundtracks and DVDs, stored in a small wooden box and is more a varied collection of information and records than an archive. These bits have no systematic, scientific or categorized order, they are a small collection of elements that remain, and are evidence of some of the events, and as a material record of poor DIY quality (one should remember that there was no budget involved and no team, and the "archive" reflects this). If we look at it from an historical perspective, the archive doesn´t correspond to the project, but it does perhaps mirror its production process: there is a

certain contingency, a certain scarcity and certain disentanglement. However, the relationality, the presence and the atmosphere of the space (conceptually scenographical), can´t actually be documented or translated into an archive.

_logist: How then can one approach the question of the "relational"? Would the presentation of the archive be the reenactment of the space through the conversations in the context of the exhibition in Poland, like a new program of conversations in the installation evoking the space? Or would the archive be presented as the playing of the previous, existing, conversations in your archive, playing in the installation as the re-enactment of *Petit Cabanon* through the sound recordings?

_tect: The act of programming a new set of conversations as the reenactment of *Petit Cabanon* would pervert the concept, and would exhaust it, topic, after topic, after topic. And though the notion of reenactment has considerable potential, I believe that the most accurate mode of presenting *Petit Cabanon* as an archive would be by participating (or taking part in a conversation), as opposed to planning/programming a new set of conversations. As opposed to the notion of programme, the notion of event is closer to cabaniére. As for curating/presenting the recordings in the archive of *Petit Cabanon* in a public exhibition, the possibility does not interest me as part of *Petit Cabanon*. I was actually invited in 2009 to curate/present the archive of *Petit Cabanon* at MEIAC (Museum in Spain), and while initially it seemed a good opportunity to present the work, after mulling it over, I turned the offer down, as the legitimising space of the museum didn´t seem conceptually aligned to a project that was exploring the event as such (and not as document). Although curating and playing the archive could have been interesting to a very specific audience, it would have become a hyper-convoluted exercise, playing out formats and reproducing past events, without producing anything new. So, from my perspective, the format wouldn´t have been appropriate.

Petit Cabanon was the period of gathering and participation, and a "tag" under which a set of past or future conversations could be announced (these were loose in terms of themes/topics). Additionally the events were private, and held behind closed-doors for those present. This meant that the notion of participation was diluted to the extent of not having a public. Everyone present was a participant, and this differed radically from a non-participating public, as well as differing radically from being played out in public (in front of an audience). A group of five or six people would gather and converse. And *Petit Cabanon* as a concept is active while it is acting; cabaniére is the construction advancing on the terrain, or as a relational space is produced by spatial practice. So, to program a new set of conversations (as

a future retrospective of *Petit Cabanon*), or to reenact the records and formats in the existing archive so as to bring it to a wider audience, are strategies that are conceptually distant from the modalities of curating that were developed at *Cabanon*. The only modality of archival presentation I can conceive of for *Cabanon* is processual and participatory: it is *Cabanon* while it is acting and inhabited, or its soundtrack while it is playing, or engaging a conversation from the middle, and not from a given topic or given role. (In this sense, maybe an archival exhibition of *Petit Cabanon* should be curated by someone else...)

_logist: How then can you make a *Petit Cabanon* in Gdansk? How can *Petit Cabanon* exist as an installation?

_tect: At its limit, the existence of *Petit Cabanon* in Gdansk is a form of the material archeology of *Cabanon*. Having it in Gdansk would only be possible as a residence, but even that residence would be a theatrical piece, as the *Petit CABANON* project has come to a close. Being in residence, producing *Cabanon* is forcing a concept to emerge from its own needs, and not from a set programme. How about gathering with people, or opportunities to share ideas and projects and different kinds of knowledge? It is different from programming a museum, a stage or other public space or building, which are spaces more eager to encounter the public. This is an experimental project that has spent two years convoluting and unfolding around issues of curating architecture and space.

_logist: I can understand that a residency would be the best method of producing it, and there is a certain theatrical aspect in being publicly exposed in a conversation, but it brings us to the question of what was happening in the space in Porto? Even the question of "*Leisure and Labour*", dealing with space to work and space to spend free-time, is grounded in the space of Miguel Bombarda, as the conversations were programmed and scheduled, and guests were invited, which brought a certain theatricality into the conversations. Was this theatricality assumed as such? How did you feel this exposure?

_tect: The project had different phases and theatricality was an issue in its early stages (while testing it and experimenting) as the programme followed the calendar of joint openings in the gallery districts. By organizing the conversations on the same afternoons as the openings (Saturdays), by combining the conversations with the program of gallery openings, the issue of participants' self-awareness became pertinent, as *Cabanon* was in a shop window and we were under public scrutiny. Taking part in an opening is a social event of exposure both to artwork, and to people, and this led to a certain self-representation and self-awareness of

those who took part in the events, and to the theatricality. After a couple of events, we shifted to holding them on working days, preferably in the late afternoons or in working hours, and this provided a more common-place setting for discussion and a greater "normality" in terms of the audience, as passers-by were not expecting to be surprised by a show in a window-shop. The theatricality of speaking in a window elevated the conversation to the status of an art piece, and this mined the notion of gathering in a *Cabanon*. (Another aspect to changing the schedule from art galleries was that Porto has a tradition of small independent art spaces that present young artists, and the project was commonly misread as one of those art-oriented spaces).

_logist: there is something about *Petit CABANON*, maybe because of its shop windows, which remind me of small radio stations based in shopping centers, as if *Cabanon* was one of these stations, but wasn't transmitting waves, a non-transmitting radio, but inside that space, in a mode of "*tertulia*" spirit. Was this happening?

_tect: I never thought of it like that, but in fact you're close to what happened there, the notion of a non-broadcast radio conversation. And at certain times the table and chairs were face to face, and there was a big hanging microphone in the middle (to record the conversation) that resembled the old radio stations, like the image on the Hans Ulrich Obrist interview book. The conversations took place in a closed room, and were only for those who were present. Back then, the inconsequence of the mode of conversation seemed interesting, and seemed similar enough to leisure time, and to the setting of *Cabanon* at Cap-Martin. The notion of event was taken to its limit: it was only at that moment and for those present at the time, and was not repeated, or broadcast anywhere else. Since the place and the project no longer exist, the re-enactment of the auratic object, its conversations, its space, or its public presentation as an archive, undoes the very principle of *cabaniére*. (In fact the first invitation/personal card that was printed said: And what did they do there? We will never know, but one can always conjecture…). So, to some extent having a soundless empty space can be a raw and robust way of presenting the archive of the space, and could be the most faithful to its ephemeral and experiential nature. The re-enactment of conversations circumvents the experiential dimension of the project. The "best" archive would be the conversation while it is being recorded/played, or the conversation in its middle, as this opens a space for thinking about the relationality of a conversation in a space (whether by Le Corbusier in France, or by other people in Porto), thereby playing a conversation as a relational

mode of curating space. The space that is active while it is being practised is a central notion to understanding Le Corbusier's *Cabanon*, and to understand the curatorial project in Porto.

_logist: Such emphasis on a notion of the present opens a door onto the question of loss, because in that relational model there is a sense of loss, a loss for everyone else. Certainly a relationality with Le Corbusier could only be possible if one was living there, together with him, at that moment for a certain period. After that it ceases to exist and becomes impossible to re-actualize. However, at the same time, it is almost as if you can re-actualise it... there is a strange play between the possibility and the impossibility of what is a "moment". This brings us to another aspect, to what the plane of "memory" can be – and where there is in fact an archeologist speaking - in themselves, archeology gestures and speech together form memories, as Bernard Stiegler has said...

_tect: I agree, and they were the radical gestures of that project. If you consider that what is conventional is to curate architecture through its representations, i.e., the original drawings, original models, the past and present pictures of the building, the new replica built by Cassina, if curating architecture proceeds through representations and the memory of a building (whether old or contemporary memories of a building that was new 60 years ago), what happened "originally" in Porto worked from the present on the possibility of enacting a memory momentarily (in the present), and this leads me back to the notion of space as practiced space, as in fact there was no material evidence of the previous space. Curating what *Cabanon* was, with no physical/material referent or evidence for that place, or its architect, or the architect's body of work, looked instead to the relational modalities that were offered. In that sense, the notion of present is taken to extreme, which is of a constant perpetual practice. To present the archive of *Petit Cabanon*, could have been an abstract, silent and empty space (no longer inhabited or active), instead of revisiting and playing the archive of conversations, or instead of re-programming a new set of conversations for Gdansk. The emptiness of an inactive space is a possible approach to curating the archive of a completed relational project.

_logist: But it would be a ruin, it sounds like you'd be producing the ruin of *Petit Cabanon*...

_tect: Exactly. But that is precisely the archive, a visit to a dead space, inactive and not practiced after May 2009 after having operated for two years. To revisit that project is to reconstruct from its ruins and archives, a dead and terminated spatial project which no longer exists. Trying to present it as active would be an attempt to reconstruct something that is not active and not needed, as it ceased to be so in 2009. It now exists only as a concept, or an idea.

(The original *Cabanon* has lasted after reconstruction from its ruinous state, and lasts now as a heritage object).

_logist: But do you consider that your project has recovered Le Corbusier's *Cabanon*?

_tect: No, it did not recover *Cabanon*. It was a radical curatorial approach to that space – not a curatorial exercise on the building or the architect – but it was a work on a notion of space, making it react from a different position. This exercise is far removed from a notion of reconstruction, and of heritage.

_logist: But there is a connection to that past, and I am not referring to reconstruction as effective and complete, but there is a connective element. What you produced at your *Cabanon* is connected to what Le Corbusier did at his, or is this just an *ad hoc* exercise in which the title repeats a name (and that's all)?

_tect: The connection is relatively clear: Le Corbusier built himself a house which had little representativity in terms of architectural history, as well as a small, humble pre-fabricated shelter where he practiced nudism and worked in the garden under a tree developing his personal "*recherche patiente*", all on a secondary plane away from the centrality and visibility of French/Parisian society; and the *Petit Cabanon* project talked about architecture without showing, or exhibiting it or its authors, in a secondary space far from a architecture museum, institute or even a college, and in a small shop in a shopping center in a peripheral city like Porto. Both used the same tactical plan, which Le Corbusier had followed provoking informal gatherings in a lesser location. One of the connections is the modality of work, which is not literal and direct (and so does not mimic) but which explores an affective modality of relation to the mainstream of Paris, and to a cultural system, and tries to produces a new perspective from this withdrawal.

_logist: In archeology we could call it "evocation"…

_tect: Yes, it became a space of evocation. The curatorial project that came after this one is called "*Aftermath and Resonance!*" (2009) and explored curating space as a resonance and evocation of (absences and presences) in a building. The project explored language not as in relational space but as a symbolic space. From one project to the next we moved from the production of a conversational and relational space to that of performative materiality, i.e., materials that perform through materiality and resonances. If you think of *Cabanon* as "musealized" in its materiality – wood, plywood, painting, metals, and technical elements – the

projects I am now referring to explored the materiality of a building not as conservation/heritage but as materially discursive and symbolic. If *Petit Cabanon* was the physical transference of the abstract model of *Cabanon* to a new project, its relational dimension overcame the physicality and materiality, and ultimately led to a discursive project. As a response, "Aftermath and resonance!" and the upcoming "Buildings and Remnants", became material-semiotic projects on space.

_logist: the evocation that was produced is interesting in the context of Gdansk, as people won't understand our conversation which is in Portuguese and not in Polish or English, so to some extent the closed "window space" will remain in Gdansk.

_tect: this is an important feature of this space, in contrast to a curatorial project that promotes authors and objects and encourages contact with a wide audience, this project produced an encounter with those who took part in it (differing from other modes of participation) and not with larger audiences. It could not have been in an experimental project which tested notions of event, gathering, participation, or audience as this would have abolished it.

_logist: And how did the conversations come to an end?

_tect: Sometimes with the end of a video tape, or sometimes we defined the duration – one or two hours, or maybe someone had to leave to get their children from school, which inevitably ended the meeting. They rarely finished in the same way.

_logist: And how shall we end ours?

_tect: we can end it like this[18], by revisiting a few images of the project.

Petit CABANON, the host space at Porto, Portugal
Photos: Vitor Ferreira

Petit CABANON (private version for Wyspa) exhibited at the Labour and Leisure Exhibition,
in the context of Alternativa Visual Art Festival 2012, curated by Aneta Szylak at Hall 90B,
Wyspa Institute of Art in Gdansk, Poland Photo: kalevkevad[19]

The model of the installation. Photo: Paulo Mendes archive

The set-up of the installation. Photos: Produções Reais

Conversation Pieces, 2007. Installation by Inês Moreira
Opening of Petit CABANON, the host space at Porto, Portugal

[1] This text is the transcript of a conversation between archeologist Gonçalo Leite Velho and Inês Moreira and was run as a sound track in the installation commissioned by Alternativa Visual Art Festival 2011, curated by Aneta Szylak at Hall 90B, Wyspa Institute of Art in Gdansk, Poland. The installation is titled: *Petit CABANON (private version for Wyspa)*, and was exhibited at the *Labour and Leisure* Exhibition, during Summer 2011

[2] *petit CABANON* was an experimental curatorial project/space that I have run for two years (from May 2007 to 2009) in a small shop in the art gallery district of Miguel Bombarda in Porto, Portugal.

[3] Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community + Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley, California / London: University of California Press, 2004).

[4] The Metropolitan Complex is an art project run by fellow Curatorial Knowledge researcher Sarah Pierce, a visual artist, which organises gatherings, talks and exhibitions as an artwork. Sarah Pierce transcribes and publishes some of these events as newspapers which she publishes and presents in exhibitions: [http://www.themetropolitancomplex.com].

[5] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Paris: Les Presse Du Reel, 1998).

[6] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford, OX, UK; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1991 [1974]).

Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).

[7] Inês Moreira, *Opúsculo no. 7: Petit Cabanon*., Porto: Dafne Editora, 2007.

[http://www.dafne.com.pt/pdf_upload/opusculo_7.pdf] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[8] The reversal of an architectural project, the notion of emergence in material production as opposed to the prediction through design, the personal affects to the construction of a home, and the craft skills in self-building is further explored in an essay on micro-spatial practices as a mode of space production.

Inês Moreira, "Micro-spatial practices, exposition of the concept and an anonymous case," in Gabriela Vaz-Pinheiro, *Arqueologia do Urbano: Abordagens e Práticas / Archaeology of the Urban: Approaches and Practices* (Porto: FBAUP, 2009), 35-43.

[9] Sue Breakell, "Perspectives: Negotiating the Archive." *Tate Papers – Tate´s Online Research Journal* (Spring 2008) [http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/08spring/breakell.shtm] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[10] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[11] Filippo Alison, *Le Corbusier: L'interno del Cabanon / Interior of Cabanon, Le Corbusier 1952 – Cassina 2006* (Milano: Electa/Mondadori/La Triennale di Milano, 2006).

[12] Inês Moreira and Sandra Vieira Jurgens, "Interview with Inês Moreira / petit Cabanon," *ARQ./A*, no. 59/60 (July/August 2008): 156-161.

[13] Pedro Baía, "Petit Cabanon." *SE7E / O Primeiro de Janeiro*, (January 2008) and *Nuances: os lugares da arquitectura Blog* (January 2008)

[http://nuances-oslugaresdaarquitectura.blogspot.com/2008/01/petit-cabanon.html] (accessed 10 January 2012).

Inês Moreira, "Letter to Antípodas." *petit Cabanon* (12 May 2009)

[http://petitcabanon.org/curatorial-projects/petit-cabanon-_porto-09/carta-a-antipodas/] (accessed 10 January 2012). This text was the response to participate in number 0 (zero) of a new editorial project on cultural and artistic production, though the magazine didn´t come to fruition. The letter was archived in the website.

[14] Martin Kaltwasser and and Folke Kobberling, *City as Resource* (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2006).

[15] The concept of *cabaniére*, building and inhabiting huts advancing through a plot, is further explored in an essay on improvisation and contingent construction in coastal architecture on the Atlantic and Mediterranean coast, focusing on the construction of ephemeral summer huts in the South of Portugal, and on the erosion and advancement of the coastal line.

Inês Moreira, "The Unplanned Coast: improvised and accidental architectures," in Mitch MacEwen, *Unplanned: Research and Experiments at the Urban Scale* (Los Angeles: Superfront Gallery 2010), 4-8.

[16] Inês Moreira, "Performative Gatherings: reinventing modes of Gathering," in Didier Fiuza Faustino, ed., *Evento 2009: I´intime Collectif* (Bordeaux: Monografik editions, 2010).

[17] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Edited by Donald F. Bouchard, 124-127 (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977).

[18] Another possible ending could be by quoting this passage: "*The Text is not to be thought of as an object that can be computed. It would be futile to try to separate out materially works from texts. In particular, the tendency must be avoided to say that the work is classic, the text avant-garde; it is not a question of drawing up a crude honors list in the name of modernity and declaring certain literary productions 'in' and others 'out' by virtue of their chronological situation: there may be 'text' in a very ancient work, while many products of contemporary literature are in no way texts. The difference is this: the work is a fragment of substance, occupying a part of the space of books (in a library for example), the Text is a methodological field. The opposition may recall (without at all reproducing term for term) Lacan's distinction between 'reality' and 'the real': the one is displayed, the other demonstrated; likewise, the work can be seen (in bookshops, in catalogues, in exam syllabuses), the text is a process of demonstration, speaks according to certain rules (or against certain rules); the work can be held in the hand, the text is held in language, only exists in the movement of a discourse (or rather, it is Text for the very reason that it knows itself as text); the Text is not the decomposition of the work, it is the work that is the imaginary tail of the Text; or again, the Text is experienced only in an activity of production. It follows that the Text cannot stop (for example on a library shelf); its constitutive movement is that of cutting across (in particular, it can cut across the work, several works).*" Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" (1977) trans. Stephen Heath, *Faculdade de Belas Artes da Universidade de Lisboa* [http://areas.fba.ul.pt/jpeneda/From%20Work%20to%20Text.pdf] (accessed 10 February 2012).

[19] "Alternativa: Labour & Leisure" *Virtualwallworld Blog* (6 June 2011) [http://virtualwallworld.blogspot.com/2011/06/alternativa-labour.html] (accessed 10 January 2012).

Chapter 5 : RESONANT SPACE
Aftermath and resonance!
A and R!: a conversation on curating space

Chapter 5 is titled Resonant Space and formulates a curatorial approach to existing buildings and architectures, exploring the resonances of architectural void and the collective memory built through architecture. It follows field work as a mode of curating existing architectural spaces. The chapter explores curating space as considering the relations of space and time, including past stories of historical buildings (or heritage sites), its appropriations and inhabitations, and examining the consequences of the abrupt event/incident that disrupted it.

Historical, public, iconic and central buildings are important objects of representation in societies and the announcement of intervention (from remodeling, to demolition) may turn it to resonance boxes. As an introduction, its important to refer the case of Ataturk Cultural Center, in Istanbul's modernist Taksim square, which in 2007 was under discussion for demolition when it hosted the art exhibition "*Burn it or not?*"[1]. Questioning the modernist politics of the building and of state foundation, and its possible futures - whether to be demolished, remodeled or kept – the curator has dealt with the existing building. The curatorial approach embraced the particularities of the space making it "speak", and interfering with architecture. Bringing in captions from the outside Taksim square, it played the memories of Turkish political contemporaneity through artists´ work, as in the sound installation "*Memories On Silent Walls*" by Erdem Helvacioglu. This interlude introduces the appropriations of a building, the undoing of exhibition conventions and of technical representations of architecture, ultimately decentering the attentions from heritage, from the architect´s legacy, and facing a wide contemporary condition: the building is a political and representational issue. The affects of *building sites* not always end when the construction works are complete. Time brings new concerns, with demolition, with reconstruction a temporal arch wider than architecture design, authorship, or the authenticity of object itself. The symbolic and allegorical dimensions of space anticipate new construction and perform long before (or much after) a building site starts to work.

Chapter 5 is divided in two sections and both focus deeply on "*Aftermath and resonance!*", a curatorial project that relates to the spaces damaged in a fire at the University of Porto in May 2008[2]. Section 1 exposes the curatorial project developed *on* the actual building, and *in* its accidented rooms. The project was developed *through* field work and *through* a deep understanding of this specific building[3]. The research explores the spaces in the aftermath of a fire, before reconstruction works begun, to set an exhibition, or an exposition, so to "expose" and "activate" building´s raw and crude condition of the building. The immersive exhibition consists of particularly commissioned artists' works, of tours and readings.

The curatorial project is a laboratorial opportunity to explore several questions, the central is the intersection of a curatorial research *on* space situated from within, and other, more practical questions, relate to a practice of display between concept and scenography. The research and the setting of the exhibition allowed for *in situ* experience formulating an idea of space that is at the same time a concept, a building and an articulation between narratives and materiality. As a curatorial project *on* space, it explores the accumulation of materials, histories and events, exploring factual and allegorical dimensions of a historical and symbolically loaded building. Other question specifically developed in "*Aftermath and*

resonance!" is the transference/dialogue between spatial formats and textual modes of research. From incident to exhibition space, from exhibition space to publication, the exhibitionary and the editorial components were articulated and problematized as spatial projects (beyond exhibition catalogue). The chapter is illustrated with sets of double pages from the book (printed only in Portuguese).

Section 2 is subsidiary to section 1 and, as in chapter 4 and in chapter 5, this section takes the form of a conversation with a special interlocutor in the field, the curator Bruno Marchand. The conversation debunks "Aftermath and Resonance!" as a curatorial project on a space, as exhibition, its parallel programs and mediation [it was curated as an interview by Marchand for *Cadernos de Curadoria* #12 (Curatorial Journal)].

The subtitle of the thesis - "*curating in/on/through space*" - was formulated along the development of "*Aftermath and resonance!"* project, in 2009. It had a turning relevance in the development of the whole thesis, and one of the main points addressed in chapter 4 is situated, implicated research focusing on several dimension of space.

A fire is the ultimate space: "unconventional" space.
Uninhabitable space.
Spectacular space.
Autophagical and exo-thermical space. Immaterial and incandescent space.
Space with properties of light, matter volatilizing and expanding into flames. Space
that expands and moves with the wind, which feeds from the air, self-consuming and
expanding in heat energy and light.

Approaching damaged architecture

A fire is a spectacular event that simultaneously shocks with its tragedy and loss, and creates opportunities for new architecture and construction. Different "fires" have different "aftermaths" that encompass both the physical and the traumatic event. Conceiving an exhibition in/at the site of a fire requires one to question the layers involved in a spectacular event such as media exposure of the occurrence, technical pragmatism, and the imagined situations of the fire.

An analytical study of fires, and fire losses, between 2008 and 2009 throughout the world[4], made it possible to isolate the different strategies that *depict* fires in architecture. I clearly identified three strategic relationships with burnt buildings: the global circulation of images in the media, the competition between new architectural projects (with exhibitions and publications), and the integration of the material memory of the fire in the reconstruction. This analysis enabled a clarification of the strategic position in "*Aftermath and Resonance!*" which explores curatorial research as a method of relating to damaged areas.

Depiction 1: contingent building sites
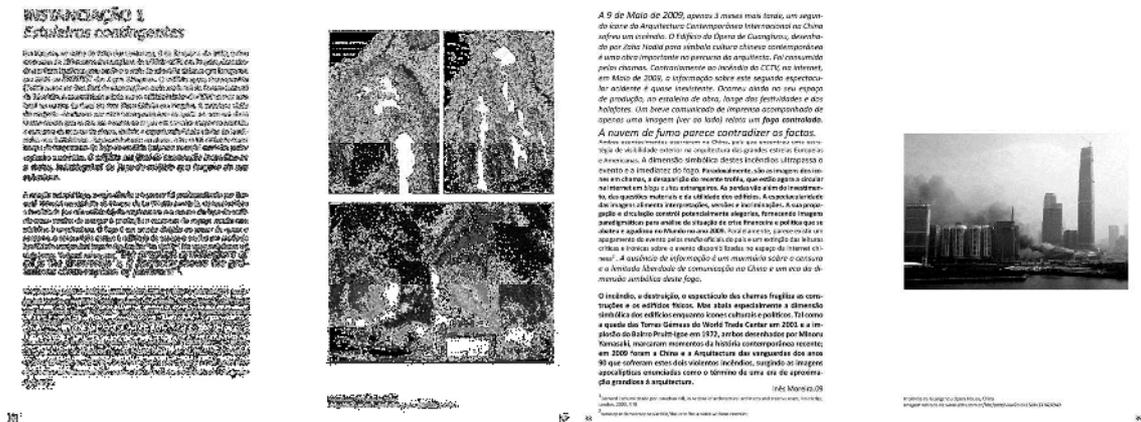
On 9 February 2009, the night of the Feast of Lanterns in Beijing, a 130m tower belonging to the CCTV building complex burnt down. It had been designed by Rem Koolhaas to host the headquarters of Chinese television in 2008, to usher in the "boom" of the Olympic Games[5]. The building that was lost (TVCC) was in the final phase of its construction and was to be a hotel for the Television Cultural Center. The new centrality that the iconic new building of CCTV had created had turned the spot into the centre of the Chinese New Year festivities in Beijing. The seductive vision of the whole complex dominated by a tower-bridge that rested on the ground in two-column towers that rose and were joined in the air through a third suspended body, hundreds of feet high, was to set the spectacular scenic location of the festivities. Ignoring the risks, the tower was used as a launch pad for the fireworks and to launch highly-explosive materials. The building, which as mentioned, was in its final stages of construction, caught fire and burned down, and was almost indistinguishable from the fireworks that had just been set off from its rooftop[6].

The relationship between fire, spectacle and pleasure has been problematized by Bernard Tschumi, in connection with his project for the Parc de la Villette in Paris, in which he conceptualized the futility (or dis-utility) of architecture and of firework events as ways of escaping the production and consumption of space usually attributed to architecture. Fire is an event that delights spectators, and its consumerism evades the usefulness of space and produces a dis-utility comparable to that of "*les jardins de plaisir*". His parallel goes further, Tschumi states that "the greatest architecture of all is the firework's, it perfectly shows the gratuitous consumption of pleasure"[7].

Nowhere has the relationship between architecture, consumerism and pleasure been taken to a more extreme limit. The burning of a large building is an intense visual spectacle. The CCTV tower unpredictably became a torch-building. Its matter and tectonics were transformed into light and event. This is said to be one of the attractions for pyromaniacs. The architecture of light and heat is a primordial element of the myths of architecture. It is also, if we think of Paul Virilio's *Catastrophe Theory*[8] a cynical barometer that references the speed of construction of the great symbols of the economic development of the Chinese.

On May 9 2009, just three months later, a second icon of China´s international contemporary architecture caught fire. The Opera House in Guanghzou[9], designed by Zaha Hadid, was a new symbol of contemporary Chinese culture and an important piece of work in Hadid´s career. It was consumed by flames[10]. Unlike the burning of the CCTV in May 2009, which could be seen on the internet, the information on this spectacular second accident was almost non-existent. It happened in the process of construction, on the building site itself, away from festivities or spotlights. A brief press release accompanied by only one image (see opposite) reported a controlled fire[11]. The cloud of smoke seemed to contradict the facts.

Both events occurred in China, a country seeking a strategy of external visibility through the architecture of the great European and American *starchitects*. The symbolic dimension of these fires goes beyond the immediacy of their burning. Paradoxically, the images of the burning icons and the disappearance of the recent trophies are now circulating in internet blogs and on foreign sites. The losses go beyond merely the investment or the material issues or functionality of the buildings. The spectacular images feed interpretations, versions and points of view. Their dissemination builds potential allegories, and provides paradigmatic images for the analysis of the financial and political crisis that hit the World in 2009. In parallel there seems to be a deletion of the event by the national media and there is a lacuna of critical and ironic readings of the event in Chinese Internet space[12]. The lack of information is a hint of the censorship and limited freedom of communication in China and an echo of the symbolic dimension of this fire.

Fire, destruction, and the flaming spectacle of burning buildings weaken constructions and physical buildings. They most specifically undermine the symbolic dimension of buildings as cultural and political icons. Just as the fall of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in 2001 and the implosion of the Pruitt-Igoe neighborhood in 1972, both of which were designed by Minoru Yamasaki, marked recent moments in modern history; in 2009, China and the avant-

garde architecture of the 1990s suffered two raging fires, flaming apocalyptic images that were a portent of the end of an era of grandiose approaches to architecture.

Depiction 2: burning, loss and opportunity

On May 13 2008 the Technical School of Architecture in Delft, the Netherlands, suffered a devastating fire that destroyed the entire "*Bouwkunde*" building[13] that was built in 1970 and had been designed by Van den Broek and Bakema. The cause was an electrical short circuit caused by a small leak in a vending machine, a small unpredictable event that caused total devastation, and that led to the loss of the research files and numerous past legacies of the college as well as to the loss of the building itself. There were no injuries, only the concrete skeleton remains of the building and the digital documents that had been stored on the server of another building. This place of education, the exchange of ideas, research, information gathering and the daily life of a community disappeared in the rubble, and its subsequent demolition.

The contingency, the melancholy of the loss and the emotional shock were approached with swift Dutch pragmatism. Three strategies were simultaneously activated: transfer, record, and replacement, and these were translated into formats of relocating the school, editing memories and creating a new project with an exhibition. The loss of facilities, space and equipment was temporarily solved with tents in a garden and with equipment lent by other European schools. The university temporarily became a nomadic event in its quest to reestablish its operations and reorganize its affects and memories. In an exercise to register collective memory, the college published a small oral history using direct speech. In his introduction Wytze Patijn mentions having heard one of his colleagues say, "*it is strange to walk through a building in your mind that doesn´t exist anymore*"[14].

The publication reenacts the memory of the building and was the beginning of extensive conversations and interview recordings to create a path for the mental and subjective stories

that happened in a space that no longer exists. The immaterial aspect of the loss, the memories and remaining experience of the fire were amplified by the affective relationships of students, faculty and staff with the building. The accident and the disappearance resulted in a small on-line publication that documents the history of the uses and appropriations of space over time.

However, architecture also saw in the loss an opportunity for building material and for reflection on what can be a teaching space for architecture. In an enthusiastic and optimistic speech, the school launched the project for new premises, "*the loss of the faculty building also offers new opportunities. Opportunities to take a fresh and critical look at the education of the future, opportunities to realize a modern, innovative and refreshing design for the university building.*"[15] This led to a competition to design a new piece of architecture to stand in the place of the previous building, and the proposals selected (by Gijs Raggers, Laura Alvarez and Marc Bringer / Ilham Laraqui)[16] metaphorically communicate a relationship between the future and the past of the Architecture School. By exploring historical continuity with architectural composition, enabling the idea of the circularity of time, and diminishing the importance of authorship through careful reuse and expanding existing spatial structures or through images and metaphors of the sustainability of natural balance, Architecture has found an alternative to the loss of its building and contents. The competition entries were then made public at an exhibition at NAI.

Depiction 3: articulating the narrative of an accident
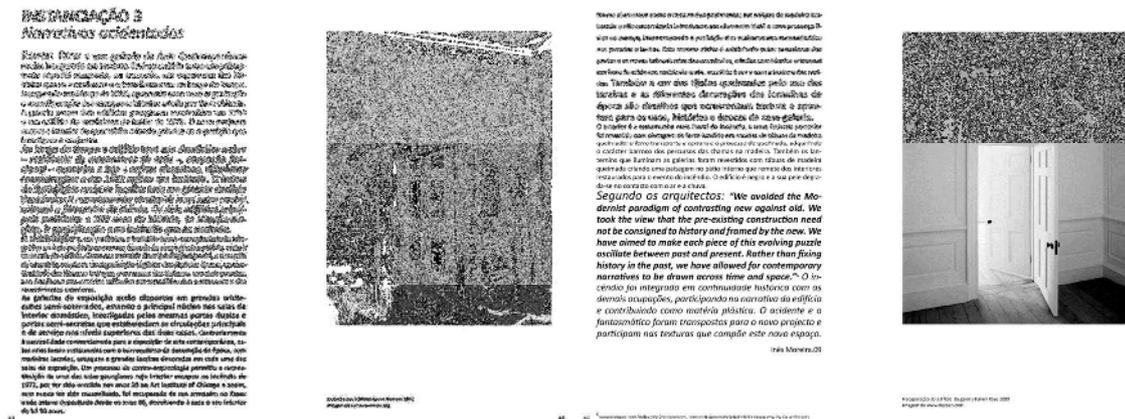
Raven Row is a gallery for contemporary art that opened in London in 2009[17]. It was designed as a palimpsest composed of space, and was created from the thickness of stories that took place and transformed over time. The gallery occupies two Georgian buildings built in 1754 and a concrete office building from 1972. The new project designed by 6a architects has excavated the interior of the block to create exhibition galleries that connect the whole complex. Over time, the building has had numerous roles, from that of a home for a wealthy

family (home of silk merchants) to housing practical occupations (warehouse and shop). It suffered neglect, and underwent several reconstructions before it burnt down in 1972. The neighbourhood of Spitalfields where it is located was affected by a major economic downturn, and has only recently become a new cultural and financial part of the city. The two main buildings withstood 250 years of history, change, gentrification and even the fire that nearly destroyed them[18].

The destruction and, in particular, the fire, were conceptually integrated into the new project as a temporary, textural and empty layer of occupation for the building. As an exercise in space archeology, the succession of memories is revealed in the succession of the different times of the organic organization, in the continuity of the various spaces, and the rawness of the textures, the finishing, the details and the materials used for the flooring and exterior coatings. The exhibition galleries are arranged in large *white cubes*, semi-buried, and the main nucleus is in the domestic interior rooms, connected by the same double doors and the semi-secret passageways that set out the main and upper levels of both houses. In contrast to the conventional neutrality of spaces to exhibit contemporary art, these rooms were restored with the "barroquisms" of the original decoration of the era, with lacquered wood, stucco and large decorated fireplaces in each of the exhibition galleries. A process of counter-archeology has allowed the reconstitution of a Georgian interior, as it escaped the fire in 1972. Having been sold in 1920s to the Art Institute of Chicago and, without ever having been included in the collection, it was recovered from a warehouse in Essex where it had been stored since the 1980s, and was finally returned back to the house after 90 years.

New elements like the texture of unvarnished wood flooring introduce a tactile element and a physical presence in the space, disrupting the perfection of the reconstituted finish of the walls and ceilings. This same effect is emphasized by the door handles and the new bannisters of the staircase, built with techniques using cast iron in sand molds, which keep the material´s color and the texture of the molds. In addition, the colour of the burnt bricks for the differently decorated fireplaces and original furnaces is a detail that adds texture and points to the uses, history and eras of the home-gallery. According to the architects: "*We avoided the Modernist paradigm of contrasting new against old. We took the view that the pre-existing construction need not be consigned to history and framed by the new. We have aimed to make each piece of this evolving puzzle oscillate between past and present. Rather than fixing history in the past, we have allowed for contemporary narratives to be drawn across time and space.*"[19] The fire has been integrated in historical continuity with the other occupations, and participates in the narrative of the building and contributes to its aesthetics. The accidental and the ghostly were transferred to the new project and participate in the textures that compose this new space.

The exterior is the most literal testimony of the fire; the new rear façade has been covered with cast iron molded into the templates of burnt wooden planks: the iron carries the texture and the process of wood burning, and has acquired the baroque character of the flames path through the carbonized wood. The skylights that illuminate the galleries were also covered with wooden planks creating a burnt landscape in the inner courtyard which refers to the

event of the fire and contrasts with the restored interior. The building is black and its skin continues to deteriorate through contact with the elements.

A curatorial study in/on resonant space

After reading and understanding the numerous modes of curating damaged places and the stories that are inter-twined between accidents and buildings, I was able to supersede the general understanding of the *aftermath* as a "non-conventional exhibition space" and to embrace it as a "case study". The project was born out of visits and was conceptualized as a field and archival study. It became a laboratorial opportunity to test concepts, ideas and methods, as well as a stage for new visual, sound and spatial projects. The research listened to "resonances" through playing with the rawness and the materiality of the post-fire and documenting it through recordings in various media (video, photography, sound and space). The exploration process differs from a design plan; it is non-propositional, non-palliative, and non-problem-solving. It thinks, speculates, interprets, and proposes an exhibition route that materializes in an exhibition and a publication. It seemed to us essential to seek and establish links between the imaginary (collective and individual) and the new materiality produced by the flames (rooms, debris, objects).

"Catalogues have become indispensable elements in the realm of visual culture. They help to open up processes of interpretation, to trigger a variety of viewpoints, and to go against the trend of simplification and consolidation of meaning."[20] Philip Ursprung

The concept of this project articulates exhibiting and publishing, and looks at the interplay of formats while respecting autonomies: a building as an exhibition, as a curatorial project, as a book. The several media/objects (photography, archival material, installation, and book) explore the notion of spatiality and conceive their outputs as spatial productions. As exhibitions have evolved from *reproducing meaning* and exhibiting objects (of academic research or collection research at museums) to *producing meaning* and generating *otherness* (exhibitions have gained autonomy from traditional institutional knowledge production, therefore seeing a growth in curatorial fields), so exhibition catalogues have also gained a certain autonomy from the exhibitions that trigger them, and become autonomous (authored) books.

Philip Ursprung, curator and editor of architectural books, refers to exhibition catalogues as "tools for exhibition experiments", which is an understanding closely aligned to my own notion. Ursprung analyses the relationship of architectural catalogues and books to exhibitions, and advocates the growing autonomy of books, though *"catalogues and exhibitions are interdependent. A catalogue that accompanies an exhibition has more discursive authority than one that is not published in tandem with the event. (…) The catalogue was intended to prolong the life span of the exhibition and live on in its own right – as a*

book.[21]" The "*Aftermath and Resonance!*" project plays with the exhibition space, exploring the container as content, and also explores transferences with the book in a dialogue, keeping it as an autonomous object.

The visual art exhibition "*Shandyismus*" (2007) at the Secession in Vienna, curated by Helmut Draxler[22], explored literature and literary techniques to experiment with space and display. Following on from the work of Laurence Sterne, "*Shandyismus*" was conceived through exploring several modes of transfer in the book Tristram Shandy[23], including authorship (artist and curator) and digressions. In the conceptual statement "*Shandyism as a phenomenon or position, reflecting the diversity of points of contact with the media*"[24], Draxler expounded a concept in which he invited artists and friends to develop "shandyesque interventions", from art works, to create scenography, graphic elements and other textual interventions in the exhibition space. The exhibition explored the book as an exhibition as a curatorial project, informing the conceptualization of the work.

"*Aftermath and Resonance!*" the essay explores formats: a building becomes an exhibition space and object; the exhibition curates the building and becomes a speculative project; the project becomes a book, expanding the exhibition and the reading of space. Through the convalescence of the remnants, we attempted to find answers to architectural questions, focusing on the space between the building and the fire. This makes the curatorial project into a spatial essay on the potentiality and the symbolic dimension of a specific space, a *terrain vague* in the attic of an institutional building that has considerable symbolic weight in the city.
Any fascination with the accident was silenced and the language of the project was restrained and austere, refusing to "spectacularise" the catastrophe, exploring the imperfections and many layers of the exhibition container. The approach to the fire (event), the raw materials (content), and the exhibition space (container), dictated a relationship with the building (architecture), with "fire" (event) and the relations between the container and the new approach to exhibiting the contents (*Brown rooms/Grey halls*). The printed book has a dark cover and is hand-finished; it explores the discontinuities, the fragmentation and the resonance of a space that has suffered an accident through black and white and color photos, text, drawings, collage, archival material, newspaper cuttings and graphic design - blank pages, typography, scaling, and the inversion of structure. The book converges to its center, having the table of contents, and introduction, in the middle and the several chapters in the first and the last sections.

2008, 5 de Maio

Aftermath, disturbing space

Event: I watched the **news;** there was a big fire on the roof at the Rectorate of the University of Porto[25]. Maybe a lamp breaking, perhaps a spark, or something else human-caused or not, caused the fire that spread through the wooden roof and consumed the chemicals of the building site. A small contingency was uncontrollable, and the wooden roof in flames spread to the chemicals, reagents and laboratory machines. The building was evacuated, and the fire was brought under control, the fire damage was confined to the area immediately below the fire. The wind helped to lessen the damage, the fire was next to the Museum and the Old Library, and a stone wall of only 40cms thick separated the fire from the large store of stuffed animals and jars of *formaldehyde*. The explosion would have been terrible if the wind had blown the fire further.

The **fire was contained**: its effects were projected in time and space. Its control amplified other interferences: the fire destroyed a number of research laboratories on the 4th floor; the weight of the water from the firefighting collapsed ceilings, destroyed offices and flooded several floors below; the removal of debris and rubble, and attempts to contain the risk of further falls ended up dislodging the few remaining offices and spaces for teaching and research. The move to a new building in the Sciences College was precipitated by the fire and relocation was immediate[26]. The side effects of the fire affected the city center. A dense cloud of smoke and ash and the smell of burning swept through the air towards the main Square. Looking at the skies, the city questioned the underlying reasons for the unusual cloud that had gathered over it. The answer came through the media[27]; television, radio, and later in the news in newspapers and in texts on the Internet. The fire did not spread. The building contained it. End of story.
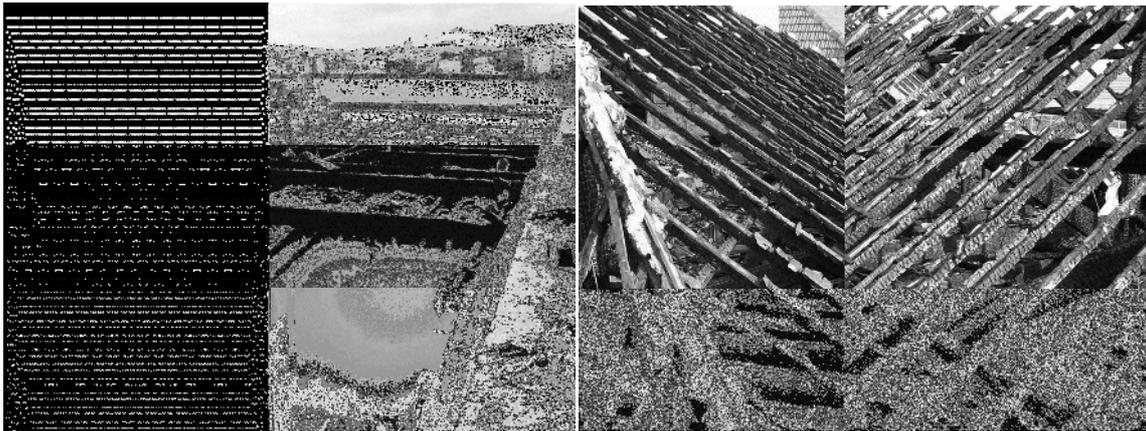
Emptiness: The fourth floor is black and raw. The space exposes a continuum of emptiness. The damaged wing was stabilized, consolidated and secure. But it exposed an unseemly nakedness, rawness in its materiality that invited an archeology of ephemeral events. The remnants exposed the sudden disappearance caused by the accident that was completed by the movements of rescue and evacuation. One can feel the stains from the water which extinguished the flames, the clouds of smoke and steam that filled the spaces. One can sense the traces of the consolidation works of the building structures, of the removal of debris and ashes, as well as of the washing of the many losses.

Aftermath: the burned place that had first engaged in controlling the accident and avoiding its recurrence then gave way to consolidation. The spectacular ruins were not made public, the spaces were consolidated, the liabilities identified and assumed, and reconstruction was quickly implemented. The evolution of the stabilization process was fast. Outside all signs of the fire were removed and the restoration of the building has continued. There was no show. Normal life coexists with the rest of the building, and the work of the university's administrative services, the acts of the main Hall, the Museums, and the Old Library, all remain active, intact and protected from fire. There are choreographies of permanent change, rearrangement of uses and services inside the giant building. The modernization of the building and recovery rooms, and the infrastructure installation continue to evolve. We can hear machines and come across cables, debris and dust.

Burned: the accident destroyed part of the building and created a fleeting show. But the *aftermath* and the consolidation produced a new place: a watertight building, consolidated masonry, void spaces and burnt surfaces. An anomalous place, between the new roof and the para-cartography of mapping layers poured into melted pavements; there are ashes, echoes, the smells and the presence of burning. Charred and radically emptied, the inside of the *aftermath* plays as a sounding board on which several presences echo. The post-presence of the fire fills the void with meaning; the emptiness amplifies them as a dysfunctional box: without function, only echoes. Inside.

Resonance! Reading and writing space

The space is filled with ghosts (from the accident, history, and the past) while new plans and temporary uses randomly appropriate it. This led to, an expectant space being opened up, and an emptiness of functionality, representation, and use is camouflaged by the monumental neo-classical facades of the city centre building. A visuality of urgency was enabled along with a spatial dimension to the imagination. The absences caused by the fire, and the violence of is post-presence, eloquently activate the symbolic potential of the damaged areas. Among the sounds of the facts, fiction and emptiness, this space brings us to the question "*what to do?*"

Spatial installation / exhibition
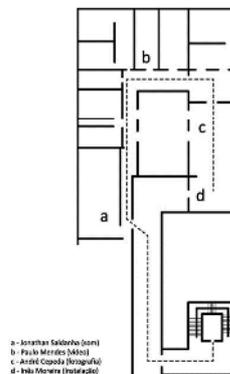
Several months have elapsed between the fire and the start of this study, which started as a set of visits and searches for archival material, a diverse collection of news stories and a series of visits to the building during the reconstruction works. We engaged with a place that had been burned, destroyed, flooded, and devoid of any decoration or language, emptied of furniture, and of all traces of past and future occupations. Doves live within it together with the debris, the stains on the walls and the ceiling pieces scattered on the ground. Pigeons fly through the space occupying the void filled with echoing abnormality. This proposal explores the potential of a space that was abruptly emptied of its activity by the fire, the *aftermath* operations and reconstruction works. The uncovering process has led to something different

from what had been our initial expectation: an exhibition on the fire. We operated on a few facts, on *in situ* experience of the area, on the post-materiality and the imagination activated by the fire, to create a speculative project. We explored the remains in two ways: the surplus and leftover in an immaterial archeology of untold stories.

We looked for the intersection of the material and fictional dimensions of the space, an approach in which metaphor and interpretation introduce new meanings to the layers of objective and technical truth. The project is a side show to the spectacle and immediacy of the images of fire, to the consumption by the flames, to the fire´s growth and the tragic testimonies of the heroic narrative and commemoration of the event; and also to the interpretation of mistakes – the forensic investigation, technical studies to combat and prevent, and even to the reconstruction, all of which were issues that were resolved and concluded.

The exhibition is a circuit installed around a central courtyard connecting several floors in the top floor of the block that was affected by the fire and water. The hollowness amplifies the space and makes it evocative, empty, unproductive and full of significance. The fictional visit conceived by Filomena Vasconcelos, the resonant performances by Jonathan Saldanha and the essay by Pedro Bandeira explore diverse connections between the discursive, the processual transformation of space and its physicality or materiality, widening the experiences of the projects installed in the space.

The sound side of the "resonance", developed by Jonathan Saldanha[28], is a large three-dimensional installation, named "*Corridor*". It consists of the first room of the circuit, the former Zoology 460 classroom furnished with large slate and wooden benches. The sound articulates elements of this space, where he set up a series of found and reused car speakers. In the classroom flooded by the firemen, it explores an acoustic atmosphere conceived as the activation of a spectral fluid emanating from the walls of the damaged space. The speakers are installed in a long dark corridor constructed from hardboard and other crude materials that were pre-existing in the building structure. The "*Corridor*" is the main area where one can feel the sounds that vibrate and resonate in the space and visitors' bodies. Jonathan explored the most invisible sounds that space can hide, emitting sounds from different tracks in space and his own body. The bass from "*Corridor*" is audible throughout the venue as a background presence, setting the atmosphere and affirming the crudeness of the physical environment of the exhibition. The "*Corridor*" was the place for a program of sound performances activated in the walls of the building, in an "*Evocative Resonance*", exploring the tensions of the moments prior to the accident.

Several empty rooms separate "*Corridor*" from the other spatial installations, using sound to unify the circuit of empty cabinets in which the research materials were kept, a small under-the-stairs laboratory, and a carbonized whale bone recovered from the charred museum's third floor. The view from these rooms is over the bell-tower of the Clérigos church (the city´s

ex-libris) and over the derelict Praça de Lisboa shopping centre that is awaiting redevelopment. The video footage by Paulo Mendes and photos by André Cepeda show the wounds inflicted by the reconstruction work. These records highlight the marks and stains that resulted from the functional void, the action of the fire, and the actions taken to remedy it.

Paulo Mendes[29] explored the imagery aroused by empty spaces, and looked for activities, gestures and the immaterial archeological reconstruction of the accident that destroyed the construction of the roofs. He explored non-forensic and fictional aspects and the fire that were hidden in private narratives set in the privacy of a teacher's former office, and he created video footage, current and archived images of the fire and University building, and edited them with images appropriated from the cinema. Paulo worked on an audiovisual narrative and the plasticity of images, notions of fiction and reality, and edited both on imaginary and forensic planes. *Cell, noire* is the title of the installation which consists of a double video projection and a pile of furniture and materials recovered from the university trash. The title is a tribute to Adolf Wölfli, a Swiss composer who spent thirty-five years in a mental hospital, composing music set for insects, machinery and other unconventional instruments. The shrill, repetitive sound of a score by a mentally ill composer creates a frenzied atmosphere through which the installation shows human error, which is shown in a lamp that is repeatedly broken, captured in spectacular explosions and other cinematic lapses of memory and imagination, and which refer to the event that caused the darkening of these cells.

Similarly to the building works, the removal of static and decorative elements that can be dangerous is a mode of working through destruction, through reversing the traditional order of construction – from the rough to the decorated. The photographic project by André Cepeda[30] is a process of space consolidation and creates surprising situations which actively enhance the visual signs of fire damage. Cepeda addresses space and returns it in a more complex form, as a palimpsest. His images take an editorial perspective at the space and at the accumulation of actions and materials in it. His previous experience at the museums in the same building, where the "density of accumulated knowledge to become visible as a museum", would be contrasted with this listening experience of a void filled by new disfigured materialities in rooms, not long before, producing knowledge and meaning. Cepeda explored the technical and conceptual limits of the medium in which he works, using photographic 35mm slide prints and exploring several types of high-quality film, film past its sell-by-date, and negative, sepia, or black and white film. The plastic quality of the photographic support intertwines with the diversity of modes of development, using traditional development methods and Polaroid. There is a material quality to these films, which combine the captured image and the revealing layers of chemicals that have remained on the epidermis of the film. A variety of experiments allowed him to explore the plasticity of the film, while recording the trails of water on the walls, the ash, the uneven spaces, the abandonment, and the chaotic furniture. A selection of 240 film slides is projected on screens made of crude materials and from the metal shelving from the library downstairs which was flooded during the fire. In contrast to high-definition digital photographic prints, the choice to analogically project on the set of the original piece

returned an ephemeral light that coexisted with the space and repeated rhythmically to the sound of the projector.

Spatial essay / printing

EVOCAÇÃO DE RESSONÂNCIA

Com a duração de 20', são usados os sons dos seguintes modelos de sirenes: Carter Siren, Alte WK2 Sirene, Weltkrieg Sirene, Maiden Newton, Chrysler Air Raid Siren.
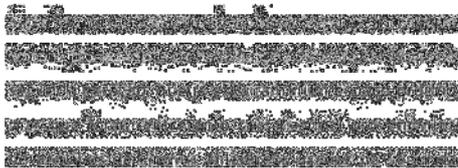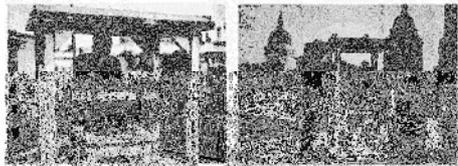
Guerra Mundial. A capacidade de pressão sonora destas sirenes será usada numa tentativa de revelar o pânico impregnado no seu som, num misto de evocação pela ressonância no edifício da Reitoria do eco das sirenes com a desencriptação das propriedades simbólicas das sirenes enquanto aviso e encantamento.

PAULO MENDES
CELL, noire, 2009

INÊS MOREIRA
BIBLIOTECA/LABORATÓRIO/ESTALEIRO
2009

O improdutivo e o performativo

A minha intervenção neste projecto debruçou-se sobre o aspecto material e performativo do rescaldo. Materializa-se numa estrutura metálica, estática, composta por 6 bancadas semi-vazias e por 3 grandes ecrãs de retro-projecção em algodão cru. A instalação hospeda e suporta projecções de slides de André Cepeda, serve de suporte espacial às suas 240 imagens e foi concebida em colaboração entre os dois. Espaço e imagem interligam-se.

Chamei esta estrutura *"biblioteca/laboratório/estaleiro"* sublinhando o nome dos lugares que as estruturas modulares de Dexion que reutilizei já compuseram. Os materiais usados foram resgatados das estantes da Biblioteca de Zoologia que ficou inundada pelas águas do combate ao fogo no 3º piso. O lugar do conhecimento deu espaço a um vazio ocupado por estantes e prateleiras expectantes. Removido todo o entulho e despojos, as estruturas de Dexion foram o remanescente deste incêndio. Reactivando o vazio, a mesma equipa de homens que transportou os resíduos do incêndio para o exterior do edifício, foi contratado para desmontar, transportar e remontar as estruturas metálicas no 4º piso.

86

A destruição de um foco e a reformulação da sua distribuição permite que este material envolver-temporara com sua história. Os Dexion ocupou agora o epicentro da laboratório rentinhem este eixo em os actividades de investigação, mais um lugar tornado improdutivo pelo incêndio.
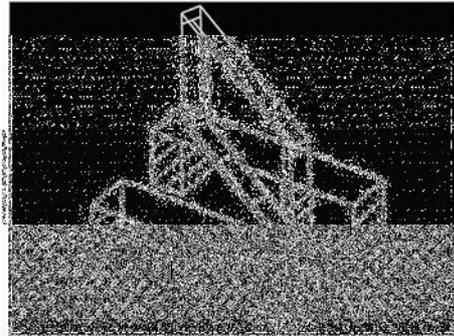
Aqui se iniciou o fogo.

Na exposição não é visível a dimensão performativa desta montagem. Acontece antes da inauguração, no processo de produção da exposição e a sua função de suporte expositivo, tal como com uma estante, um armário ou uma bancada em uso, torna-se invisível ao olhar de quem procura uma obra. Apenas as páginas deste caderno documentam e recordam que o material que sobreviveu ao fogo e à inundação serve agora de ecrã de projecção das imagens em slide captadas por André Cepeda. Participam na improdutividade do epicentro vazio e negro do incêndio:

repositório imaginário de materiais e imagens.

8

RESCALDO. E DEPOIS?

O 4º piso está agora negro e cru. O espaço expõe uma sucessão de vazios. A ala acidentada está estabilizada, consolidada e segura. Apresenta porém uma nudez indecorosa, uma crueza na sua materialidade que constitui uma arqueologia de eventos efémeros. Pelos indícios adivinha-se o abandono súbito provocado pelo acidente, preenchido pelos movimentos de salvamento e evacuação. Sentem-se as marcas das águas que apagaram as chamas, as nuvens de fumos e o vapor de água que preencheram os espaços. Pressentem-se os traços dos trabalhos de consolidação do edifício, a limpeza dos escombros, a lavagem das cinzas e dos despojos.

O rescaldo, lugar carbonizado que se empenha no controle e na reincidência do acidente, deu lugar à consolidação. As espectaculares ruínas não foram visitáveis, os espaços foram consolidados, as responsabilidades apuradas e assumidas, as obras de recobertura e de estabilização ficaram executadas rapidamente. A evolução do processo de estabilização foi breve. No exterior todos os indícios do incêndio foram eliminados e o restauro do invólucro prosseguiu. Não houve espectáculo. A vida coexiste com normalidade no resto do edifício, continuando a actividade da Universidade: os serviços administrativos, os actos do Salão Nobre, os Depósitos dos Museus, a Biblioteca do Fundo Antigo, todos permanecem em actividade, intactos e salvaguardados do fogo. Há uma coreografia permanente de mudanças e reordenações de usos e serviços nas entranhas deste gigante da cidade. Continuam também a decorrer diversas obras de modernização do edifício, recuperação de salas, instalação de infra-estruturas. *Por isso, ouvem-se máquinas, vêm-se cabos, entulho e pó.*

50

Ardeu. *O acidente destruiu uma parte do edifício e gerou um espectáculo efémero.* Mas o rescaldo e a consolidação produziram um novo lugar: edifício estanque, alvenaria consolidada, espaços vazios e superfícies queimadas. Um lugar anómalo onde entre a cobertura técnica nova e a para-cartografia de camadas derramadas nos pavimentos derretidos, existem a cinza, os ecos, o cheiro e a presença do queimado. Carbonizado e radicalmente esvaziado, o interior do rescaldo funciona como caixa de ressonância onde ecoam diversas presenças. As pós-presenças do incêndio preenchem de significações o vazio. E o vazio amplifica-as como numa caixa disfuncional: sem função, só com ecos. Por dentro.

Após o rescaldo, o espaço encheu-se de fantasmas – do acidente, da história, do passado -, enquanto novos planos e usos temporários fortuitamente se apropriam e encontram espaço. E assim, um vazio de funcionalidade, de representação, de utilização. camuflado pelas monumentais fachadas neoclássicas do centro da cidade foi aberto e está expectante. Ficou aberta uma visualidade da urgência e uma dimensão espacial do imaginário. As ausências provocadas pelo incêndio, e a violência da sua pós-presença, activam com eloquência o potencial simbólico dos espaços acidentados.

Entre os sons dos factos, da ficção e o vazio, este espaço coloca-nos um sonoro *"que fazer?"*

51

[1] Reference: Exhibition "*Burn it or not?*", curated by Hou Hanru, Ataturk Cultural Center, 2007. Part of the 10th International Istanbul Biennial: *Not Only Possible but Also Necessary. Optimism in the age of global war.* AKM - Atatürk Cultural Centre - is located speck in the center of the city of Istanbul, at Taksim square. It is a monolithic black volume, a sophisticated piece of monumental modern architecture. Designed by Hayati Tabanlıoglu, it burn down in 1970 and was reconstructed to become Istanbul's major house for opera and other high-art performances. In 2007, AKM faced the risk of destruction and/or demolition, for gentrification.

[2] The project was an opportunity to work with the historic building of the Rectorate of the University of Porto, a building familiar to me and where I had conceived/coordinated the set-up of several exhibitions (such as Storage (2007) and Pack (2007). The University of Porto wanted to present an art exhibition in a space temporarily available, exploring the very idea of fire.

[3] The burnt aisle of the building of the Rectorate of the University of Porto is situated in the same building where Storage exhibition was held in 2007. See Chapter 4, section 1.

[4] The photos and videos of spectacular fires in the burnt buildings designed by Rem Koolhaas and Zaha Hadid in China have circulated in images feeding a critique of the paradigm of financial development of the country. The post-fire events at the Faculty of Architecture in Delft were pragmatic as the demolition of the skeleton of the old building preparing the grounds for a new building, along with the publication of testimonies and memories of the old building. In London the remnants of a burnt building were redesigned as Raven Row gallery, a new building with a set of exhibition spaces that interpret and expose the tracks and the aftermath of the imaginary of a fire, of the story of the building and of the materials and textures of the flames.

[5] On CCTV see Koolhaas website: [http://www.oma.eu/projects/2002/cctv-%E2%80%93-headquarters] (20 January 2013)

[6] On the fire incident, see daily mail: [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1353315/Chinese-New-Year-5-star-hotel-destroyed-blaze-started-fireworks.html] (20 January 2014)

[7] Bernard Tschumi quoted in Jonathan Hill, *Actions of architecture: Architects and Creative Users* (London: Routledge, 2003), 78.

[8] Redhead, Steve. *Paul Virilio: Theorist for an Accelerated Culture. (*Edimburg: Edimburg University Press, 2004).

[9] See the project at Zaha Hadid´s website: [http://www.zaha-hadid.com/architecture/guangzhou-opera-house/] (20 January 2014]

[10] See article: [http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/5201855.article] (20 January 2014]

[11] The statement is referred here: [http://legacy.interiordesign.net/article/485244-Fire_Erupts_at_Zaha_Hadid_s_Guangzhou_Opera_House.php/] (20 January 2014)

[12] See article: Li Datong, "The CCTV Fire: A Voice Without Restraint," *openDemocracy* (5 March 2009) [http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/the-cctv-fire-a-voice-without-restraint] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[13] See archdaily news: [http://www.archdaily.com/827/tu-delft-architecture-school-devastated-by-fire/] (20 January 2014)

[14] Wytze Patijn (phone conversation between Dirk Sijmons) "Bouwkunde, Portrait of the Faculty of Architecture 1970-2008" *Building for Bouwkunde, Delft University of Technology* n.d. [http://www.buildingforbouwkunde.nl/Portals/BK2008/documents/B-book.pdf], 4 (accessed 10 January 2012).

[15] International Open Ideas Competition "Building for Bouwkunde": [http://www.buildingforbouwkunde.nl] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[16] Reference: Exhibition "Building for Bouwkunde" at Netherlands Architecture Institute (15 March – 7 June 2009).

[17] Opened in March 2009, it presents a new organization and reconfiguration of the existing spaces created by 6a Architects.

[18] See 6a-architects website: [http://www.6a.co.uk/projects#_raven_row] (20 January 2014)

[19] 6a-architects "Raven Row: Contemporary Exhibition Centre" *IconEye: Icon Magazine Online* (n.d.) [http://www.iconeye.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3691:raven-row-by-6a-architects] (accessed 10 January 2012).

[20] Philip Ursprung, "The Indispensable Catalogue," *Log Magazine*, no. 20 (Fall 2011): 103.

[21] Philip Ursprung.

[22] Exhibition: *Shandyismus, Autorschaft als Genre*, curated by Helmut Draxler, February 22 – April 15, 2007, Secession, Vienna.

[23] Sterne, Laurence, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (London: Wordsworth Classic, 2009 [1759-67]).

[24] Helmut Draxler, ed. *Shandyismus. Autorschaft als Genre* (Stuttgart: Merz & Solitude, 2007).

[25] A small incident in the reconstruction works of a rooftop, almost completed, provoked an extense fire which, in a few hours, has destroyed part of the roof and a few of the rooms in the aisle where a group of laboratories and educational spaces of the Faculty of Science were installed.

[26] Since the 5th may 2008, the rooms in the top floor have remained empty.

[27] The information fragments presented in national media have focused on: the first moments of the fire, its outburst and on the heroic extinction of the flames.

[28] Jonathan Saldanha is a sonic artist involved in several sound universes; he is a visual artist and researches on sonoplastics, acoustics, and the sound event, as well as on several musical scenes, from occidental to oriental to more popular/ethnographic. Along hi career Jonathan has abandoned pure visuality so to explore bodily incorporation as a vehicle to communicate sonically with the visitor's bodies. Sound and space align with visitor´s bodies, with the materiality of built buildings, exploring relations of body/building as transmitter and receptor of sound waves. Jonathan explores in His compositions the concepts of unspeakable and the inexplicable, events beyond rationalization and mental reception.

[29] Paulo Mendes explores relations between representation, narrative and the erasure of collective memory, specifically thinking of the official representations of "Estado Novo" – Portuguese fascist regime - , in public and private spaces where it was installed and in the collective memories of that same historical period, today rejected. Exploring the abandonment of objects and the destruction of spaces as parallel to the erasure of memory and to the non-existing public discussion of that period in Portuguese history, his work has been appropriating diverse archival materials and everyday objects (furniture, cloths, images), as he has been producing photography, video and performances articulated in spatial installations close to site-specific pieces.

[30] André Cepeda has been registering in large format photography the unproductive sides of cities, the degradation of urban and private spaces and the social conflict and harsh human landscape of several sub worlds.

A AND R!: A CONVERSATION ON CURATING SPACE

Inês Moreira in conversation with Bruno Marchand[1]

Cadernos de Curadoria *(Curatorial Journal)*: In a recent interview, you (Inês Moreira) suggested the idea of *curating space* as the underlying concept of all your curatorial activities. Within such a vast and diverse framework, why is the exhibition *Aftermath and Resonance!* the subject of this interview?

IM: The exhibition *Aftermath and Resonance!* came about at a time when my academic research was starting to take shape and was finding parallels with other practical projects[2]. It is a project in which I was able to test a specific research methodology in relation to space, and where the link between architecture and art is closer than a mere thematic relationship or mutual curiosity. This exhibition signals a turning point in the methodology of the relationship between a space and its creators, and is an analysis of architecture based on art as well as on other fields,

However, it also has a more "chaotic" methodology than my current one, as everything was uncovered as the project itself unfolded. It was a long project: one of the features of my work is to invest a significant amount of time in creating and developing projects. This is one of the reasons that I don't do many projects. But to return to your question, *Aftermath and Resonance!* is a project that I was able to collaborate and experiment with in different areas, and it helped me to discover and develop my own methodologies.

CC: What was behind this methodological transformation?

IM: I believe that with this project I was able to develop a unique research process, a field study on space (a burned-out Rectorate's office building), with access to archives and historical materials from a variety of different sources (photo-journalism, staff personal photographs), and to work closely with the artists and the production team, and also to follow almost daily the exhibition after its launch.

CC: What was the context of the project?

IM: *Aftermath and Resonance!* takes place in the attics of the building that holds the Rector's

office of Porto University, which had previously been the *Academia Real* and that for centuries had housed a variety of faculties and courses. It is a building that has always had tremendous symbolic importance in Porto. In 2007, with Paulo Cunha e Silva as curator, I undertook a study of several University museums for the exhibition *Storage (Depósito)[3]*, which opened the building to the public. In the spring of 2008, there was a fire on the upper floor that destroyed part of its interior. This fire was symbolic on several levels, one of these led to the relocation of the last of the courses that had been taught there, and finally transformed the building into a merely administrative space. It was no longer a building that hosted research labs, students and knowledge production, and it became simply a repository for history, administrative activities and the kinds of things that are no longer wanted and end up becoming part of University museum collections – the machines, tools, and other things that are left behind after the disappearance of research. Thus, my relationship with the building is imbued with considerable empathy, and I developed this through the stories it hid within it. The Culture Department of the University, with whom I had previously collaborated, then invited me to create an exhibition that would temporarily occupy the rooms that had been burned in the fire.

CC: What were the terms of the invitation?

IM: Initially, the proposal was to come up with an exhibition project specifically for these rooms. This meant that instead of working with a *white cube* or with a conventional exhibition space, the point of departure was a space with the recent marks of a violent fire. After I had begun the process of research, it became clear to me that the exhibition would have to centre on the materiality of the fire itself. The support of Alexandra Araújo - the University's cultural producer and with considerable experience in this area -, was essential in allowing the project to take its course.

CC: So you are saying that the violence the space experienced was more important than the architecture itself when developing the exhibition?

IM: In this project, the presence of the architecture was stronger than in many of the other projects in which I have participated. For example, at the *Biennial da Maia* (2001)[4], we took over the FIMAI textile factory and transformed it into a space for contemporary art; it was a space laden with history and contained a variety of material presences and prior uses. However, our occupation of the building was from a relatively conventional line of art projects from the 1970s and 1980s that occupied industrial spaces. The same thing occurred with the

project *Terminal*[5], where the industrial architecture was more spectacular, more interesting, and beautiful, but also more limited, and I was more of an architect of the exhibition. In *Storage,* the occupation of the Chemistry Hall was somehow less expected, however, with *Aftermath and Resonance!,* we had the opportunity to analyse a fire through a project that had not only an artistic element but that could also investigate the field of architecture and reconstruction. One of the sponsors was a building company which saw the opportunity for self-promotion and business creation. I think that this is an interesting aspect: we found that, contrary to our expectations, it was not the usual cultural partners and galleries that became involved with our project. In the end it was the construction management company Ribeirinho Soares that was interested in its name being associated with a revitalisation project. The collaboration between architectural tools, the interpretation and transformation of the space, the potential of the visual arts, the contributions of the guest artists and even the involvement of the University's non-cultural services – which contributed with archives and documentation – generated an extremely interesting energy that looked at thinking about that particular building in that particular circumstance. I think it can be described as multidisciplinary in the sense that the intention was to bring people together, rather than just being a desire for inter-disciplinarity.

CC: One of the ideas explored in the introductory essays of the book that accompanies the exhibition is that as an event, the fire event, should be taken into account not only as a motive or element that sparked a civic movement and artistic intervention, but also as the metaphorical place for the meaning of the projects there created. What is critical, political and artistic reach of the notion of fire in this project?

IM: In order to try to understand the project from the effects of fire, I looked at how similar fires in similar conditions had been treated. I discovered that the CCTV, the Rem Koolhaas public television building in China, which is an incredible building, had caught fire over the Chinese New Year due to the amount of fireworks that had been set off from the roof. The fire on the roof was spectacular and was used by the media as a form of ironic criticism of the Chinese government's desire to promote itself. In counterpart to this, I also discovered the fire that had broken out during the construction of the Guangzhou Opera House, designed by Zaha Hadid, of which there was only a single photograph on the internet (I believe due to censorship, as it possibly challenged the power and image of the Chinese government and the quality of its constructions). A third example was a fire that broke out in the famous Faculty of Architecture in Delft, Holland, caused by a short circuit in a coffee vending machine. In this

case, the accident gave rise to several events, which included a competition for new designs to reconstruct the building, an exhibition of these designs at NAI, the Netherlands Architecture Institute in Rotterdam, and a book with the memories of different people about living and working in the building. This meant that there was a record of peoples' memories, there were new technical plans for the reconstruction of the building and there was an exhibition of the results of the contest. A fourth case that related architecture and fires, and that seemed particularly interesting because this metaphorical element of fire is included as a new constitution of space, is the Raven Row gallery in London. Raven Row had a variety of uses over the centuries, but burned down in 1972. The plans for its reconstruction aimed to recreate what the building had been before the fire, and also to preserve the memory of the fire: in the details of the handles using a specific technique of cast-iron; in the flooring that has been left raw with the remains of the splinters and shards in full view; in a worn decorative element and in a series of details only noticeable at the level of the language of architecture. These were four very different forms of relating architecture and fire.

The way we approached the Rector's office building was to make a series of visits to the space and allow it to take its own part in the process. We had at our disposal a building which had been stripped of its language, an empty, raw, brittle building, marked by the flames and the fire-fighters' water. It was a space marked by fire but was also one in which nothing particularly spectacular took place. Therefore, through these visits, the idea was to try to work out how to make a building tell its stories without us limiting it to only one. The solution included attempting to interweave techniques and references from Anthropology, Archaeology, the Humanities and Social Sciences, and also from Architecture and the Visual Arts, in order to create a productive interaction.

CC: Was it you who organised this interaction? As you had already had a prior history with the building, with the project *Storage*, was it you who enabled the information flow between the participants and in particular, the artists; or was this something that they themselves took as a part of their own research?

IM: I introduced the artists to some of the people who had worked in the building; some came from previous collaborations and already knew the people there and their relationship with the building. Another important issue at the time was my collaboration with the Faculty of Humanities' Museology course, which is a multidisciplinary course stemming from the field of material cultural studies. This means that it is an environment in which archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, and professionals from other areas in which relations with physical

objects are crucial, can co-exist. At the time, much of what seemed important and interesting to me was actually to do with the non-material stories, with a hidden side that has to be told in order to exist, and that is dependent on dialogues that live in and work within the place. What I mean are the affective, emotional, and subjective dimensions that I wanted to bring to the process.

CC: Another of the two recurrent ideas in the book's opening essay are those of a *speculative project* and an *essay-project*. What were the perspectives for these ideas, and how do they translate into your curatorial practice?

IM: The vocabulary of curatorship is still a recent one, especially as curatorship was not considered a field of science until recently. Normally, the strongest lineage of curatorial terminology is from the history of art and material cultural studies. What we did was to embrace several other knowledge areas that had the potential to inform the study and research. For example, when I talk about a *speculative project* or *essay-project* I am also aligning myself to ideas of architecture, as in architecture the designs normally come before the actual constitution of a space, and come before a future is materialised. The aim of this exhibition was to amplify, as if through a loud-speaker, past events that still had a physical, but also non-material presence in the space. We called this a *speculative project* because this form of action allowed us to think about the space from a speculative perspective that is not only concerned with physical reconstruction.

CC: Do you mean that a *speculative project* or *essay-project* therefore implies a completely intangible foundation that is connected to a construction or, rather, to an organization of a group of events that, in some way...

IM: I like the idea of *construction* – a construction of ideas, as if ideas were the building blocks of a certain kind of building, a truly structuralist image (laughs). A *speculative project* does not lose its limit and gives itself over to open speculation. What it does do is to see speculation as one of the constituent forms of the project itself. However, the intention of an *essay-project* was to highlight two distinct working areas: that of academic essays, and of cultural projects. I believe that this exhibition is somewhere between an academic essay and a cultural project. In short, it is along the interface between cultural and academic research, and between a curatorial language from the history of art, and a line of study that is closer to material culture, and that I can nowadays work with more confidently. At this point, in 2013, I would also add another concept - that of *research-production*, which underscores the necessity of not allowing

research to only be expressed through ideas and papers, and of allowing it to materialise. Without wishing to refute certain areas of knowledge, there are levels of instantiation that are possible depending on if one uses a research methodology, or if one uses a production process. It is here, at the juncture that I see this interaction of concepts becoming operational.

CC: You made it clear in your text that you didn't want the spectacular element of the fire to dominate the project. Yet at the same time, you spent some time explaining that the fire is an event that consumes itself, that it is a space that extinguishes itself at the same time that it is happening. This is a very powerful image as a starting point for experiencing the exhibition. How did you work with the latent spectacularity of the project?

IM: I think I can answer that by giving two distinct examples. In London, I saw an exhibition that left me absolutely sure of what I did not want this exhibition to be. It was an exhibition that the City of London Museum about the 1666 Great fire of London. It was based on the spectacle of the fire, both in the paintings of the time, the engravings that told its history, and also on the techniques and gadgets that were used to simulate the fire. When I saw such a production and populist visualisation of the great fire, I immediately realised that the Porto exhibition could not be anything like it. The second example is in regard to the book I edited on the project for which I had invited Pedro Bandeira to write an essay, which ended up taking on the role of a provocation to academia, with situationist references that Bandeira had been exploring through his work, and that also served to politically question the University as a space for knowledge legitimisation. In his short essay, Pedro Bandeira touches on this more metaphorical side of the fire, and writes about its developments through references from literature, film, and history, underlining that at its root, fire is not something that puts itself out; it is something that is activated, like a political position. This notion is exactly the same as that in the famous situationist palindrome "*In girum imus nocte et consumimur igni*". At a time when the University was increasingly becoming a bureaucratic machine for teaching and knowledge, it was important to introduce the romantic and poetic side of the fire, which incorporates reinvention, depuration, and passion.

CC: When you realised that you wanted to keep this project from spectacularisation, how did you make your invitations to the artists involved, and what were the criteria behind them?

IM: I began by working with relatively small projects on a limited scale where what was important was the depth of contribution, rather than the number of those involved. I also tend not to invite people with whom I have no close references or prior collaborations. In this

particular case, I looked for people who already knew the building, whose work I was already familiar with, and whom I knew would respond to the challenge openly and would immerse themselves in the history of the place. This meant that more than a corpus of work, I was looking for a certain kind of profile. I think that is really important.

CC: Is the fact that there are only three people connected to a difficulty in finding this kind of profile, or is it to do with production issues, or to a desire for a small team and a more intimate process?

IM: I wanted it to be a small team and an intimate process. I was interested in exploring emptiness. Not an emptiness in which the works are invisible, but an emptiness in which the building was present, where the works that are present have a clear dialogue with the space. Instead of neutralising the dark burned out architecture, I wanted people who would be genuinely interested in being involved in the research process. For example, André Cepeda was an artist who was already familiar with the University's building and museums and I was interested in him taking part in the project as he already knew the hidden side of the place. André was familiar with the institution, the people and the spaces, and I realised that he would be able to come up with an interesting perspective on the space. In practice, his project was based on a premise that used damaged, badly processed, and out of date rolls of film. This material quality of the slides was *a priori* to a work that aimed to explore mistakes and accidents. To further accentuate this element of deterioration, the slides were projected onto poor quality screens made from cheap fabric, and mounted on structures made from shelves that had survived the fire that we designed together.

CC: A slight aside regarding what you have just said: bearing in mind that these structures had a concrete impact on the morphology of André Cepeda's project – and that they are also described in the book as an installation –, what is the status of these pieces in the exhibition and to what extent did your authorial work contribute?

IM: My intervention in the exhibition is as the author of the spatial component that has not been designed by the visual artists. André participates in the exhibition as a photographer, Jonathan Saldanha takes part in the exhibition as a composer and sound artist, and Paulo Mendes' involvement is as a visual artist, most specifically through his work with image in movement. My involvement is as an architect. The structure I referred to is an ephemeral architectural structure made specifically for André's photographs. It is not an artistic work. I usually sign my work as an architect, researcher and curator. In that order. I have never signed

anything as an artist. I am an architect and I came to curatorship through architecture. I don't want to disguise this more physical and material side of my work by only taking on the role of a researcher, because conceiving the space is a fundamental component of any curatorial project. It would be unthinkable for me to have another architect design my exhibitions as these projects come about as an immersive experience within curating space.

CC: Let's get back to the artists' works…

Inês Moreira: Jonathan's work was entitled Evocação e Ressonância [*Evocation and Resonance*] and it is perhaps the most metaphorical of the works. Put simply, the piece, which was a sound installation, aimed to make the building reverberate by evoking the sound of the accident, or rather, the sound of the flames racing through the building. At its root, what it did was to reactivate the experience, and the fear, through the manipulation of sound. For example, the low frequencies were carefully modulated so that they had a physical effect both on the spectators and on the structure of the building. In addition to being the first work in the project, it was also one that was omnipresent throughout the exhibition.

CC: So the sound volume was considerable.

IM: Yes. And it became even more so in the concerts that Jonathan gave throughout the exhibition. These always took place at the end of the afternoon – which meant that the public were in half-light, as there were no lights in the exhibition rooms – and this factor made the experience even more alarming and disturbing.

CC: Some of the rooms were actually empty, which must have further added to this sensation.

IM: Precisely. There were several empty rooms, with clear signs of the accident; there were marks where water had run down the walls; a partly charred whale bone; there were broken windows, and pigeons had come in through these and were living in the space alongside the works and the visitors [laughs]. Of course, this all led to the pieces' progressive deterioration but, rather than trying to stop the pigeons coming in, it seemed to us that it actually made sense in the wider scope of the exhibition. In a way, we took the idea of the space's deterioration to its extreme, as there were no preventative conservation actions taken that survived this ephemeral exhibition, which was in a constant process of deterioration.

CC: What about Paulo Mendes' work?

IM: Paulo Mendes' project was a double projection video based on a group of images of the

process of the deterioration and the transformation of the building over time. Paulo added to these images others that are part of our collective symbolism about fire as a visual phenomenon, and that are images that have come to us particularly through film. By editing this material, Paulo created a video-graphic piece that was installed in a space he had designed and which contained a variety of old, unwanted things and furniture that had come from the University museums.

CC: The material that accompanies the project is very careful about how it describes the participants of the project - calling them collaborators. As the curator, how did you follow the development of the works created for the exhibition, and how did you work together with the artists?

IM: We made a lot of visits to the space. The fact the building is located in the town centre meant that we could meet up with relative ease. Whenever someone had an idea or wanted to discuss anything, it was easy for us to meet there to test out solutions, and to rethink options.

CC: When you say "we", do you mean the whole group? Was it always a work shared by the four of you?

IM: Yes, the space was very much shared. There were several separate meetings with each artist, but there were lots of meetings together as well. This is anyway one of the hallmarks of my form of working. Instead of making studio visits I much prefer the *think tank* model. The advantage of discussing the works openly and collectively is that there is a mutual contamination and influences between them. Something that one artist says at a joint meeting may influence the work of another's, and this is not possible if you are isolated in your studio. It becomes a much more organic process. Additionally, these open exchanges go against the tendency to form hierarchies between participating artists, curators and the rest of the team. Whenever possible, I try to work towards eliminating these kinds of barriers and establishing permeabilities. I am not at all interested in the hierarchic processes of curatorial legitimisation. I am though interested in discovering how these artists' work can influence my own research, and can confirm and challenge it. I don't see the role of a curator as either an arbitrator or legitimiser: but just another participant in a process of extended debate and reflection on a given subject or issue.

CC: At the end of your catalogue text, you introduce the concept of *brown rooms/grey halls*[6] as a counterpoint to the abstraction of the *white cubes* and *black boxes* that dominate architectural options for commercial and institutional spaces dedicated to contemporary and

modern art. What is behind this concept and how does it work in the context of this exhibition?

IM: In this project I realised that what I was exploring was the connection between the semiotic dimension of the artistic intervention and that of the existing building. There is a line of inquiry that supports and informs my own research that is known as "material semiotics" and that in turn has come out of techno-scientific studies, which explore how the cultural and the technical intersect and work together. How is this translated in the exhibitions?

In part, the history of a building – which, in the case of the Rector's office building is a paradigmatic example of a *brown room*[7] – can be told through both the material and non-material dimensions of its existence. If one here understands a material dimension to be the building itself, its architectural characteristics and the marks of its transformation over time, a non-material dimension can be understood as the history of the place, its uses and its symbolic projection in society. This exhibition is the first project in which I have managed to delineate and articulate these ideas. While in projects like *Terminal* (Oeiras, 2005) – coordinated by Paulo Mendes and in which I collaborated as the exhibition architect – these questions had not yet surfaced, meaning that I chose a spatial construction that was related to the language of industrial spaces, but that did not have the concrete history of the place in itself, but with projects like *Buildings & Remnants* (Guimarães, 2012)[8], I was able to incorporate this dimension more strongly and effectively.

CC: What sets this concept apart, and what challenges does it present for *place-specific* practices, for example?

IM: This concept is very close to *place-specific* practices. However, I should underline that the experiences of artists in the 1960s and 70s, who initiated a variety of activities that were held in supposedly unconventional spaces, paved the way for a line of thinking about exhibition space that has taken these experiences to a far more complex level. While previously, spaces - even though they were far from the clinical hygiene of the *white* cubes -, acted essentially as containers, nowadays their histories and symbolic meanings directly feed into the projects presented in them. What I mean here is the potential exchange between the perspective of the curatorship of contemporary art and the curatorship of material culture. The way in which contamination takes place and how it interferes in the exhibition, have both become significant elements to my research. And I have tried to express this in the conjunction of these two terms, *brown rooms/grey halls*. To give you a more concrete example, the exhibition

Buildings & Remnants[9] explored these notions through a variety of strategies that ranged from anthropological and ethnographical research techniques, to transforming the architecture of the space, to set production and lighting design.

CC: On a different level, but in this same sense of diversification, how did you conceive of and organise the exhibition's programme of parallel activities?

IM: I think actually that the parallel programme was the most organic part of the project; it was to a great extent motivated by people's desire and availability to participate in the event. In part, the program corresponded to an organised framework of external contributions, situations that confirmed the involvement of the people in the exhibition and that expanded its effects. Among other activities, and in addition to Jonathan Saldanha's end of day concerts, we also had Filomena Vasconcelos' *Visitas Ficcionais* [*Fictional Visits*] – a performance event which had a significant literary component –, a cycle of readings with Sílvia Guerra, one-off conversations on subjects related to the exhibition, and workshops with students from the Master in Museology.

CC: What kind of inductive tools did you use to guide spectators' experiences?

IM: Visitors received a brochure with a range of information about the exhibition: a presentation text, listings of the parallel events, and an image that summarized the programme. There was also something slightly amusing, a sheet with safety instructions that the University had insisted on due to the inherent dangers of the building. The rooms that did contain works - there were several which were empty -, had A4 sheets at their entrances with images of the rooms before the fire, descriptions of the works within them, and their credits. I believe in mediating with different publics; that the work should be conceived for a group that includes, but that is not limited to the contemporary art public, and that encompasses the wider public.

[1] An abridged version of a conversation held between Inês Moreira and Bruno Marchand on the project *Aftermath and Resonance!*: the twelfth conversation of those published in a special box collection of twelve journals edited by Bruno Marchand, *Cadernos de Curadoria* (*Curatorial Journal*). Moreira, Inês and Marchand, Bruno. *Rescaldo e Ressonância!, Caderno de Curadoria #12* (July/August 2013), Fundação Cidade de Guimarães, Portugal, 2013. Special Box Collection [Portuguese]

[2] We refer to other exhibitions such as: *Terminal* (Oeiras, 2005), or *Storage (Depósito)* (Porto, 2007).

[3] See Chapter 3

[4] Exhibition: *Urbanlab*, Bienal da Maia, curated by Paulo Mendes, different venues Maia, 2001.

[5] Exhibition: *Terminal*, curated by Paulo Mendes + Plano 21, Fundição de Oeiras, 2005.

[6] See Chapter 6, section 1

[7] See Capter 6, sectiont 2

[8] See Volume 2 of the Thesis.

[9] See Volume 2 of the Thesis.

Chapter 6 : (NON) MATERIAL SPACE
Brown rooms/Grey halls
B & R: a conversation on curating post-industrial spaces

Chapter 6 explores space as a hybrid material and non-material entity, formulating (Non) Material space. The projects and the texts in the chapter are an attempt to curate spaces as considering its physical and material extension, augmented by other constituents that may not have a physical reality and which are believed to enlarge the more physical first perceptions. Departing from a concrete proposal - to develop a wide and complex study of post-industrial spaces in Europe, from factories, to landscapes, to scrap metal - , chapter 6 engages with many concrete spaces considering the readings of the previous chapters. Processual and transformative spaces of production, and of progressive abandonment, relate to conversational spaces reconstituted by narratives and different tellings of its many stories; and as well to resonant spaces and entities relating immersiveness and sounding materiality.

The main contribution of this chapter to the broader body of the thesis - *Performing Building Sites* - is the active curatorial approximation to existing buildings (some of which heritage), to propose a caring relation that aims not to rebuild its architectural structures, but to read and to intervene in it with (non) material approaches, as the telling of past and present conditions, as well as proposing new futures that are not necessarily reconstructions. If *building sites* follow plans and projects, in the particular case of post-industrial sites, the plans are not necessarily defined and spaces perform other, less productive, ventures.

Chapter 6 is divided in two sections (as the previous chapters 3, 4 and 5). In the first part we came to a conceptual proposal - *Brown rooms/Grey halls* – so to establish a dialogue between building and content, defying container/content conventions for architecture/art, or for exhibited/curated. *Brown rooms/Grey halls* text instantiates a specific case-study, the exhibition and book project entitled *Buildings & Remnants, essay-project on post-industrial spaces.* The proposed concept offers a theoretical strategy to deal with post-industrial spaces. Buildings, materials and spaces are read through different disciplines - from engineering, ecology, architecture, sociology, history, archaeology, art, among other. Field work practices were involved and invite to engage in performativity.

Following the more conceptual approach, section 2 includes a conversation focusing on the curatorial strategy to address architecture and to the several disciplines and knowledges involved in the large scale and long curatorial research project on post-industrial spaces. The conversation was held between two architect-curators, Inês Moreira and Luís Santiago Baptista and is held as a critical review of the curatorial strategy to deal with architectural industrial space.

B&R exhibition, general view from the entrance. Photo David Pereira

Post-industrial buildings and spaces dominate the landscape of many European cities and their territories[1]. Along with other historically resonant and semiotically overloaded production places, such as historical buildings, manufacturing sites and weathered monuments, these factories and industrial remnants provide intense spatial, material and experiential sensations to both informed and uninformed visitors[2]. From the romantic gaze of photographers of ruins to systematic studies by historians, archaeological/forensic analyses of past places and events and architectural reconstructions, most post-industrial places resonate with stories and figurations that want to be heard. These have been recorded by ethnographers and by storytellers engaging with different kinds of remains.

Post-industrial spaces deserve to be approached in ways that go deeper than the romantic gaze of amateur photographers while leaving room for fascination (not always found in the memories of industrial companies) and should also be understood in a manner that looks beyond the original factory architecture. The new spatialities and materialities found in buildings and their remnants demand a deep understanding of their conditions and potential. Abandonment, dereliction, dismantlement or advanced decay are states of incompletion, considered from the point of view of a pre-existing whole, but can be understood as new states of spatiality and materiality, if pasts, presents and futures are conjoined in a single reading.

I propose to conceptualize a mode of relating to space, materiality and its many non-material stories. This proposal is a hybrid approach to the many layers and physical remnants along with the *presences and absences* read in space. This approach has been explored previously in relation to burnt rooms, and now the aim is to extrapolate it to broader and more complex questions.

If industrial buildings have long been adopted for new cultural uses as contemporary art museums and other cultural venues, and if industrial archaeology has protected and explored built heritage, industrial machines and object collections in its museums (and eco-museums), then a dissimilar approach to post-industrial spaces can be identified. This approach is based on experience of fieldwork in abandoned factories and heritage sites[3], the designing of sets for exhibitions in industrial spaces[4], and on influences stemming from contemporary techno-sciences, such as material engineering or mining[5]. These influences, when brought together, read the post-industrial as a present condition and as its potential for future intervention, diverging from historical/heritage crystallizations and *pastiches* of past moments. It also borrows ideas from the humanities, such as the notion of immaterial heritage[6], or the notion of stratigraphy used in archaeology[7]. But most importantly, our proposal on space bridges the techno-sciences and the humanities with the works produced in fields such as art, cinema[8], photography[9], architecture[10], design[11] or sound art[12].

Industrial and other historical places demand the use of approaches that are fundamentally different from those explored in most exhibition venues (whether they be temporary exhibition places or more permanent museum halls[13]), which, in most cases, have examined the volumetric and technical space of existing buildings, neutralizing their remnants into new abstract architectural container rooms, like those explored in modernism and its later ramifications[14].

This paper explores how, in curatorial projects, the materiality of existing buildings can be considered as an extension of exhibited objects; how immaterial/verbal testimonies on existing places inform, and may embody, curatorial narratives; and how actual relationality (as in fieldwork practices) contributes to curatorial research and to experiential engagement with places. I call this concept of relating to space *curating space*.

[Co-lateral becoming space]

In canonical terms, architectural space is defined by a perimeter, whether that of a construction, an irradiation, or a fabricated material. This space configures a place of protection for its inhabitants (a hut), or a place in which to gather around a comfortable/useful centre of irradiation (a fire), underlining the notion of centre/perimeter, or the material/technical conditions required for its physical birth (enclosure).

A passage from a text by the artist Walid Sadek contains an introductory allegory that enunciates a remarkable (and violent) mode of spatial becoming, testifying to a horrific birth of space and speech. The most significant section says:

> "*Such corridors, and the stories that lie in them like dusty moths dead on the reflective plate behind the glow of a halogen light, are usually of the past. Unless a war happens to visit your city, encroach upon your front yard, intimidate your windows shut and send you scurrying into those corridors again on all fours like the child you once were. War can hurl us back unprepared into the spaces of childhood, into those secondary spaces (…). It can pack a family into a box-like semblance of security with little else to do except listen for sounds and hear too many. (..) And yet it is in such corridors, when surviving at the architectural end point of war, that we discover the desire for speech. First, it bursts sporadically, disjointed, words heavy with meaning even if without the couch of proper syntax. Words of a rare ambiguity, more like captions to faces we thought familiar, now crumpled in fear, almost primitive. Then it picks up, longer sentences, words connecting into a speculation, a probable guess. The corridor grows slightly more spacious, almost a room with a conversation in the middle. Granted, this is unlikely to last.*"[15]

Though ephemeral and only lasting for the duration of its performance, this passage instantiates different dimensions, the intensity of being part of spatial production and part of its affectivity. Never before has the potential of speech to become space, or the performance by which space is orally constituted, been more clearly expressed than in Sadek´s passage.

The inhabited corridor produces space from language, differing from those architectural foundational myths described in extensive architectural bibliographies which approach the notion of the hut as a place of physical protection; or the notion of a burning fire as a homely gathering space; or another variation, the notion of a fabric/textile enclosure as a fabricated second skin extending the body. We learn from this passage an oblique entrance to functional and production spaces, witnessing the becoming of something else: performativity and affectivity as minor constituents of space. This is a shift in notions of architecture and construction to notions of space produced through speech.

So what if we consider the production of space in a multi-layered manner, generating a deep resonance with notions of performativity and affectivity? Speech generates space as an immanent process of *becoming*. Referring to spaces through ephemeral events, through "atmosphericities" in space-making, architecture and construction are violently performed by unproductiveness and speech. This awareness expands the importance of minor events, generating a *spatial otherness*. The tensions between orality, technicity, and materiality are broader than the appropriation for new uses, as space resonates with the diverse depths and thicknesses of the social, economic and political contexts, convoluting with human and affective complexity.

White-black-brown-grey

B&R exhibition, general view at the hangar. Photo David Pereira

In the process of carrying out research for *Buildings & Remnants: An Essay-Project on Post-Industrial Spaces* I came across eroded notions of container/content relations as well as those transferences of exhibition space/exhibited object. The *presences and absences* in existing spaces and their relation to local histories have informed the curatorial narrative. *Buildings & Remnants* overcomes the technical, tectonic or strictly material modes of knowing/curating

space and buildings, overcoming the neutralizing relationship between curating and exhibition space.

The main lines are simple: if post-industrial spaces are loaded (both materially and semiotically), then to exhibit (*in*) them, and to occupy them, is to expose this "weight". The main questions go beyond design, construction or technicality and enter the inner field of curatorial knowledge: how can architectural (industrial) envelopes and the objectual/artifactual exhibit be conjoined? And how can the dichotomies of space/collection, container/content, or narrative/interpretation be surmounted? This raises a broader question, opening up what I consider to be a potent field of research: which tools and fields of knowledge should be engaged in order to adopt wide-ranging approaches to post-industriality? Post-industrial spaces demand that dialogues be established with old and newer stories, with concepts, containers and found objects. So zooming out from the immediacy of cultural production, how can space be curated? It becomes necessary to re-examine certain notions.

Exhibition spaces are informed by two main traditions that have dominated curatorial and cultural practices since the modernist era: the paradigm of the abstract *white cube art gallery* (still) informing the spatiality and visuality of most art galleries; and a divergent direction inspired by the display or set design (mostly in material-culture traditions). As Brian O´Doherty examined in his book[16], the two notions of *white cube/black box* have created neutrality in which to stage auratic objects. Visual and performative objects have made widespread use of it, and historical, anthropological and even zoological finds or media-art projects have all been exhibited in white, aseptic environments.

Post-industrial spaces open up other approaches, establishing a dialogue with this core duality of concepts. Spaces are most commonly found in a used state, darkened by traces of machines, materials and hands, bearing the stripes of industrial colours and the non-human proportions of containers for machines. Whether derelict or closed, post-industrial spaces reveal their uses and stories. I strongly believe these should not be neutralized. The use of such spaces for exhibitions and cultural projects relates to art practices in which, since the 1970s, existing spaces have been explored as sites loaded with materials and stories, from studios to site-specific art installations (in their relations to site and context)[17]. This use also relates to context-specific approaches to industrial heritage (such as those found in industrial archaeology, or in eco-museums that maintain raw spaces and old machines), and to several experiential surveys on urban space and landscapes (from walks to audio walks, ephemeral

happenings or subtle interventions). Such activities explore the poetics of and immersion in place, and trigger a deeper understanding of the social and economic dimensions.

Brown rooms/grey halls

B&R exhibition, transversal view of the exhibition, to the front. Photo David Pereira

I am essaying a new concept - *Brown Rooms/Grey Halls* - that has been arrived at through curatorial and architectural practice. Beyond the abstraction of the *white cube* spaces examined by Brian O´Doherty, which are so widespread in contemporary art galleries, as well as in the empty and aestheticized photographs of architectural spaces, *Brown Room/Grey Hall* is a conceptual figuration of non-neutrality in which space is/has been occupied.

The *Brown Rooms/Grey Halls* explored here cause the materiality, semiotics and affective dimensions of space to intersect, adding to the dominant black-and-white dichotomist notions that encapsulate curatorial endeavours. These are the worn-out reverse sides of neutral containers (such as abstract *cubes* or *black boxes*). Old rooms, historical sites, abandoned halls, damaged places, derelict spaces, dismantled and inactive industrial hangars, rough architectural structures, and even corridors, are fertile and socially loaded with stories. These stories reverberate in space and are willing to be depicted and exhibited.

To exhibit these sites, at these sites, demands that a dialogue be established between container and content; the building, event, place and exhibition space coincide in a single space, providing a workplace where all of the participating presences and absences omitted from *white cubes* become actors. If the generic designation of *non-conventional exhibition space* creates room for a *performativity* of space, then the presence of temporalities or the marks of passing time bring layers of past remnants to the new events. Post-industrial spaces such as hangars, factory halls, ruins or damaged landscapes are rich in *performativity*.

Therefore, the proposed conceptual figuration - *Brown rooms/Grey halls* - enunciates imperfect and incomplete spaces that resonate with absences and presences, i.e., spaces that are physically present, with an intense materiality manifest in the accumulated layers, the passage of time and in the real and imaginary stories that they incorporate.

To exhibit *Brown rooms/Grey halls* is to refer simultaneously to the effects of history and the past in space and to the reading/writing strategy intended to include visitors: the pieces, projects, spaces, visits, performances and actors are all parallel events that resonate. To tackle complex spaces such as *Brown rooms/Grey halls* is to consider complex/unclear entities and to demand tools capable of grasping and registering hybridity and complexity, aspects usually excluded from architectural representations.

The figuration of *Brown rooms/Grey halls* steps away from an analytical perspective and reveals approaches to *spatiality*, *materiality* and *resonance,* requiring a tactical reading to avoid reducing their hybridism and to assume the subjective embodied knowledge from which we have developed (scientific, personal, and affective) expertise. This speculative and experimental attempt plays with both empirical approaches to research into space/architecture and epistemological concerns in different fields.

Techno-cultural studies are a possible reference point for hybrid research since they question techno-science´s (and its industries') production and impact, approaching it at points where cultural and technical fields intersect via political, social, and economic tensions. Within such studies, the theorist Donna Haraway has emphasized the necessity (and benefits) of *multiple literacies* so as to address complex cultural-technical-scientific conundrums. Haraway´s *multiple literacies*[18] comprise readings acquired by specialized education, and other less disciplinary knowledge. Situating both the reader and writer in a literary affiliation and in an affective relation to objects and text, this position opens up the strict disciplinary boundaries that would usually delimit the end of one field of research and the beginning of affectivity.

Which "case-studies", authors and scientific contributions should we care about? Haraway´s multiple dialogues with disciplines and authors, engaging a situated and non-neutral mode of research, relates "knowledge" to text, objects and diverse personal backgrounds. The writer (or researcher, or curator) is a modest witness, situated in space and time and subjectively *diffracting knowledge*. Along with more conventional tools and scientific references based on expertise, the idea of the *care, protection and affection* of complexity itself are modes of relating to knowledge that should be stressed as modes of knowing the objects of study. This

epistemological model provides us with an approach to post-industrial space, materiality and its cycles.

Should curating space stop at objects, architecture, industrial design, local history, anthropology, or mine and materials engineering, thereby excluding networks of inquiry due to the limits imposed by literature? And what about personal, empirical and affective inputs? As "building sites" are prolific companions with which to enter the processuality of space, and the performances of production (they trigger methodologies which enable us to read and write conjunctions of objects, architectures, contents, containers, spaces, experiences and narratives[19]) so *Brown rooms/Grey halls* are a conceptual companion with which to enter to complex, incomplete, and intense entities.

Literal Metaphors

B&R exhibition, transversal view of the exhibition, to the back. Photo David Pereira

Processuality, conversationality and resonance are modes by which to depict complex spaces and, through these paths, the need for a narrative dimension in the spaces we research, and act on, are made urgent. Following Donna Haraway´s notion of *literal metaphors,* which are simultaneously material and semiotic and, by virtue of their strength, can expose specific case studies and be read as a metanarrative (e.g. *Oncomouse*), *brown rooms* allow for kaleidoscopic readings of diverse conditions in post-industrial space and architecture. If figurations condense complexities and demand to be strategically unfolded, *Brown rooms/Grey halls,* as a figuration for post-industrial spaces, demand for the opportunity to be told, and heard, beyond the immediacy of an exhibit for the visitor´s experience. How to introduce a modality of storytelling in/on/through spaces, beyond "exhibiting the crude space" or "exposing an objective" space?

A script can be a way of reading and writing a space/object and its unstable condition, instantiating the figuration through several stories that start with everyday gestures of cultural production and curating. The following script offers an open approach to grasping a network of complex spaces, generated by a *Brown Room/Grey Hall*. It offers a visit to a conglomerate of spaces which are geographically, historically and culturally separate but which come together to produce a new assemblage. It exposes the resonances of vernacular space; it becomes a work of art and an exhibit of a symbolic place; and it enacts the difficulties of depicting the limits between manufactured/constructed readings and museum/cultural writings. Following a network activated by post-industrial vernacular architecture exposes the multiple literatures and fieldwork needed to keep and expose the potential of post-industrial space.

Obliqueness as a methodology reads, writes and transfers diverse modes of knowing. I believe that *obliqueness* has a performative relation to a thing, to its recording/writing, and to the role of the reader/writer. So, it is a position that allows odd objects, such as post-industrial spaces, to be disturbed and grasped in all their complexity. The example of scrap-metal yards is a strange one, but it brings forth a notion operating throughout this research, which has been approached, and entwines with a broader question of methodology. One starting point from which to understand *brown rooms* as *literal metaphors* would be to think of the readings and uses of scrap metal outside a factory.

To follow the refractions and networks of scrap metal cycles is to disturb a notion of space and production: from mechanical and structural high technology to networks of dismantlement, compression, piling up and recycling, to raw material. Or, from oxidation into new shiny plates; to laboratorial analysis of mechanical, chemical or energetic past events that change materials; to sculpturing works of art out of used materials, to seeing the technical and poetic intersections between them.

A kaleidoscopic reading of scrap metal expands a notion of post-industriality that goes beyond design, representation or linearity. It might unfurl in any of the following ways: as an experiment with metal alloys; as an alternative black-market economy; or as an attempt to decorate or simply improvise. It can be read in multiple ways, from the point of view of quality, value, or aesthetics. It is likely that someone working on a material sciences project enjoys the aesthetic/visual results. And, besides the official circuit of second-hand materials, scrapyards are often involved in black markets and material illegalities, adding Law as another layer to raw material. *Brown rooms/Grey halls* are neither neutral containers nor plain semiotic interplays of presences/absences; they are stories in need of being told. Why not?

The scrap-metal script

Scene 1 [scrap metal and the dismantling of a shipyard in Gdansk]

Photo: Konrad Pustola, Gdansk

Shots: Early in the morning, a boat sails through the port and offers a broad view of a shipyard, with its cranes, buildings, materials, and a few other elements indicating the construction of ships. A view from the shore shows the movement of a boat on the water, carrying metal parts. A third view shows a pile of rubble and a yard containing bits, chunks, and pieces of an office building being torn down. A fourth view shows empty spaces echoing the sounds of demolition. At the end of the day, an image reveals the rear of an outdoor space with the name of the lofts to be built.

Line: The shipyard reveals processes of *production, dismantling and the unproductive* aspects of heavy industry.

Scene 2 [a worker´s shed door reopens after closing in the 1980s]

Photo: Konrad Pustola, Gdansk

Shots: Work tables inside a shed link together processual spaces: lockers, cloths, papers, dossiers, a telephone, and work gloves as they were abandoned in the 1980s. The work tables once offered a platform for gathering, lunch, work, or private conversation. The plots engendered in these isolated spaces eventually led to the downfall of the communist system. Empty sheds were enlarged to become *conversational spaces*. Work tables stand in the middle of *resonant spaces*. The recorded sounds of men entering and exiting these spaces fade out. Images of the Worker´s Union and old pictures of protesting workers can be seen inside a drawer.

Line: Work tables are *performative allegories* through which to think of production and relationality in production.

Scene 3 [transformation into a new project]

Photo: Konrad Pustola, Gdansk

Shots: A man stands in front of a shed, showing interest in it, while another measures and takes photographs. One opens the door of a shed and explains to his assistant, "the sheds were built by brigade groups out of scrap metal left over from ship building, to create private spaces within the shipyard structure". The sheds were meeting places and comfortable locker/lunch rooms. In the winter, they were heated by surplus steam from the (now dismantled) factories. The artist looks at it, wondering what to do.

Line: The workers´ shed *becoming* a work of art

Scene 4 [adaptation of vernacular sheds to EU transport standards]

Photo: Konrad Pustola, Gdansk

Shots: A worker measures the shed and confirms the actual measurements of a shipping container in a drawing. He then marks the shed with a blue line, indicating the place where it will be cut so as to fit to the container´s measurements. The shed is cut at the ends, following the sketch of a shipping container. The sharp metal edges of the freshly cut surfaces expose the old rusty surface to a shining sun. The shed is ready to be loaded onto a heavy truck and transported from the port along the highways. It moves along the road with other loaded and empty trucks.

Line: the vernacular shed initiates the dialogue between old materials/systems and the new EU standards imposed on ships and trucks.
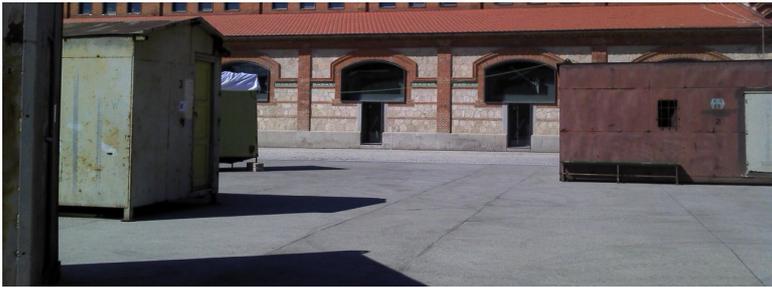
Scene 5 [five sheds move to several cultural venues in Europe, including the Solidarnosc Camp project]

Photo: Inês Moreira, Madrid

Shot: overall view of the Solidarnosc camps in Gdansk, Brussels, Kiev, Madrid and Warsaw with an installation by Grzegorz Klaman and other art pieces by several artists. The camps host talks, performances, events, conferences and publications by several authors, reaching diverse audiences all over Europe.

Line: works of art installed in sheds as symbols of the workers' movement in Poland in the 1980s.

Scene 6 [a five-ton shed arrives by truck to a new cultural venue]

Photo: Paulo Mendes, Guimarães

Shots: The shed is transferred from a truck to a couple of euro-palette carriers balancing the 5-ton weight. The shed is unloaded and faces the adversities of being hosted at a factory that is currently being readapted to become a cultural centre. Its dimensions complicate the moving of the shed, which enters the factory and is left in the lobby as the new doors to the cultural centre are too low to allow a container of that size to pass through. The new refurbishment work did not take volume into account. Producers, curators and other bureaucrats discuss where to leave the shed. No solution is found and the shed is temporarily parked in the hallway to be placed in the exhibition gallery.

Line: a shed goes to Portugal to be shown as an art installation.

Scene 7 [arrival and residency at a factory that is still under construction]

Photo: Paulo Mendes, Guimarães

Shots: Construction works taking place at the factory require the shed to be pushed and moved around the industrial building site. The curator complains about the safety of the work of art and holds on to the keys to block the entrance. A group of construction workers sit down beside it for lunch and hang up some clothes. The curator and producers complain. New construction materials are moved within the factory and stored alongside the shed. The shed is moved from its previous position again. A wide gap has been opened in the floor to allow new electrical infrastructure to be installed 60cm from the shed. Curators, producers and the factory owner meet to discuss safety and insurance, giving rise to a tense situation.

Line: The piece remains in a factory that is under construction and appears as a worker´s shed again.

Scene 8 [Bureaucrats meet to re-state the nature of the shed as a work of art]

Photo: Paulo Mendes, Guimarães

Shots: A meeting at the offices of the cultural organization to discuss the difficulties of accommodating the shed inside an industrial building under adaptation. The curator presents several DIN A4 prints of the shed surrounded by piles of construction materials. The meeting turned into a debate on issues of safety, insurance and the state of abandonment of the "Shed". The organization is fundamentally worried about the delay in the construction works and admits that the operation is intricate and that it is difficult to ensure that construction workers remain aware that the shed is now a work of art. The meeting lasts for hours and touches on other issues related to industrial heritage. One of the several bureaucrats at the table says: "it was a mistake to bring the shed into a building site; it should never have come as the men won't understand that the *Shed* is not a builders' shed but a work of art". Eventually the shed is moved to the exhibition storage depot a couple of months later, along with art-transportation crates. End.

Line: The shed´s status as a 'work of art' interrupts the day-to-day construction work being carried out at the building site.

[1] van Boom, Nienke, Mommaas, Hans. *Transformation Strategies for Former Industrial Cities*, NAI Publishers, 2009

[2] This footnote is intended as an index to the books presented for consultation in the exhibition *Buildings & Remnants*. The collection of a bibliography to accompany the project was a starting point for several conversations and relations with other fields and to the authors participating in the project and, therefore, and risking sounding loose, its inclusion as commented list reference in the present text is an attempt to binds the essay and the exhibits.

A photographers working on industrial settlements:

Margaine, Sylvain. *Forbidden Places – Exploring our abandoned heritage*, Jonglez, 2009

Moore, Andrew. *Detroit Disassembled,* Damiani/Akron Art Museum, 2010

Payne, Christopher. *Asylum,* The MIT Press, 2009

van Rensbergen*,* Henk. *Abandoned Places II,* Lannoo Publishers, 2010

Celestino García et al, Braña. A Arquitectura da Indústria, 1925-1965, Fundação Docomomo Ibérico, 2005

Selected bibliography on Industrial Archaeology, from past few decades:

A.A.V.V. Revista Monumentos 29: *Covilhã, a Cidade-Fábrica*, IHRU, 2009

Blake, Brian. *Industrial Archaeology,* BBC Publications, 1965

Buchanan, R. A. *Industrial Archaeology in Britain,* Viking, 1974

Casella, Eleanor C. *Industrial Archaeology: Future Directions (Contributions to Global Historical Archaeology),* Springer, 2005

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Edensor, Tim. *Industrial Ruins: Space, Aesthetics and Materiality*, Berg Publishers, 2005

Hay, Geoffrey D. *Monuments of Industry: An Illustrated Historical Record*, Royal Commission on the Monuments of Scotland, 1986

Neaverson, Peter. *Industrial Archaeology: Principles and Practice*, Routledge, 1998

Palmer, Marilyn. *Industrial Archaeology: A Handbook,* Council for British Archaeology, 2012

Rix, Michael. *Industrial Archaeology*, Historical Association, 1967.

On regeneration of industrial sites:

Arkio, Tuula. *New Sites: New Art*, BALTIC, 2000

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Stratton, Michael. *Industrial Buildings: Conservation and Regeneration: Initiatives in Conservation and Regeneration,* Taylor & Francis, 2000

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Najafi, Sina. Cabinet #20: Ruins, Cabinet, 2005 and Najafi, Sina. Forgetting: 42, Cabinet, 2011

[3] This approach can be instantiated by the work of artists as Patrícia Azevedo Santos, Micael Nussbaumer, or by Eduardo Matos.

[4] We designed two previous exhibitions which were important experiments in this approach - Fundição de Oeiras, Projecto Terminal, 2005 e Fábrica de Fiação da Maia, Urbanlab, 2001

[5] The collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto through its Museum in a project named "*Post-Industrial Thinking Machine*" is an example of a dialogue with science research under development.

[6] The field work on verbal testimonies on miner's life´s experiences developed at Borralha wolfram mines, by historian Pedro Araújo, comes along this line.

[7] Historical/Industrial archaeology research: "*Stratigraphic readings of Moinho do Buraco Factory*" by Mariana Jacob.

[8] Short-film, title: "*Cooper is not all that shines*" by Frederico Lobo and Tiago Hespanha.

[9] Installation composed of HD video projections, 9 photographs of mines and a collection of digital photographs of miners and families, title: "*Wolfram*" by Konrad Pustola. Three large analogical black and white photo prints, taken during night, title: "*Black Smoke*" by André Cepeda.

[10] Matadero in Madrid and Can Framis in Barcelona are good examples of such approach to architecture.

[11] The research on an archive of soap labels from *Confiança factory*, developed by Nuno Coelho, explores a scientific and visual approach to industrial design.

[12] The sound project by sound artist Jonathan Saldanha titled: "*Khorus Anima*"; and the sound installation titled: "Then and… cut" by Pedro Tudela.

[13] A.A.V.V. *Baltic – The Art Factory: The Building of Baltic, the Centre for Contemporary Art*,
Gateshead, BALTIC, 2002

[14] Sampaio, Maria da Luz. *Actas do Colóquio de Museologia Industrial. Reconversão e Musealização de Espaços Industriais.* Associação para o Museu da Ciência e Indústria, 2003

[15] Walid Sadek, "A Room with a Conversation in the Middle", in *Notes for an Art School,* Manifesta 6 (Nicosia, School Books, 2006). The book is a catalogue of the cancelled event Manifesta 6.

[16] Brian O´Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1999).

[17] Claire Doherty, *Contemporary Art: From Studio to Situation*. London: Black Dog Publishing, London, 2004

[18] Joseph Schneider and Donna J. Haraway, "Conversations with Donna Haraway," in Joseph Schneider, *Donna Haraway: Live Theory* (London/New York: Continuum, 2005), 149.

[19] This is further explored in my PhD Thesis: Performing Building Sites: A Curatorial Approach to Space. To be presented in late 2012 at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Inês Moreira in conversation with Luís Santiago Baptista[1]

Luís Santiago Baptista: As the curator of the exhibition "Edifícios & Vestígios: Projecto-Ensaio sobre Espaços Pós-industriais" [Buildings and Remnants: An essay-project on post-industrial spaces], what were your plans and your aims for the project?

Inês Moreira: *Buildings and Remnants* is an "essay-project" on post-industrial spaces. It was initially conceived of as a project for an exhibition between art and architecture that would work at a more conceptual and metaphorical level in relation to local industrial spaces and others within Europe, but when we looked more closely, we discovered a variety of modes of empirical knowledge together with numerous other fields that also seek to find ways of relating to the industrial past.

The project went beyond just the exhibition, and experimented with new readings and approaches to post-industrial art and architecture, engineering, archaeology, history, sociology, photography, cinema and sound, in addition to conservation and restoration. While our initial intention had been to present work that "touched" on the theme, over the two and a half years of research and production we ended up with an essay-project that led to new understanding in a variety of areas, as well as new artistic work. It is important to point out that I also invited the Polish curator Aneta Szylak, who is the director of an arts centre based in an industrial building within the shipyard of Gdansk, to work with me on the concept of the exhibition, which shows both the results of the research and the art work.

LST: If one considers the theoretical concept of "post-industrial", how does this function and develop within the particular context of the Vale do Ave? What are the roles of the other international contexts, notably Gdansk, which were involved with the exhibition?

IM: The post-industrial concept serves several approaches to industrial and economic futures: outsourcing, digitalisation, creativity, all of these use the same designation and propose different futures. We are positioned between the past and the future. This is why I invited Aneta Szylak with whom I have collaborated and together with Leire Vergara and Arne Hendricks, co-curated the exhibition *Materiality* in Gdansk. We wanted Gdansk and the

curatorial work that we developed there to enunciate the political dimension of industry, labour, workers, and also of the huge scale of State industry. There is an invisible triangle in the exhibition that connects the project, the places and their peculiarities; the large and medium/small scale of industry, which in the case of Gdansk was state-owned and on a huge scale, and in Portugal was private and evolved organically; and also the tension between the material and non-material dimension of activating industrial spaces which are visible today and are deepened by the state of dereliction and incompleteness of post-industrial spaces.

LST: The exhibition is widely inter-disciplinary, encompassing themes from art to architecture, anthropology to geography, history to biography, etc. What were the reasons that led you to this "essay-project" model?

IM: There are a vast number of abandoned/derelict buildings out there and a tremendously rich potential for discovering objects, and industrial remnants that no one knows what to do with. An essay-project can attempt to read, articulate and experiment with answers to our question: how can one interpret, record and transform post-industrial spaces?

The project is based on both an epistemological and direct action approach; it explores interdisciplinary readings of architecture and industrial buildings from the perspectives of visual culture, art and cinematography. The research tools of history, anthropology and archaeology (such as field work and documenting remains) have been fundamental in the relation between the buildings and remnants. There is a genuine need to come up with new approaches to what is post-industrial and to materialise them, and it was this convergence that led to a real, material and concrete dimension.

For several of those involved whom we met, the project allowed them to explore more speculative, less conventional elements of their own current production. I discovered that we were beginning to work with a research/production model where the various researchers I had invited were able to realise their research projects, and where artists were invited to research and present their own methodologies. It is an "essay-project" that tests and tries out different approaches, which are materialised in "research-production" modes. The exhibition presents the various methodologies and proposals in the 1st person, and they are frequently conflicting, but also precisely reflect the variety of potential post-industrial futures.

LST: Is there any contamination in the exhibition between fields that are commonly considered as opposites: fields like science and art, technical skills and culture, documentaries and fiction

etc? What is it that interests you about these specific fields? How would you define the space between such different logics?

IM: I don't believe in opposing fields, or in the controlled orchestration of a repertoire of answers/solutions provided by a curator. By following a pair of referents and a concept – how to approach post-industrial buildings and remnants – we unearthed a vast amount of knowledge, poetic and metaphoric readings, methods of resolving technical problems, visions of potential futures, and ways of registering the past. And in particular we discovered expectations that people and institutions now have and wish to articulate and relate to: local collective memory, the structure of territory and landscape, pollution/contamination, tragedies and life stories, all of these drive and stimulate conversation. In this sense *Buildings and Remnants* is a polyphonic dialogue: the curators talked to local people and artists, scientists, historians and workers, and these brought their own references and other authors who together created a network of questions, proposals and institutional partnerships. For example the collaboration with the FEUP museum was very interesting, as the mapping of technical solutions and materialisations - e.g. groundwork, chimney brickwork reconstruction – required alteration to the language of the project and reconsideration of the selection of artists involved, so that there could be dialogue between all the participants. There was also the way the British collective The Decorators created our conference space in collaboration with a basket-weaver, seamstresses and the kitchen of the local inn. Following a "curatorial edition" logic, the presentations needed to be modulated (like sound) so that the different voices could be heard. From the numerous commentaries on the project, one is particularly inspirational for its hybrid nature and incompleteness: "a cyclopic task", that declares an observer an "out-law" with a sidelong gaze, an inheritance of builders and blacksmiths. If we add to this the dialogical model behind it, we have a figuration as hybrid as the research itself.

LST: The exhibition is imbued with an almost romantic atmosphere that is poignantly nostalgic and melancholic, and that inevitably evokes feelings of loss, destruction and absence. Is this exhibition centred on the negative? Is negativity a precondition of post-industrial spaces?

IM: This is one possible interpretation if one looks at the remnants and the immersive experience in a raw space and in shadow... However, a more progressive view of industry or even architecture would nowadays be a kind of fiction. There is an ironic romanticised element in the black trailer in Pedro Bandeira's *Máquina Romântica*; there is the brutality of demolition in Michal Szlaga's film and Konrad Pustola's films about the Portuguese mines, and also in the improvisation of the skaters being "found" by Tiago Hespanha and Frederico Lobo. But I know

that on the other hand there is Artur Franco's architectural project Matadero which won the FAD Architecture award 2012; the Can Framis – the new museum in Barcelona; and the SNA Europe, a factory in Vila do Conde based on the LEAN model which is a great management success story, and the film that Rui Manuel Vieira made on its production. We also have the new construction materials made from the remains of power stations (FEUP), innovative conservation and restoration techniques (Lab C&R do IPTomar), and the return to the mining and extraction industry supported by the Portuguese government as a solution for the national economy.

There is yet another reason for optimism! We are very optimistic about post-industrial futures and their potential (not of the 1960's industrial model). Several of these projects began on a small scale, small experiments that make collections and can create Museums (Confiança [Trust]), create events (The Decorators) and create spectacle (Jonathan Saldanha) and, whether they were able to continue or not, they transformed the lives of their participants.

LST: One could say that the exhibition focuses on the subject of memory, on its simultaneous presence and absence. This is something that for example is clear in Ignasi de Solà-Morales' text "terrain vague" and in Manuel Mozos' documentary Ruínas. The memory of an industrial world that is disappearing, the memory of its material remains, the memory of its absent activity etc. What is the structural relationship between space and memory in *Buildings and Remnants*?

IM: Both these references are completely right; I was a student of Solá-Morales in 1999 and expectant spaces were widely debated as manifestations of the urban, the artificial and the disappearance of nature in his classes – expectant spaces are spatial manifestations of contemporary culture. However, I now look at this text from a certain distance, spaces are no longer as expectant, and with the property crash and vanishing investment, these spaces are now less temporary, they are no longer waiting... And Manuel Mozos' film is a strong reference for the relationship between buildings and document, with the voice as a spatial guide. *Buildings and Remnants* explores two particularly strong dimensions: materiality and the non-material. You are right that we sought spaces that speak, that resonate and that narrate. Aneta's specialist area is literary theory, mine is architecture. Aneta´s Doctoral research is on Palimpsests and Bahktinian polyphony, and it was in this connection that I saw the potential for collaboration: materiality and the non-representational side of architecture. *Buildings and Remnants* looks at spatial presence and absence, and also in the non-material stories that activate space. In my research I formulated something that I would like to put forward here: an

inhabited corridor produces a space engendered by language, which is different from the founding myths of architecture mentioned in the extensive architectural bibliographies and their notions of shelter as something physically protective. There is an oblique entry point to functional and productive spaces, and this leads to the birth of something different: performativity and affectivity as lesser constituents of space. It is a landscape made up of architectural and constructive notions of space produced by speech.

LST: Although this is not merely an architectural exhibition, one could say that it may be vital to spatial and architectural thinking on post-industrial territory. Apart from two architectural works presented, the exhibition avoids positing answers through architectural projects. What is it that has led to this deliberate distancing from the subject field of architecture? Is there a structural conflict between architectural projects and constructed industrial memory?

IM: The exhibition is about "spaces" and is founded on a cultural and technical-scientific reading (not specifically about architecture). As I mentioned previously, it includes cases of architectural constructions built in the last few years, which are ways of reconverting space through visual and colour management, and also encompasses the reconstruction of two demolished buildings, the work of three photographers, two film makers, and the creation of five engineering projects, thereby introducing a tremendous diversity of fields. I think that the issue is set along a temporal arch, as all the buildings in the exhibition were constructed, whether in the 19th century, whether in the 20th century or whether only last year. We relate to them as existing, demolished, reconstructed, recorded, archived, and we explore the different lives and after-lives of buildings. We have projects, models, blueprints, samples, documentaries, and a wide range of examples of the forms and representations of architectural construction.

But what is implicit to your question is the commissioning of architectural projects for industry. The industrial architecture of Northern Portugal (the coastal regions and Lisbon are different) is not an architectural proposition put forward by architects, but rather, they are buildings developed in accordance with the need to house machinery. While there are some exceptions, interestingly, the majority of cases acquired the machinery for (textile) production from foreign manufacturers, which also offered the architectural project to house the machinery, which was an empty shell. There was no architecture, only construction. Now, with the dismantling of industry and the price of metal, the machines are being sold and these empty shells are being demolished and sold for scrap. Space is not preserved, only the materiality is recycled. It is on this vertex one finds post-industrial space, like the gigantic cranes that are

being demolished in Gdansk, or in the meticulous analysis of scrap undertaken by the FEUP for this project, that I believe we will be able to extend and expand the territory of reading architecture.

LST: There is great care taken with the curatorial strategy used, inviting artists to creatively participate with their perspectives on the theme, invoking memory and the remnants of industrial presence within the context of Guimarães, involving teaching and museological institutions that provide a variety of information and materials etc. How are these different participations structured and how do they interact within this curatorial approach?

IM: Would it be possible for the curators of the space to not include the objects, architecture, industrial design, local history, anthropology and engineering of materials and mines, thereby excluding these research networks because of the limitations imposed by conventional literature? What should one conclude in relation to personal, empirical and affective contributions? What *case-studies*, authors and scientific contributions should we look at?

Donna Haraway is an author in the field of cultural studies whose work I have followed since 2001; she is an extraordinary analyst and epistemological specialist. The multiple dialogues that Haraway establishes between different fields of study and authors, using a non-neutral situational research technique, relate *knowledge* with texts, objects and people of different origins. Writers (or researchers or curators) are modest witnesses within space and time that subjectively *diffract knowledge.* By placing readers and writers in a literary affiliation and in an affective relationship with objects and text, she encourages a relaxing of the rigid frontiers between different subjects, which tend to delineate where one subject stops and another begins.

The *multiple literacies* posited by Haraway include readings acquired over specialised education as well as other less formal modes of knowledge. Together with other more conventional tools and scientific references founded on skills, the ideas of care, protection and affection about complexity are modes of relating to knowledge that should have a specific role as methods of discovering the study objects. This epistemological model enables us to approach post-industrial space, materiality and its cycles.

LST: The Fábrica ASA building, in which the exhibition is held, is in itself a part of the exhibition, something that is clearly shown through the participation of the artist Paulo Mendes. What is the role of the exhibition space in the curatorial project?

IM: Over the research process of *Buildings and Remnants* I came up against clichéd notions of relations between container/content, transfers of exhibition space/exhibited object. The *presences and absences* in the existing spaces and their relationship with local narratives influenced the curatorial narrative. *Buildings and Remains* goes beyond a technical, tectonic or strictly material way of understanding/curating space and buildings, and delineates the relationship of neutralisation that is usually established between curator and exhibition space. It is simple: if post-industrial spaces do indeed have a kind of (material and/or semiotic) "charge", exhibiting *(in)* them and occupying these spaces also means exhibiting this "charge".

The principle questions go beyond aspects of design, construction or technicality, and lead us to the crux of curatorial knowledge: how can one conjugate (industrial) architectural wrappings and the objects/artefacts exhibited within them? How can one resolve the dichotomies of space/collection, container/content, and narrative/interpretation? This raises a wider question, which seems to me to be fertile ground for research both for this project and future projects: what tools and areas of knowledge should be invited to develop more widely-embracing approaches to the post-industrial? Post-industrial spaces require dialogues to be established between both old and new narratives, to find concepts, continental spaces and objects.

From a more specific perspective, the exhibition has made it possible to materialise a spatial concept that I have been exploring, the *Brown rooms/Grey halls* in their dialogue of container/content; the post-industrial container and the contents that reflect continuity between building-object-exhibition. I believe that in this project we have been able to take an important step in curating space.

[1] This conversation between Inês Moreira and Luís Santiago Baptista, chief-editor of Arqa Magazine, was held in November 2012 and focuses on the project *Buildings and Remnants* as a critical review of the project, to be published at the special issue of Arqa Magazine devoted to Guimarães 2012, European Capital of Culture. Moreira, Inês and Baptista, Luís Santiago. *Buildings & Remnants interview,* Revista Arqa #104 (December 2012) [Portuguese]

Chapter 7 : PERFORMING
Depicting. [knowing/site]
In/on/through.
Last remarks.

Chapter 7 explores transdisciplinary strategies to address, and support, research on heterogeneous entities, as the ones we have been addressing along the previous chapters. We called it *performing*, as our attempt to enter research from the three theories that we approached as theoretical scaffoldings, finding external support to our own research. Ours´ is an attempt to set a methodology for curatorial research on hybrid and complex entities, beyond authorial, objectual or disciplinary delimitations.

The chapter attempts to outline a proposal for *depiction* of heterogeneous objects, so to support strategies to interdisciplinary work. It proceeds by visiting social and cultural sciences, namely, material-semiotics, assemblage theories and the critique of techno-science. Paying attention to authors studying hybrid and heterogeneous entities, we focus mostly on how they set reading/writing strategies within their research. We bring a group of authors/approaches into discussion: performative *actor-networks* as defined by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law; Donna Haraway's strategy of *densification of figurations;* and John Law´s *method assemblages*. The first and the last are broad theories to analyse the social from which we learn modes of *depiction*; from the other one, Haraway´s, we learn different contribution, a situated position for research and a strategy to depict entities for subsequent reflection.

[It includes an interlude on the spatial and material concept *Hinterland,* proposed by John Law, which is at the same time literal, metaphorical and allegorical, bridging back to our own notion of *Performing Building Site*.]

In the last section, the chapter proposes a curatorial method that dialogues, non-illustratively, with the theoretical scaffolding and with the notion of hinterland. Beyond the centrality of objects and authors in architectural, artistic and spatial fields it manoeuvres the foregrounding of a non-unifying proposal: *curating in/on/through space*.

This reading/writing strategy proceeds through *disturbance,* an operative gesture to address heterogeneity and hybridity and claims/accepts diverse *literacies*; a second move, *depiction,* follows it, as a strategic gesture within *disturbance* that proceeds by sensitively approaching and inscribing the entities of research. This approach constitutes our proposal for curatorial research, a strategy to perform space that disturbs pre-given conventions of the disciplining of curated objects.

"How, then, might we imagine an academic way of writing that concerns itself with the quality of its own writing? With the creativity of writing? What should this do to the referent, the out-thereness?"[1] John Law

Along the chapters of *performing building sites* we have progressively been focusing on complex spaces, addressing its processes and embracing its contradictions. Going back the several projects exposed, it becomes evident that we have progressively been entered hybrid, complex and unstable spatial entities – buildings, rooms, processes, conversations, etc. – entities, complicating notions of architecture, design, display and authorship. After this route, or this interplay of practical curatorial projects and more conceptual/theoretical problematizations, we must bring for some aspects of the bodies of work of a group of cultural and social sciences theorists whose work on methodology and on epistemology has been informing our curatorial method.

Depiction of hybrid and heterogeneous entities – as our "spaces" – is a fundamental issue to the studies of social sciences and for cultural studies. We find *depiction* is a crucial aspect for interdisciplinary research, and particularly for the kind of questioning of the objectual and the authorial as we are proposing to develop in the field of *Curatorial Knowledge*.

We have been following three methodological approaches to offer us insights to heterogeneous entities, the three of which are operating in dissimilar ways: *Actor-Network Theory*, *After Method Theory*, and the [feminist] Material-Semiotic cultural critique of techno-science. The three different methods are concerned with relations of society and culture, as a whole, focusing on techno-science and on other critical issues. We came to it through previous research on architecture and science intersections, namely on biotechnological references to the constitution of space[2], and decided to visit it from a specific perspective: its reading and writing strategies to address hybrid/heterogeneous entities. We are particularly interested in understanding how complexity and hybridism can be read and not reduced to simplifications, and on the writing strategies to inscribe it.

How can one depict and curate the un-building within building? How can one grasp the processual and resonant? And how can one begin to address contingency and non-materiality?

The above-mentioned methods/theories, differing in their strategies, they offer us different reading and writing to consider. *Actor-Network Theory (A-NT)*, early developed by John Law, Michel Callon and Bruno Latour[3] (though frequently only Latour is acknowledged) follows

heterogeneous entities, focusing on *actants* to describe networks being performed. The notion of *actor-network* performance is, to some extent, self-explanatory: as *actants* perform its acting we follow the networks under performance. *A-NT* is literal, objectual and relational and works through conjunctions and assemblages, from the three, it is the more systemic reading of social, economic, technical, and cultural relations, providing kaleidoscopic grounds for writing on heterogeneous entities.

John Law´s *After Method Theory*[4] (*A-MT*) is a critical review of his previously collectively authored *A-NT*. The position of the researcher or writer is strategic in this writing, as it dares the politics of what is represented and what is let-out, using creative tactics to grasp non-objective features. We are particularly interested in *A-MT*, as it introduces amplification, resonance and allegory to address heterogeneous entities through the writing of *presences*, and proposing to attend, as well, to *absences.*

Material-Semiotic approach to hybrid and complex entities, developed by cultural theorist Donna Haraway, is written from a situated position and unfolds from literal/metaphorical figurations that embody and condense wider preoccupations under analysis – the OncoMouse©[5] patented mouse with oncological genes sold for pharmaceutical laboratorial research is still a good example of the many questions and concerns revolving around biotechnology industries. Material-Semiotics proceeds by densification and diffraction of case-studies, addressing critically its several concerns – social, economic, political, gender, race, etc. – through multiple literacies.

Differing in the contextual relation of the writer, or researcher, to their objects, having Haraway´s situatedness and Latour (et. all.) networkness in dissimilar relations to context, we perceive, as well, possible relations of some aspects. Therefore, we have sketched a diagram, our visual attempt to relate aspects that interest us most for our specific project. The diagram is a tool for our thinking, it is a partial reading that risks inconsistency, but we risk exploring it to test how *depiction* occurs. Namely, we are interested in curating heterogeneous objects and in conceptualizing what can be taken into consideration, what is let-out, so, we learn how reading/writing on/about this complexity does proceed in the work of thinkers exploring innovative methodologies. As Haraway has once asked, “*Interdisciplinarity is risky but how else are new things going to be nurtured?*”[6]

To lay a preliminary approach to the diagram and the text in the next pages, we can advance that Bruno Latour, John Law and Donna Haraway provided us with tools to grasp the limits of disciplinary knowledge, having empowered the statement of our situated and interdisciplinary

position. Their bodies of work are central to our formulation of a position to curating space – considering space as a complex, heterogeneous entity - and, more specifically, their proposals have determined our the enunciation of our conceptual prepositions – *in/on/through space*.
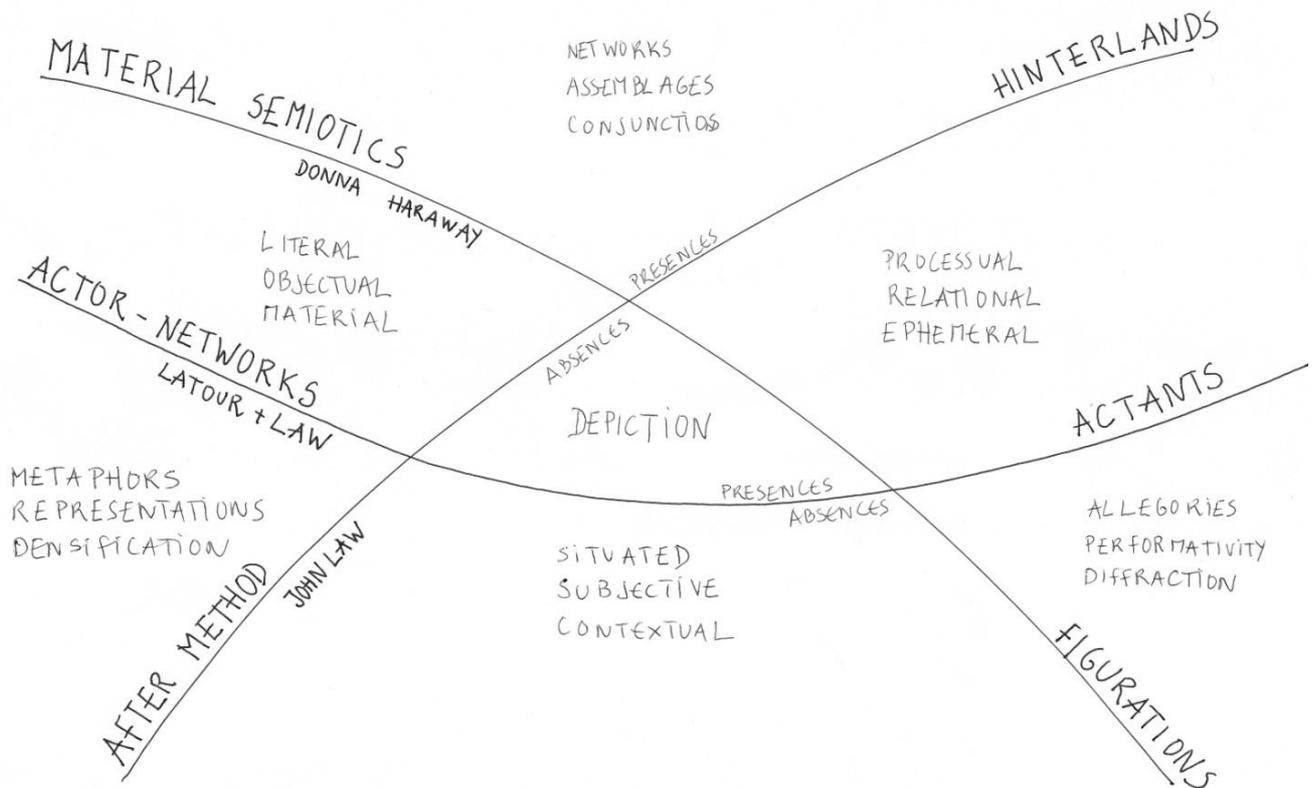

Diagram for a reading of three methods depicting heterogeneous entities [Inês Moreira]

A-NT

Actor-Network Theory (*A-NT*) [7] uses a descriptive analysis to *depict* objects, following the relations and the effects of actors. The method maps relations between objects and assemblages, unravelling the idea of an object as a static node in a network and coming to consider relations, conjunctions and their continuous performances as a new unit: *actor-networks*. *Actor-networks* act and literally generate networks. *A-NT* articulates processuality and relationality, exposing the heterogeneity of what seem to be unpredictable relations of diverse entities. It focuses on ephemeral relations, differing from static notions of network[8], as in *A-NT* networks´ existences are determined by being acted upon. A*ctors* act and perform (several) nets: the *actor-network* is not pre-given (as a disciplined structure) it rather requires the actions of *actants*.

Most importantly, *Actor-networks* can be human and non-human. *A-NT* displaces network connectivity from the net to its actors; and addresses how heterogeneous actors exchange and

interact and recombine, observing interactions of parts and wholes, connections and re-combinations. To map, or to follow, it is therefore a fractional, multiple and unpredictable mode of *depiction*. *A-NT* doesn´t explain why a network exists, its performances and origins are multiple; nor explains the drives for interaction, instead, it is concerned on how it operates. The *actor-network* exists as long as actors *act*, meaning that the network is an actualization of an actor's performance. It is a hybrid, continually generated entity that lasts for the duration of its *performances*[9].

Acting and performing

A-NT´s writing proceeds through descriptively reading agencies of actors and networks. Writing is mostly a literal inscription, focusing on literal, objectual and material events, and leaving sparse space for metaphor. One is able to *address actants* by stressing the agencies and the openness of the networks that compose and circulate within.

Our *Building sites* are active and prolific *actants*: they are polygamist entities, addressable through the many relations and games they play. More than the traditional perspective of incomplete physical buildings, they act beyond physical delimitations, participating and generating different sorts of events. We wrote our *Building Site Manifesto*, in chapter 2 of this project, depicts building sites through *A-NT* approach: a multidimensional entity, composed of several layers of micro and macro activities, passing from plan to material reality, generating buildings and raising expectations and disappointments in dissimilar spheres. For *A-NT*, objects and networks overcome ontologies, disciplines or affiliations, as objects/subjects are understood as material/technical/conceptual/cultural/social, and so on, formulations that are reconfigured by their continuous acting. The curatorial approach to space we have been developing and the *depiction* strategy for processual and incomplete conjunctions is informed by *A-NT* and its continuous trailing of networks and actors. We can say that we curate *through* space influenced by Actor-Network Theory.

A-MT

After-Method Theory (*A-MT*), developed by John Law[10], is an experimental *method assemblage*[11] approach to research in social sciences that offers us with methods to address networks and conjunctions, and, as well, it offers processes of "knowing" beyond the literal. To explain it, we can use A-NT (Latour, Law and Callon), as A-MT (Law) responds to some of the principles of the first proposal. *Actor-Network Theory* is a textual flow of literal descriptions of conjunctions of heterogeneous actors, and affects, enacted by processes and relations, and A-

MT follows as well these principles. Though, A-NT describes causal relations and conjunctions' connecting what is vague with the "causes" of vagueness, and what is unproductive with "counter-images" of what produces its unproductiveness. *A-MT* attempts a different approach and addresses absences and presences equally.

We find relevance this one aspect: *After-Method Theory* depicts the performative nature of *absences* by detecting and amplifying their *resonance*; it reads *absences* and *presences* in networks and conjunctions, focusing particularly on what is not considered objective to traditional understandings of science, of research, even of knowledge. While the relational and processual facts are inscribed in networks and conjunctions, as proposed as well in the performative descriptions of *A-NT*, John Law offers a less objective proposal: *A-MT* is able to depict vague, non-coherent and indefinite aspects of *absences* through the allegorical[12].

A-MT envisions allegorical writing to tackle non-representational aspects/layers of reality: "*And this is what allegory always does. It uses what is present as a resource to mess about with absence. It makes manifest what is otherwise invisible. It extends the fields of visibility, and crafts new realities out-there. And at least sometimes, it also does something that is even more artful. This is because "it makes space for ambivalence and ambiguity". In allegory, the realities made manifest do not necessarily have to fit together.*"[13] Allegory performs language as a diffractive space, depicting and giving shape to what, from a dominant perspective of science, or scientific research (as in structured rooted taxonomies), is read as disordered. The allegorical as a modality of depiction of *absence* offers a potent tool for reading heterogeneous entities.

Allegory and unbuilding

To deploy an approximation to our *Performing Building Sites* model through allegory, offers us with the potentiality to depict, detect and amplify resonances, beyond strict material and technical production. *Building sites* articulate the objectual, technical and material, and produce a synthesis: buildings. John Law states that *buildings* invite for allegorical approaches: "*The building – and our apprehensions of the building – are an exercise in allegory. In the absence of words I guess there is less pressure to narrative consistency. There is less pressure to manifest an absence that is single and coherent. Perhaps, then, architectures and other non-linguistic verbal forms are rich sources for allegory. Perhaps they "are" allegories which enact the non-coherent, allowing us to make it manifest. Perhaps it is simply that we are not very good at treating them as allegories – apprehending the ways in which they craft and relate sets of realities that cannot be located in a single narrative*"[14].

We are taught at Architecture school that building is a productive activity revolving around rendering things visible (materials, shapes, truth claims), to which design, technical blueprints and discourse contribute in disambiguating prevailing doubts repressing/excluding every non-coherent, or non-coherent aspect. Yet, as we have been addressing construction proceeds contingently[15] and buildings are not silence, objective, newly inaugurated entities as we have been addressing in our curatorial exercises *in*, *on* and *through* space.

If *Building Sites* progress in what, we want to stress, conjunctions of *building and unbuilding,* they assemble *presences* and *absences*, the representational, the processual and the vague. And A-MT permits us to consider vague and incoherent dimensions in-between *building/ unbuilding;* the contradictory expression points to both the objectual and the non-coherent, offering further arguments not to reduce research to objectual, authorial, or disciplinary simplifications. The curatorial approach to space we have been developing, and the *depiction* strategy involving non-linear strategies such as resonance, amplification and detection, has been strongly informed by John Law, and we can say that we curate *in/on* space influenced by After-Method Theory.

Connectionism and figuration

We include a last theoretician in the field of cultural studies, Donna Haraway, for reasons that go beyond one single theory. Haraway´s work is devoted to the study of heterogeneous, hybrid and conjunctive entities. The wide *connectionism* of issues and concerns around complex case-studies is influential for research on several interdisciplinary studies – as cultural, gender, or social studies – and particularly to critique of techno-sciences. This *connectionism* unfolds through *material-semiotics*, articulating both the physical, material and technical aspects with symbolic and more representational layers of entities.

Haraway´s work is *situated*, a feminist stand that affirms personal, subjective and individual experience in science production. Importing from feminist studies notions of *positionality* in the field and *implication* with the object, she suggests considering *situated knowledge* as a means of disturbing the relative distance between object, context, and writer. Her writing is carefully situated, and takes cultural, political and personal positionality into account. The author declares: *"My writing and also lectures finally don´t come to a whole. It´s ironically a kind of anti-holism, for someone who wants everything. (laughing). It is connectionism. I am constantly working for ways of connecting that don´t resolve into wholes. (…) And it is hard to engage, but I also think that some of it is pretty straightforward. But the end-means relations*

are confusing to folks, and I also think the multiple literacy issues are confusing."[16] The analytical modality - *connectionisms* – and the positionality - *situated knowledges* – exist in partiality, accepting processes as producing knowledge, unfolding through diverse literacies, and informing our *Building Sites.*

Another, side, or minor, issue on her work is of great relevance for understanding modes of *depiction*, as Haraway follows reading/writing strategies evolving through *figurations*[17]., i.e., through identifiable entities accentuating human-non-human relations (technology/culture; machinic/organic) stressing culture and non-human relations (the Cyborg, the domestic dog, the Oncomouse). Her writing refers to actual entities through literal and metaphorical descriptions of hybrid objects that are read through material-semiotic relations and connections. We find that material-semiotic figurations offer a tri-dimensionality dissimilar from that of *A-NT*, as Haraway's reader and her "figures" are culturally grounded in culture.

In contrast to *A-NT*'s active descriptions of heterogeneous relations of actors and to "permission" to practices of allegorical writing in A-MT, Haraway's writing through "literal metaphors" embodies dense figurations, introducing us to a different modality of depiction from which to learn for curatorial activity. Haraway's reading of technical objects is navigational and multi-directional, extending conjunctively through her writing which is both fleshy and wordy, and unfolds from material and language forms; finding/creating dense entities, and writing through it, the author is articulating and playing with multiple literacies[18] from hard science to personal affects. Her material-semiotic approach grasps several layers as the *figurations* are objectual (organic, human, animal) and relational, and are subjective, may have feelings and its identity is extended by language. This leads us to, sometimes, understand the *figurations* as metaphorical.

Along with heterogeneous networks and more allegorical writing, Haraway's *connectionism* and *figuration* stand as modes of *depiction* that offer alternative perspectives of objects, fields, and their relations. We learn how *depiction* of subjects encompasses a bewildering array of material, technical and physical facts, leading the writing somewhere between what is conventionally understood as academic research, along more subjective storytelling. As readers of these "literal metaphors" we are invited to apply our own literacies and imagination.

[Knowing/site]

Law´s critical revision of social science research and procedures, its politics of inclusion, exclusion and the reference to non-considered aspects of "knowing", relates to our own argument within curatorial practice and curatorial knowledge - *Performing Building Sites* – bridging further the fields and providing methodological and epistemological substance that we used to our own spatial models. This way, our attention was brought to *hinterlands* by John Law[19]: "*Hinterland – a bundle of indefinitely extending and more or less routinized and costly literary and material relations that include statements about reality and the realities themselves; a hinterland includes inscription devices, and enacts a topography of reality possibilities, impossibilities and probabilities. A concrete metaphor for absence and presence*"[20]. We will enter *hinterlands* is to learn from a last knowledge/site, so to finally systematise an approach to curating space that considers the concealed absences within architectural spaces.

Learning from actual physical *hinterlands*[21], but operating, as well, metaphorically, Law´s model is a referent to understand and analyse un-clear places of knowledge production, between a methodology, field work practice, hybrid case-studies, and, more critically, as an abstract model of what is kept outside the disciplinary and academic research. *Hinterland* are Law´s representation of the non-visited places, the knowings non-considered, or edited out, from a more linear and coherent production of scientific knowledge.

Hinterlands[22] are disparate places in the landscape, indeterminate grey zones beyond the foreground and yet before the horizon; they are neither skylines nor backgrounds, but "no-man´s lands". The *hinterland* is not a whole, it is not objectual; rather, it acts as the backdrop to a wider landscape, or to material activities. The *hinterland* is comprised of complex places, and structured foregrounds and backgrounds, holding everything in place. To understand *hinterlands* requires a movement back and forth between the limits and the referents in a framed landscape.

[Diagram]

I have created a visual diagram of Law´s concept *hinterland* to map a set of relations regarding, according to my reading of John Law, what disciplinary writing defines as the known, the unknown, and the many procedures and gradations at play in-between. The diagram follows my interpretation of the text book, mapping my reading of the proposed model of knowledge production[23], and relations between reality, the known and the *hinterland*. Knowing moves from confusion (left) to clarification (right), exposing in its centre the interplay of "*presences*" and "*absences", i.e.,* the mutual interactions and the politics of inscription in disciplinary

knowledge. It exposes a tension between what can be proved, reproduced and clearly represented in science, and the "*other*" dimensions of the "*unknown*", the ones that can be detected, amplified or performed but are, most of times, kept as the "other" to scientific knowledge. As stated, "*This, then, is the most important point: it is the character of this hinterland and its practices that determines what it is to do science, or to practice a specific branch of science.*"[24] To consider the *hinterland* as a backstage of research, and of knowing, overturns the more systematic projectual approach to reality that is structurally produced by sciences and technical disciplines, like engineering and architecture, and its role resembles the contingent, non-coherent and messy aspects of our *performing building sites.*

And, in addition to help the mapping of knowledge production, the diagram offers a critical disturbance of spatial knowledge, bringing *hinterlands* into more dominant space. The theory can be understood as a critique of dominant knowledge structures, underlining unknown spaces, and pushing to interdisciplinary practices of object *depiction.*
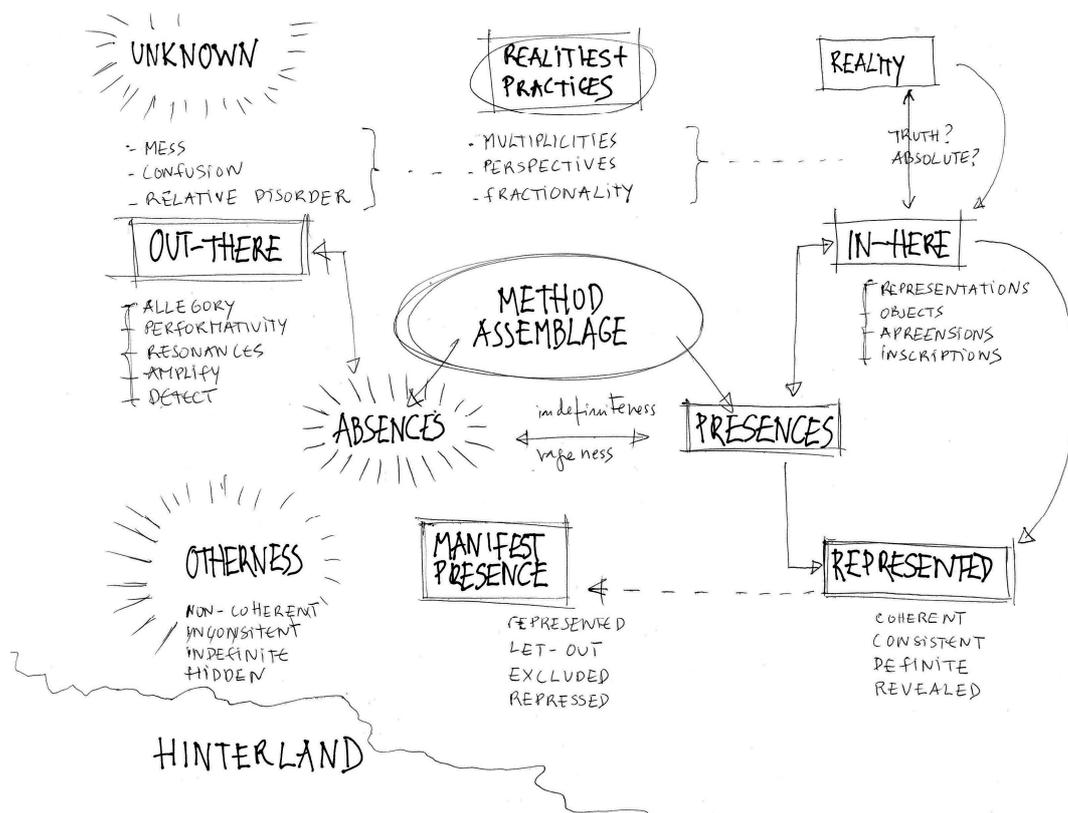

Diagram for a reading of the Hinterland [by Inês Moreira]

The reading/designing of the diagram propels us to three movements: *navigational, inhabitation and performative*. First, the navigational move: traversing the *hinterland*, not focusing on objects nor too bound to a previous field (curating, architecture, art). The

navigation is hybrid, in-between *absences and presences*, in-between disciplinary representations *in-here* and non-coherent *otherness*. The second move is political and situational, and propels to the field, embracing *hinterlands*, moving in-between confusion, vagueness and non-coherence. Both unleash a third, performative, move: the hinterland propels performing along with it, detecting, amplifying, and acknowledging what research can do to the researcher and to the objects of the study. The research problem addressed within this approach shifts from "how to" (to curate or to address) and turns to the potential found along, or through, the processes.

Academic and scientific bodies of knowledge are inherently disciplinary, and *hinterlands*, as we understand, stand for messy field work practices. This is an invitation to consider unknown fields, to find strategies to map this strangeness, and to search for modes of literary inscription, reminding to keep and to visit spaces aside, where we find of *wrong*, incomplete and inconsistent arguments. Exploring the intersections between the technical and factual knowledge of objects and representations, we came to understand the (scientific) activities as both analysis of reality and as the production of new realities. Knowing produces realities, as it scours the world in search of knowledge, it transforms the world itself. These ideas are particularly interesting in the context of our own interdisciplinary and performative studies, as now our model may too proceeds, spatially, materially, immaterial, fictionally, relationally, allegorically, among other.

We seek to permeate disciplinary paradigms of objectuality in architecture, visual culture and cultural production with components and conditions of spatial manifestations, so to grasp, from curatorial research some aspects and issues that traditionally were considered beyond the affirmed disciplinary limits of architecture. Our quest is for a curatorial strategy to approach problematic spatial conundrums, and we are mobilised by the will to map space´s complexities, its processuality and its incompleteness. We have been pursing ways to articulate the social, the political and the cultural on space throughout several projects, and the encounter with the body of work from cultural studies and social sciences[25] have taught us how to depict the side-effects, resonances and instability in architecture and space**.**

Our proposal - curating space – came to follow a strand of thinking that is embedded in cultural and social studies, and in critical readings of objects, and of technical entities. The displacement from architecture, or "architectural objects", to a broader notion of space dues to our ambition of curating heterogeneous entities, as they are concurrently architectural, artistic, technical, or historical, among other. We address space as a complex, heterogeneous and hybrid entity, available to expose its many layers to our interdisciplinary research - political, social, economic, and affective. We have taken from Donna Haraway the implicated relation to hybrid objects, a proposal simultaneously caring and protective of "oddness". We have learnt from this relation a position for curating, and we believe that caring and protecting "odds" can be a curatorial notion to relate to complexity, so to impede reductions, or simplifications.

It is proposed in this thesis a situated position *in* the locations under research. Large part of our questions/conclusions is contextual and depends on a dialogue and the immersive experience *in* space. Most qualities of the spatial case-studies cannot be collected through existing representations (books, photographs, documents, drawings) because they happen as disruptions of architecture, beyond static representations. Therefore, if space instantiates beyond architectural (or technical) representations, we are invited to be *in* space. The proposal is to bond to notions of field work (from anthropo-ethnographic, or other material-culture disciplines), so to amplify the depictions of our research cases. Therefore we propose a position *in* space, and a depiction *through* space.

The route taken in these two hundred pages brings us to the obligation for systematization, a complex task after the many paths taken. Avoiding a "minimum common denominator"

between the many experiments, theories and references, as it would average and reduce the specificities of each, we risk exposing the entangled lines of our navigations.

Changing the curatorial focus is a strategy for undoing the dominant position of researcher-lens-object, widening the gaze and the diffractions of the observed. We find potentiality in John Law´s *hinterlands*[26] moves between *absences and presences,* and in other mappings of complexity, as Albena Yaneva´s[27] dialogues between *processes of becoming* and *states of incompletion*, in exhibition set-ups. The focus for curating space overcomes the centrality of a case study, escaping the territorial boundaries of pre-given fields of architecture and art, and allowing for contemplating the invisible activities of the backgrounds, the inhabitations and the other existences we may find *in* space.

Depiction is a central gesture to curatorial research; it defines and stabilizes "objects". This research evolved questioning objectuality and representation, focusing on processes and on incoherence, disturbing the objects/spaces under research. This approach is a mode of relation to objects that, we believe, redefines curatorial *depiction.* Instead of departing from existing adopted methods, from a limited number of objects of study, and testing a methodology, we propose producing sets of *disturbances* and to learn from disturbance which, eventually, brings us to different objects from the ones we departed from. We expect that the encounters during a research process, leads to redefine the objects we work with. We believe that curatorial projects may redefine objects.

We came to *curating in/on/through space* as a manifold location. It is not possible to be straight, or sharp, about this multiple position as it would destroy the methods´ potentiality for a plurality of assessments. Going through the many dimensions *in/on/through* space – as the conversational, resonant, processual or other non-material dimensions -, demands traversing diverse knowledges and attempting more than a single methodology.

The body of this present research is both experimenting with several approaches to complex spaces; and casting methods to curate space. Our methods are both theoretical and empirical, referring to some relevant authors, and assuming a self-generating mode, tending towards the expansion of existing models for curatorial research.

We dare a provocation for interdisciplinary research: asking *wrong* questions[28]. *Wrong* questions may seem out of place, out of context, or out of expected boundaries. By *wrong*, we mean shifting from *legitimate*, or safe, disciplinary literature and to cross the uncertain fields of interdisciplinarity, as *wrongs* destabilises taxonomies and structures, pushing into unknown

territories. Jumping fixed limits is a tactic to place problems usually avoided, and not nor replies to, a tactic that risks being misunderstood. Questions depend on the context of reception; a *wrong* question can be interpreted as inconvenient, due to a lack of diplomacy, or sound as ignorance, or badly formulated. The address risks to be semi-confrontational – daring *the wrong -,* or cautious, proceeding through misunderstandings - *posing wrongly asked questions.* Wrongly asked questions provide smooth entries to hard objects, by exposing a view from an *outside,* they can disturb knowledge or power structures.

Wrongly asked questions may *disturb* providing the opportunity for altered *depiction*s which may vary in their formal definitions. It is a proposal that redefines the contours of objectual representation, from situated positions and from a manifold re-composition of parts, processes, narratives and distributions. *Wrongly* asked questions generate oblique reading/writing *strategies* and we believe they constitute a potent tactic for interdisciplinary research *on* space.

Curating demands a simultaneous activation of reading/writing, and we understand it differs from technical and functional inquiry and techniques and alters knowledge structures. To be situated *in* space, reading *through* it, is a performative position that entails the reader/writer to move around, within, beyond and through the entities he is researching on. To read, write, or to *depict*, an entity we are placed at, roughly, implies pushing a double analytic and interpretative movement - more scientific – along a second, more creative/interpretative one.

Curating in/on/through space is therefore the embodiment of a reading/strategy. *Curating in/on/through space* means traversing more space, as it is not a direct journey; it values specific qualities of walking, as its trails that are not merely following paths. It demands spending more time, listening, speaking, and feeling in presence. It may lead to a sense of loss, and explores inventiveness and diverse resources, that, otherwise, could be erased from knowledge production.

On confronting the final remarks on the project that is now stabilized, edited and bound, one has to acknowledge that the notions of curatorial research and of curatorial practice have been transformed through the long process of researching/writing and practicing/producing. This transformation is the true core of the thesis and it is now stabilized in a printed document.

A question that continually arises from interdisciplinary research: "how do the convened fields interact when brought together, and what do they produce?". The interdisciplinary combination of fields of curating, visual cultures and architecture inspires an approach to non-representational dimensions of space that is gleaned through knowledge from other non-architectural disciplines. The written text of the thesis rehearses the different *disturbances* to fixed and static categories such as material, exhibition, display, archive, and even conservation, to which a monolithic concept of *building* would correspond. By allowing for resonance beyond architecture, we invoked the notion of *space* so as to capture the diverse processual, material, economic, political, and also symbolic and personal dimensions of that same *building*. The subject matter is the formulation of a critical approach to curating architecture and spaces. A more assertive research *drive* might opt for a reorganization of the "bits and pieces", found in a solid *building*. However, instead, this document is accompanied by a *building site* and enters more confusing, tangled and unfocused terrains. The thesis suggests (1) a performative and situated project *on* space, (2) follows the various performances and manifestations of spaces, and (3) highlights the processual dimension of curatorial research and practices. I believe this represents a radical experiment in author-object relations.

The study further argues that *curatorial knowledge* becomes manifest in the activation of a reading and writing strategy, i.e., in the tension between the known object and the curatorial approaches. A strategy lies in the tension between reading and writing: the first, the reading strategy, may cause *disturbances* and the second, the writing strategy, follows the object pre and during *disturbance*. The *writing* corresponds to what we have coined as the *depiction* of object of research. *Curatorial research in/on/through space* may allow for objects to be moved to initially unforeseen territories. In my understanding, this is a fundamental angle that curators should be aware of and, I believe, should be explored as a critical position.

In order to stabilize the subject of our study and to complete *Performing Building Sites* project, we focussed mainly on fields that are affected by architecture, deflecting from the centrality of the author and from exceptional master pieces. This meant employing a broader notion of terrain, encompassing the effects of projectual, processual, social, economic and political

intersections in a site as well as the absences, voids and echoes that inhabit it. The proposal is to focus on the idea of *space* as a platform for various performances, and as a means of escaping disciplinary and professional questions.

Additionally, while some *building sites* were case studies, they were also the theme, object, subject and method. They offer a potent stage as *building sites* condense three fundamental aspects: a *processual nature* (between becoming and incompleteness); they *disturb* the ways/methods of work (between project/plan and contingency); and, finally, they offer case studies that merge subject/process/object, existing between materiality and language, and, to be precise, between literalness and metaphor. *Building sites* were approached with diverse methodologies that matched the parts of the thesis: the situated constitution of a body/field of work (Chapter 1); the conceptualization of a model articulated as manifesto (Chapter 2); and diverse approaches to processuality, relationality, resonance and materiality in new and existing spaces (Chapter 3 to 6).

Finally, the centrality of the research experience and the processual nature of work go against a more "constructive" method of building. The project followed field work and found its own ways through theory. Notions such as *situated knowledges* (Donna Haraway), or *everyday affects* (Kathleen Stewart), emerged and gradually formed a discernible position that we experimented performatively (through trials and errors) and from which the project took shape. The work embodies certain degrees of contingency and randomness, inherent to the many demands along its paths, and found its potentiality through the route itself. *Performing Building Sites* have a performative condition and set the quest to activate processes, to depict and to react on it. Put more clearly, departing from *building sites*, the overlooked and heterogeneous entity, that is subject/process/object, we found a subject, method and an object that is one, that is performative and that exists in its many interrelations.

Performing is used in a double sense: the more passive is a set of literal and symbolic relations that are continuous and invisible, as they are inherent to the processual condition of *building*. The second is a more active sense, *performing* is a proposal to capture the complexity within the entities and becomes a propeller for action. The proposal is to perform a curatorial research activated by the many observations and literacies/fields of knowledge.

This notion of performativity was expanded in the final path of the research journey in a project that has expanded to what is presented as Volume 2 of the thesis, a book prepared from 2011-2013 entitled *"Buildings & Remnants: an essay-project on post-industrial spaces"*, an editorial project I published for Guimarães 2012, European Capital of Culture (associated with the homonymous exhibition Aneta Szylak and I curated). *Buildings & Remnants* depicts

post-industrial spaces departing from art and architecture, and expanding along other techno-scientific and social science fields - engineering, mining, sociology, anthropology, archaeology, and several others. Not meant to illustrate the ideas, or to materialise the methods proposed along the research presented in this Volume, 1, the book has a life of its own. Nonetheless, it develops the theoretical arguments of the thesis, helping to clarify and bringing us to a few final remarks on the potential of the model of curating as research and production.

Curating space

We suggested *curating space* is an interdisciplinary mode of research/practice that follows endeavours around field work, opening possibilities to what the object/subject can be. And *Buildings & Remnants,* both project and book, enunciate the potential of curating post-industrial spatial manifestations: the confluence of different kinds of knowledge (art, architecture, sciences and the humanities, oral testimonies, visual formulations, etc.); it elaborates on empirical field work practices (archeology archives, sociology enquiries, etc.), and on theoretical research that opened possibilities for different new projects (books, films, exhibitions, talks, and art works, engineering samples, etc.). Writing turned curatorial research into search for methods, and to approaches to depict objects (materiality, performativity, spatiality, affectivity, objectuality, technicity); as well as a study into the incorporations of findings from the processes into new projects. The writing, and later the reading of the same writing, makes evident an elliptical movement of slight advances and backward movements, both feeding-a-written-work-and-feeding-a-project.

The final observation responds to a more dominant field of curating architecture and space. Along the route, we came to process an intuition into a position: *curatorial research on space is an altered mode of curatorial practice*. Along this postulation, several positions were systematised. The first position is a disciplinary one and concerns knowledge and the constitution of a field: *curatorial research **on** space* is a mode of *critically reviewing the object for curating architecture, and the spatial*. Then we found an insidious perspective of altered curatorial practices: to work **in** space is a *situated* position. It is, as well, a minor position for curators to practice, as the legitimating distance from the object disappears in favor of a more horizontal relation of curator-author-object. Both positions, ***on** space*, and ***in** space*, shift the initial idea of a distance from architecture/space into a tighter strategy within spaces, revisiting the curatorial tools of work (the critical spectacles from theory) and complementing it with work-gloves - and not metaphorically!

Exhibitions are not an end to expose spatial research, they are one the many possible formats to expose space, and parallel to publications, gatherings, events and other non-fixed out-puts. Space is not just a container for curatorial projects, nor an object of curatorial research, it can be both. If the concept of *curatorial research* differs from traditional *practices of curating*, as Curatorial Knowledge research group has been postulating, it is important to highlight our approximation to space. My proposal is to consider within *curatorial knowledges* a modality of research ***in/on/through*** space which goes beyond the objectification of space/architecture and offers a critically engaged mode of inquiry and of operation.

[1] Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research* (London: Routledge, 2004), 12.

[2] Mphil thesis presented in Metropolis Master Program in Architecture and Urban Culture, 2003 [CCCB – The Center for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona / Fundación Politécnica da Catalunya]:

Moreira, Inês. *Bio[tecno]logy in Architecture. Converging Body and Architecture in experimental practices*. Original title in Portuguese: *O Bio(tecno)lógico em Arquitectura. Convergência de Corpo e Arquitectura em práticas experimentais*. (Research project supported by the scholarship programs of Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia)

[3] Actor-Network Theory (ANT) is a "material-semiotic" approach to both science and technology studies and social sciences. *A-NT* is a social theory and science studies research approach developed in the 1980s by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law explaining agencies of actors and networks.

[4] Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[5] Haraway, Donna J. *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan©_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.

[6] Haraway, Donna. *How like a leaf: an interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

[7] Bruno Latour uses the contraction *A-NT* to refer his *Actor-Network Theory.*

[8] Networks are commonly defined by knots and links creating connections. Networks-theories tend to define actors linking to existing networks. In NT, networks are understood as existing entities to whose knots actors connect. Network theories consider a certain hybridity; their knots may be part of dissimilar networks. However, these knots are seen as centralities in networks, connections in existing networks. [In network theories, *building sites* would connect to building industries networks, exhibitions would connect within cultural institutions networks; the World Wide Web would connect computers with access to Internet.]

[9] A few notions are central to *A-NT*: translation of the network (problematization, enrolment, mobilization); intermediaries or mediators; generalised symmetry of intervenients (human and non-human entities interact); actants (actors are enacting relations and all are shaped by that same relation); punctualization (all actors are constituted by networks, but some are in more stable or recognizable shapes); quasi-objects (actor-networks are passing tokens from network to network enacting it).

[10] Law, John. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[11] Definition of *Method Assemblage* from the glossary of John Law: "Method assemblage is generative or performative, producing absence and presence. More specifically, it is the crafting or bundling of relations in three parts: /a) whatever is in-here or present (for instance a representation or an object); (b) whatever is absent but also manifest (that is, it can be seen, is described, is manifestly relevant to presence); and (c) whatever is absent but is Other because, while necessary to presence, it is also hidden, repressed or uninteresting. Presence may take the form of depictions (representational and/or allegorical) or objects. Manifest absence may take the form of a reality out-there that is represented, or the relevant context for an object. Method assemblage is distinguished from assemblage in the priority attached to the generation of presence. The definition itself is symmetrical, telling us nothing about the form taken by presence, absence, or the relations between these." John Law, *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research* (London: Routledge, 2004), 161.

[12] I became aware of allegorical writing through Prof. Jean-Paul Martinon´s lectures on Allegory, during Curatorial/knowledge PhD group seminars, using seminal texts:

Walter Benjamin, *Allegory and* Trauerspiel in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Translated by John Osborne (London: Verso, 2003), 177-182.

Pete Berek, "Interpretation, Allegory, and Allegoresis" *College English*, vol. 40, no. 2 (October 1978): 117-132.

Bainard Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory." *New German Critique*, no. 22 (Winter 1981): 109-122.

[13] Law, *After Method*, 90.

[14] Law, *After Method*, 92-93.

[15] See chapter 2.

[16] Joseph Schneider and Donna J. Haraway, "Conversations with Donna Haraway," in Joseph Schneider, *Donna Haraway: Live Theory* (London/New York: Continuum, 2005), 143.

[17] Donna Haraway´s Material Semiotic studies of science and technology provide a critical approach to heterogeneous entities, informed by feminist studies. Haraway´s creative work addresses hybridity, and conjunctive entities such as human-non human, or material and language relations, in *nature-culture*.

[18] *"Those two sets of skills are – reading the experiment and the novel – condition the way each gets read so that I can´t approach a grant proposal, a scientific paper in primatology (…) without carrying with it the ways that I know to read a poem, a short story, a novel, a museum display or a painting. Those different reading skills interact diffractively. I know the difference between one state of skills and another, but they constantly interrupt each other productively. (…) I think that´s what multiple literacy is about, because everybody in the world ends up with many kinds of literacies, and as you foreground them to yourself, to each other, they interact diffractively."* Schneider and Haraway, "Conversations with Donna Haraway," 149.

[19] Law is a social sciences scholar developing a critique of science and technology.

[20] Definition of *Hinterland* from the glossary of John Law. Law, *After Method*, 160.

[21] Definition of *hinterland*. Encyclopædia Britannica *Online*, s.v. "hinterland." [http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/266517/hinterland] (Accessed 15 January 2010).

We can refer that after a Germanic romantic notion, hinterlands are the name of grey regions in landscape. It can be understood as "no man´s land", referring to low-accessibility, low-functionality or low structured territory. And wet zones besides riversides, terrain vague in-between the suburbs, or un-infrastructure or low-populated post-industrial areas, they are all seemingly non-productive spaces, but they follow its own function: empty plot holding and reorganizing functionalist "zoned" spaces.

For interest – this is the Shorter Oxford Dictionary's definition of hinterland "The often deserted or uncharted district behind a coast or river's banks; an area served by a port or other centre; a remote or fringe area."

[22] The term *hinterland* is, also, the official denomination for the service areas of the import-export logistical areas of sea ports, where cargo is in constant transference. While seemingly only vaguely organised, or with an unclear form and function, it offers a platform for functional activities.

[23] If we read the diagram from *Reality*, to *Presences*, to the *Represented*, we address the objective and structured production of knowledge. However, if we move from the *Unknown* to *Reality* we include a multiplicity of perspectives, and the fractionality of knowledge structures. *Manifest Presence* is closely related to *Presence*s, as its exclusion supports the *coherent*, *consistent* and *definite* in *Represented* reality. *Otherness*, or the *Unknown*, elicits a critical reading of *Method-Assemblage,* which critically articulates the policy of *exclusion*, *repression* and the *let-out* of more acknowledged models. If we want to explore diagonal articulations within the diagram, the model offers the opportunity to reconsider the *unknown* as part of *reality*, and, particularly, to consider messiness as both a theme for research, and as a hybrid mode of research in itself. Recalling the politics of inscription, the *Hinterland* may be a counterpoint to *In-Here, to* bodies of legitimisation, techniques of representation and recognition.

[24] Law, *After Method*, 29.

[25] See chapters 3 to 6 and the first section of chapter 7.

[26] See the first section of this chapter.

[27] See section 2 of Chapter 3.

28 The formulation "asking the wrong questions" was born from the acronym of RAQS media collective, briefly presented in a Curatorial / Knowledge research group seminar, as the "Rarely Asked Questions". The RAQS weblog has it in its title: "Raqs Media Collective - Rarely Asked Questions Can Surprise". [http://blog.raqsmediacollective.net] (accessed 07 November 2009).

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NAI: http://en.nai.nl/collection

CCA – Canadian Center for Architecture (English website)
http://www.cca.qc.ca/en .

The Building Center
http://www.buildingcentre.co.uk/home.asp

The Storefront for Architecture
http://www.storefrontnews.org

Fondation Le Corbusier
http://www.fondationlecorbusier.asso.fr

STORAGE, notes on density and knowledge	2007
DEPÓSITO, anotações sobre densidade e conhecimento (curatorial research, exhibition and book)	curatorial research, exhibition display, spatial installation, academic, museum studies, contemporary art, architecture

Curator: Paulo Cunha e Silva
Architecture: Inês Moreira
Production manager: Inês Moreira

Commissioner: Rectorate of the University of Porto
Venue: Old Chemistry Hall, Rectorate of University of Porto

Exhibition: January-July 2007
Research: February-December 2006

Books/publications:
a) Depósito, Univ. Porto, 2007
b) Exhibition leaflet (polycopied and distributed)
c) [www.petitcabanon.org/projects/deposito]
d) Short films on-line [http://vimeo.com/2062239]

General view of the exhibition room
(Images: Rui Mendonça and Z.Z (flickr))

Curatorial Project: The research project for the exhibition "Storage: notes on density and knowledged" developed at University of Porto, was a collaborative project with the University Museums of the Univ. Porto during the years 2006-7. The exhibition consisted of the display of objects rescued from museum storages, as well as new artworks commissioned to around a dozen visual artists who were invited to think of museums and knowledge production in Academia. The exhibition established a dialogue with diverse material and visual traditions: material culture (archaeology, anthropology, palaeontology, mineralogy, zoology); visual art and museum architecture.

Participating artists: André Cepeda, Eduardo Matos, João Leonardo, Mafalda Santos, Manuel Santos Maia, Marta de Menezes, Miguel Flor, Miguel Palma + António Caramelo, Nuno Ramalho, Pedro Tudela, Renato Ferrão, Rita Castro Neves e Tiago Guedes
Participating Museums: O Museu (FBAUP), Museu da História de Medicina do Prof. Maximiano Lemos, Casa-Museu Abel Salazar, Museu da Ciência, Museu de História Natural (Museu de Mineralogia Montenegro de Andrade, Museu Zoologia Augusto Nobre, Museu Antropologia e Pré-História Mendes Corrêa, Museu Paleontologia Wenceslau de Lima), Instituto Arquitecto José Marques da Silva, Museu de Botânica da FCUP, Núcleo Museológico da FFUP, Centro de Documentação e Urbanismo e Arquitectura, Museu de Engenharia, Museu do Desporto

Spatial installation/display:
The exhibition occurs in two planes: the horizontal, is a flat stage with an uneven platform accommodating artists' work, on the edge of the platform, in a vertical plane, stands a metal shelve 12mx7m tall revealing and exposing the objects of the museums. The large scale and oversized shelve structure allude the morphology of the storage, monumentalizing the invisible spatiality of collections and storerooms.
Set-up: Produções Reais
Team/production: Cultural Dep. Univ. Porto + Museum studies interns

Production team at work
(Image: Produções Reais)

PACK (spatial display for art exhibition)	2007 exhibition display, spatial installation, academic

Curators: Fernando José Pereira and Cristina Mateus (lecturers/artists at FBAUP)
Architect: Inês Moreira

Commissioner: Rectorate of the University of Porto
Venue: Old Chemistry Hall, Rectorate of the Univ. Porto

Exhibition: September-December 2007

Books/publication:
a) Pack, Univ. Porto and FBAUP, 2007 (pt)
b) web: [www.mpac.fba.up.pt/docs/pack-final.pdf]

Inside and outside of the exhibition space
(Image: Victor Ferreira)

Spatial installation/display:

The spatial installation of Pack subtracts the monumental character of the building of the Rectorate of Univ. Porto where it is installed, trying adapt it to the scale of the art pieces. A platform with two shipping containers was placed in the portico, underlining the public dimension of the gallery and undoing the neoclassical façade. The containers provided inside rooms for art projects. The space plays a simple game between the different experiences codified as "white cube" and "black box" so to create a physical path through the different media in the exhibition. It begins and ends with "conventionally" illuminated white rooms and is crossed by paths that penetrate shadowy darkened rooms, inverting the usual hierarchy of spaces/media: a large exhibition room was darkened and used for projection and viewing moving images.

Set-up: Produces Reais
Team/production: Cultural Depart. Univ. Porto + Fine Art students

view of the set-up of sea containers in from of the Rectorate building
(image: Paulo Moreira)

| AFTERMATH AND RESONANCE!

Rescaldo e Ressonância!
(curatorial research, exhibition and book) | 2009
curatorial research, exhibition display,
event space, spatial installation, contemporary art,
architecture, museum studies |

Curator: Inês Moreira

Commissioner: Cultural Department of the Rectorate of the University of Porto

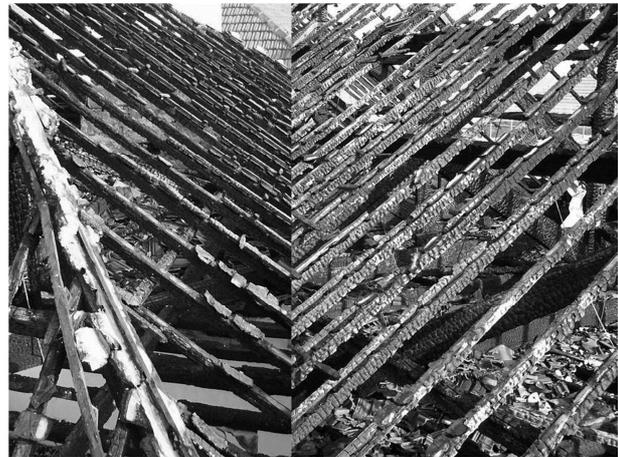Venue: burnt rooms at the Rectorate Building (3rd and 4th floor)

Exhibition: April-July 2009
Research: September 2008-April 2009

Books/publications:
a) Rescaldo e Ressonância!, Univ. Porto, 2009 (PT)
b) [www.rescaldoressonanciaproject.blogspot.com]

burnt rooftop
(images: Univ. Porto archives)

Curatorial Project:

Aftermath and Resonance! is a speculative project exhibited as a spatial installation and a catalogue/book. The project consisted of a field work research on the burnt aisle of a building produced by a group of authors: André Cepeda, Paulo Mendes, Jonathan Saldanha and Inês Moreira. The Project interprets the rawness and materiality of the aftermath and documents it through diverse media (video, photography, sound and space). Exhibition presented an essay-project as an installation, which reads and interprets the consolidation processes of the existing spaces, registered in existing documents and in the materials collected by a group of young researchers after the fire.

Participants:
 André Cepeda, Paulo Mendes, Jonathan Saldanha, Inês Moreira, Pedro Bandeira, Filomena Vasconcelos

Spatial installations:

The exhibition consisted of spatial installations distributed along the several rooms, namely: sound installation by Jonathan Saldanha, video installation by Paulo Mendes, photo installation by Andre Cepeda, on structure designed by Inês Moreira. The space was kept raw and the existing materials were used and readapted for the exhibition, as its display structure.

Set-up: Irmãos Faria – transport company.
Team/production: The artists

Views of the exhibition rooms
(image: André Cepeda)

petit CABANON	2007-2009
(exhibition and gathering space)	curatorial research, exhibition display, event space, spatial installation, performative gathering, visual cultures, architecture, contemporary art

Curator/programmer: Inês Moreira

Commissioner: self run/self funded
Venue: Centro Comercial Bombarda, Porto, Portugal

From May 2007 to May 2009

Book/publication:
a) Petit Cabanon, Opúsculo 7, Dafne Editora, Porto, September 2007, edited by André Tavares (pt)
b) Web: [www.petitcabanon.org]

Petit Cabanon logo

Curatorial Project:

petit CABANON started as an experimental hosting space for architecture and visual culture and a plain weblog. For a year and a half, petit CABANON offered a modest gathering and discussion place for research projects of a few free-lancers and free-thinkers mingling in a small shop in Porto, at CCBombarda.

petit CABANON became a platform for curatorial research and debate on space and visual culture. It is too an extradisciplinary workshop for inventive spatial installations, expanding notions of display and curatorial practice. In its in-between meanders and movements around space, petit CABANON is still generating a body of written and visual materials, attempting oblique angles into the fields of architecture, visual arts and urban culture.

Participants: Many, throughout 2 years period

Spatial installation:

The spatial installation of petit CABANON opened the space and was used as a scenography for several projects, adapting it to diverse needs. It consisted of a simplified replica at scale 1:1 of the interiors of petit cabanon by Le Corbusier. The material used was plain Styrofoam for roof insulation. The installation was built by a group of volunteers.

Set-up: self built/self managed
Team/production: Inês Moreira and volunteers

and what did they do there?
that's the interesting part because we really don't know...

Printed card to first event, 27th may 2007
(Image: Inês Moreira)

CONVERSATION PIECES (spatial installation and program of conversations)	2007 event space, spatial installation, performative gathering, visual cultures, architecture

Programmer/architect: Inês Moreira

Venue: petit CABANON, CCB, Porto, Portugal
May-June 2007

Book/publication:
a) web: [www.petitcabanon.blogspot.com]
b) web: [www.petitcabanon.org]

view of the spatial installation
(image: Victor Ferreira)

Curatorial Project:

Conversation Pieces was a program of conversations. Conversation Pieces are informal group portraits presenting groups of people discussing and playing in casual interior or outdoor situations. A Conversation Piece is also a thing which is interesting enough to spark conversation about it. By staging the conditions for particular gatherings each Conversation Piece is a proposal of a get-together where to expose on-going projects, research or where to discuss ideas and concepts.

Participants:

Lígia Afonso, Sandra Vieira Jurgens, José Maia, Paulo Moreira, Miguel Araújo, Pedro Araújo, Padre Lino Maia, and other.

Spatial installation:

The space was adapted and different tables, stools and chairs were used, transforming the disposition for gatherings and meetings.

Set-up: self built

conversation on Istanbul Biennial
September 2007
(Image: Paulo Mendes)

PROJECTO MORRO (exhibition of the documental process)	2008 spatial installation, archive, documental, exhibition, contemporary art

Curator: Inês Moreira
Artists: Vasco Costa and Hugo Canoilas

Venue: petit CABANON, CCB, Porto, Portugal
Exhibition: March-April 2008

Book/publication:
a) poly-copied curator´s essay (pt)
[http://pt.scribd.com/doc/49337793/Ines-Moreira-Projecto-Morro-petitcabanon]
b) [www.morroproject.blogspot.com]

detail of exhibition display
(Image: Vasco Costa)

Curatorial Project:

The exhibition consisted of the public presentation of the documental process (images, photos, posters) of Project Morro, an on-going processual space built during a summer by a collective of artists. "Morro is an artistic project developed by Vasco Costa e Hugo Canoilas for Project 270 in Costa da Caparica during the summer of 2007. Morro project started from notions of popular Architecture using its materials and construction processes, and was supported by historical references such as Kurt Schwitters Merzbau, Hélio Oiticica's environments and the cadavre exquis from the Surrealists. Morro Project was developed from a basic structure in which each artist develops his work on top of the work of the previous artist, erasing the barriers of authorship." Vasco Costa

Participants:

Hugo Canoilas, Pedro Barateiro, Miles Thurlow, Teresa Gillespie, Sancho Silva and Nuno Delmas, Vasco Costa, Ruben Santiago, Francisco Tropa and André Maranha.

Spatial installation:

The spatial installation was developed by Vasco Costa, using remaining materials from the installation (corrugated iron and wood) and displaying the photographic archive of the project behind its structure. The installation had a sculptural quality and was another piece, adding to the project.

Set-up: Vasco Costa (one of the artists)
Team/production: self run/self managed

Project Morro at Costa da Caparica
(Image: Vasco Costa)

BUILDING SITE **(workshop and exhibition)**	2008 workshop, exhibition, performative gathering, academic, public space, contemporary art

Workshop director: Inês Moreira (no curator)
Collective Team/production: Fine Art students (FBAUP)

Venue: petit CABANON, CCB, Porto, Portugal
Workshop : January 2008
Exhibition : February 2008

Book/publication:
a) Transformations, IPT, 2011 (eng)
b) Archaeology of the Urban, Univ. Porto, 2008
c) web: [www.madep.wordpress.com/page/2]

external view of the exhibition
(Image: Inês Moreira)

Curatorial Project:

Petit CABANON hosted an exhibition with the results of a workshop with Fine Art students (FBAUP). The exhibition presented documents and processes of creative research work, (not addressing projects nor finished work pieces). The workshop consisted of field work on specific sites of metropolitan area of Porto (from Braga to Aveiro). Each participant developed approaches to public space following three methodologies: performativity, visuality and spatiality.

Participants:

Fine Art students (FBAUP): Luis Sezões, Joana Nascimento, Michelle Domingos, Patricia Monteiro, Rui Manuel Vieira, Rosario Matos, Ines Osorio, Sofia Santos, Odete Barreiro, Helder Folgado, Joao Ferreira, Joao Costa, Bruno Marques, Liliana Almeida, Michele Ferreira, Maria Guiomar, Patricia Azevedo Santos

Display:

The display was developed as a collective presential experiment in-situ. Exploring the communicability and transference of performative and critical analysis of public spaces, the exhibition focused on edition, juxtaposition and assembly of some of the materials. The exhibition used the existing tables, chairs and small dispositives available in the space.

Set-up: self built

group of students discussing the set-up
(Image: Rui M. Vieira)

EVENTO 2009 - Public art biennial of the city of Bordeaux Intime collective: rencontres performatifs Intimate collective: public gathering	2009 curatorial research, event space, cultural program, performative gathering

Chief curator: Didier Fiuza Faustino
Contributing curators: Cláudia Martinho, Inês Moreira, Marcin Szcelina
Commissioner: Mairie de Bordeaux
Venue: Performative gathering at Chapiteau and exhibitions and public installations in several locations in the city

Event: October 2009

Book/publication:
a) evento 2009 - intime collectif, Monografik Editions, Paris 2010 (eng, fr)
b) web: [www.evento2009.org]

Respublica by Nicolas Milhé, in front of Chapiteau. (Image: Evento 2009)

Curatorial Project:

Evento 2009 is an event happening throughout the urban public space of the city of Bordeaux presenting artistic, theoretical and performative interventions articulated by the notion of Intime Collectif, the hub concept proposed by the chief curator, Didier Faustino. Exploring different dimensions of intimacy and collectiveness in public space, every programmed and commissioned art piece, architectural space, ephemeral event and sound experience is addressing situations where Intime Collectif exists.

Participants:

Maurizio Bortolotti, Peter Cook, Joseph Grima, Sam Jacob/fat, Doreen Mende, Paolo Plotegher, Anne Querrien, Mårten Spångberg, Juri Steiner, Pelin Tan, Henry Urbach, Felix Vogel

Event:

How do intimacy and collectiveness co-inhabit in the everyday? Under what forms it does expresses it? Contributing a bit further to the disentanglement and recomposition of the relationships inscribed in the expression of Intime Collectif, a one-day event will take place on October 10, 2009. Named "Intimate and Collective: public debate" it is envisioned as a dialogic afternoon that seeks publicly to expand and unfold the core concept of evento 2009, provoking multi-perceptions of the notions implicated.

Set-up: Art Public Contemporain

Intime collective, the public gathering
(Image: Evento 2009)

RETRATO PROTEICO/Proteic Portrait by Marta de Menezes (Curatorial research and exhibition)	2007 curatorial research, exhibition display

Curator: Inês Moreira
Artist: Marta de Menezes

Commissioner: Meiac – Museo Extremeño
Iberoamericano de Arte Contemporâneo
Venue: MEIAC, Badajoz
Exhibition: October/November 2007

Book/publication:
a) Proteic Portrait, Meiac, 2008 (eng, spanish)
b) Web: [www.meiac.es]

Exhibition view. (Image: MEIAC)

Curatorial Project:

Proteic Portrait is an art project in which the artist Marta de Menezes portrays herself using different media. Her artistic self-portrait employs technological media and knowledge from biological science in the creative process. It is an investigation and research process which, like other projects by Marta de Menezes, combines artistic creation, the conventions of art history and technical processes, and the languages and graphic conventions of science and technology.

Participant:
Marta de Menezes

Spatial installation/display:

The exhibition of the Proteic Portrait of Marta de Menezes at MEIAC in Badajoz is a three-dimensional feature that *spatialises* the multiple portraits produced in the course of finding *mArta*, the protein created with Marta's living cells. It includes photographs, texts and duplicated correspondence, videos and various scientific images and objects from the process that enable the viewing of *mArta*, allowing for an intimate experience with Marta de Menezes' project.

Set-up: the museum
Set-up Team/production: the museum
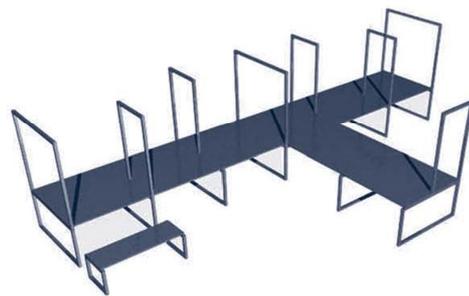
3D model for exhibition display
(Image: Tiago Costinha)

233

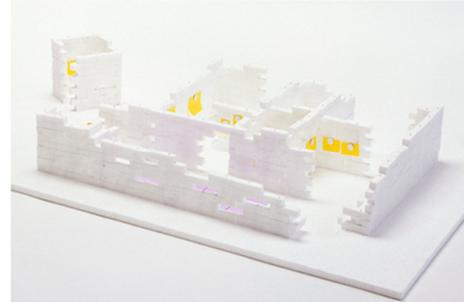| REWIND (spatial installation for contemporary art exhibition)	2010 spatial installation, exhibition display, contemporary art, architecture

Curators: Laurent Fièvet and Sílvia Guerra
Authors: petit CABANON (Inês Moreira + Diogo Matos)

Exhibition : Rewind
Commissioner : Lab´Bel, Laboratoire Artistique du Groupe Bel

Venue: Maison de la Vache Qui Rit, Lons le Saunier, France
Exhibition: June-September 2010

Book/publication:
a) Rewind, Paris, 2010 (eng, fr)

View of the model.
(Image: Inês Moreira)

Spatial installation:

The spatial installation for Rewind contemporary art exhibition is designed and built from gigantic white cardboard bricks arranged in walls, and rooms, and corridors, and hallways, and windows, and doors so to support a selection of artworks revisiting childhood. The spatial concept grew into a complex maze, producing both fascination and a sense of lost: architecture´s spatial complexity is a proposal to expand the curatorial and artistic concepts.

Participants:

Dan Colen, Cléa Coudsi et Eric Herbin, Gabrielérard Desplanque, Xavier Gautier, Robert *F*. Hammerstiel, Betrand Lavier, Fabien Mérelle, Moira Ricci, Jan Vercruysse, John Wood et Paul Harrison.

view of the spatial installation.
(Image: Diogo Matos)

Petit CABANON – private version for Wyspa (spatial installation)	2011 event space, spatial installation, exhibition

Curator: Aneta Szylak with Maks Bochenek
Author: Inês Moreira

Exhibition: Labour and Leisure
Commissioner: Wyspa Institute of Art

Venue: 90B Hall, Wyspa Art Institute, Gdansk, Poland
Exhibition: May-September 2011

Book/publication:
a) Alternativa 2012 Guide, Wyspa, 2011 (eng)
b) Web: [www.alternativa.org.pl]

view of the spatial installation
(Image: Inês Moreira)

Spatial installation:

The physical installation consists of the reconstruction of the two sheds that le Corbusier had in his garden: CABANON + the Work Shed. The two buildings will be made of cardboard bricks, in a playful construction. The soundscape inside both volumes will reproduce the atmospheres and summer conversations by Le Corbusier, Eileen Gray and their friends.
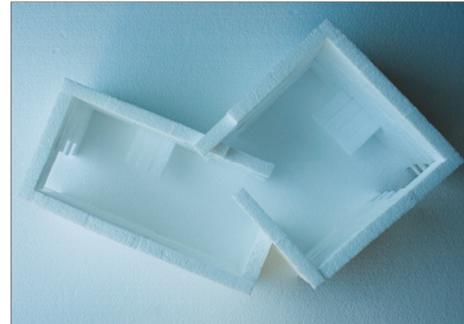
View of the model
(Image: Inês Moreira)

Other participants:

Anders Bojen & Kristoffer Ørum, Kalle Bröllin, Jane Cheadle, Maureen Connor, Roman Dziadkiewicz, Köken Ergun, Elżbieta Jabłońska, Hiwa K, Grzegorz Klaman, Zbigniew Kosycarz, Kasia Krakowiak, Joanna Malinowska, Ekta Mittal & Yashaswini Raghunandan, Ines Moreira, Jacek Niegoda, Cora Piantoni, Konrad Pustoła, Jadwiga Sawicka, Dominika Skutnik, Marek Sobczyk, Łukasz Surowiec, Michał Szlaga, Pilvi Takala, Milica Tomić, Anna Reinert, Zorka Wollny & Anna Szwajgier, Mariusz Waras, Julita Wójcik and Artur Żmijewski.

ART FOR LIFE, ART FOR LIVING (spatial installation for contemporary art exhibition)	2011 spatial installation, exhibition display, contemporary art, architecture

Curators: Laurent Fièvet and Sílvia Guerra
Authors: petit CABANON (Inês Moreira + Paulo Mendes)

Commissioner: Lab´Bel, Laboratoire Artistique du Groupe Bel
Exhibition : Art for Life, Art for Living

Venue: Fira de Barcelona, Spain
Exhibition: May 2011

View of the model
(Image: Paulo Mendes)

Spatial installation:

The spatial installation designed by petit CABANON for Lab'Bel is a double topography composed by two flying surfaces which are folding, and unfolding, and binding, and stretching, generating rooms, niches and corridors. The space is a temporary and fragile host for a 4 day event, and it transmits the ephemeral nature of the event itself. The installation contrasts the super-technical modular aluminium structures with the rawness of canvas tissue.

Participants:

Isabelle Le Minh, Jean Denant, Quentin Armand, Alejandra Laviada, Mauro Cerqueira, Raul Hevia, Jonathas de Andrade and André Guedes for gasworks (London), Wind Ferreira for le Pavillon du Palais de Tokyo (Paris) and Sergi Botella and Mariana Zamarbide for Hangar (Barcelona).

views of the spatial installation
(Image: Paulo Mendes)

THE EXHIBITION (conference)	2011 curatorial research, exhibition display, cultural program, academic

Organization: Inês Moreira

Commissioner:
Museum Studies Department, Arts and Humanities College, University of Porto

Venue: Univ. Porto, Arts and Humanities College

Event: May-June 2011

Books/publications:
a) [www.petitcabanon.org/event/conferencia-a-exposicao]

Event poster

Project:

The conference program "The Exhibition" counts on a constellation of authors and agents involved in diverse ways in the practice and research on what an exhibition can be. The sessions are based on samples of projects/portfolios by several authors and aim at an approach semi- academic semi-experience based and presented the diverse components and techniques involved in the conception and production of an exposition: design, set-up, display, book, sound, etc.

Participants:

Lígia Afonso, Paulo Mendes, Inês Moreira, Sandra Pereira, José Bártolo, Godofredo Pereira, Cláudia Martinho, Rita Castro Neves, Nuno Grande, Nuno Coelho

FUTURE MAP (workshop and exhibition)	2009 exhibition, workshop, academic, public space, contemporary art

Workshop director: Inês Moreira (no curator)

Commissioner: FBAUP
Venue: The Kitchen Gallery and The Museum (FBAUP)

Workshop: August-September 2009
Exhibition: October 2009

Books/Publications:
a) Book: Archaeology of the Urban, FBAUP, 2009 (eng, pt)
b) [www.petitcabanon.org/exhibiting/future-map-_fbaup]

view of Documentation Centre, FBAUP
(Image: Patrícia Azevedo)

Curatorial Project:

Future Map was an exhibition presenting visual research projects on public space developed by 12 young researchers and artists throughout the year 2009, engaging diverse places. The maps are approximations that present visual proposals and perform the public sphere. Far from a sample of cartographies, the exhibition employs various media, formats and languages, and condenses artistic proposals to interpolate and interpret what manifests itself as "the public".

Participants:

Fine Art students (FBAUP): Brunna Anchieta, Eduardo Vieira de Almeida, Joana Nascimento, Luís Sezões, Maria Guiomar Côrte-Real, Michelle F. Domingos, Patrícia Monteiro, Patrícia Azevedo Santos, Rosana Alexandre, Rui Manuel Vieira, Sofia Santos e Vânia Cunha

Display:

Documentation Centre with archival material.

Exhibition with artworks.
No scenography or spatial installation.

Set-up: Produções Reais
Team/production: Fine Art students and Produções Reais

View of video projection, O Museu FBAUP
(Image: Patrícia Azevedo)

| DEVIR MENOR Arquitecturas e prácticas espaciais críticas na Ibero-América	2012 Curatorial research, exhibition, spatial display workshop, architecture

curator: Inês Moreira
co-curator: Susana Caló

Commissioner: Fundação Cidade de
Guimarães, Guimarães 2012 – European
Capital of Culture
Venue: Temporary Galleries of Sociedade
Martins Sarmento, Guimarães

Workshop: June 2012
Exhibition: June-August 2012

Books/Publications:
a) Devir Menor, FCG, 2012
b) [www.devirmenor.com]
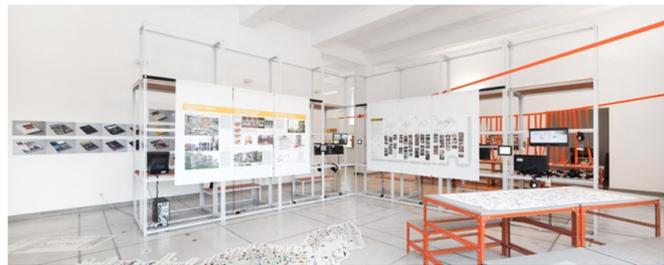
views of the exhibition, temporary galleries, SMS
(Image: David Pereira)

Curatorial Project:

DEVIR MENOR is a hybrid research between architecture, critical theory and material practice, looking to diagram projects and work processes of architects and collectives based in the context of Ibero-America. The project´s concept is a collaboration between Inês Moreira (architect and curator) and Susana Caló (philosophy researcher and editor) who want to experiment the conceptual and material continuity of the project in its various formats and in curatorial / editing processes.

Participants:

Inês Moreira, Susana Caló, Luís Santiago Baptista, José María Galán Conde, Jorge Garcia de la Camara, Paula Álvarez Benítez, Stephane Damsin (Supersudaca); AlBordEarquitectos, Ángela Bonadies + Juan José Olavarría, Blaanc+ Rootstudio, Borde Urbano consultores, Control+z + Straddle3 + Lamatraka Cultural+ ElNodo A.C., CristobalPalma, Husos, Iconoclasistas + Bernardo Amaral+ Paulo Moreira, José Luis Uribe Ortiz + Marco António Diaz, La Panaderia, Louise Marie Ganz, Maria Luz Bravo, Mario Ballesteros, Mónica de Miranda + Artéria Arquitectos, Moov, Paulo Tavares, Plano B, Supersudaca, Todo por la Praxis, Tomás Garcia Puente, Urban ThinkTank

Display:

Set-up: Produções Reais

Exhibition Scenography model
(Image: Rui M. Vieira)

BUILDINGS & REMNANTS, essay-project on post-industrial spaces (exhibition + book)	2012 Curatorial research, exhibition, spatial display

curator: Inês Moreira
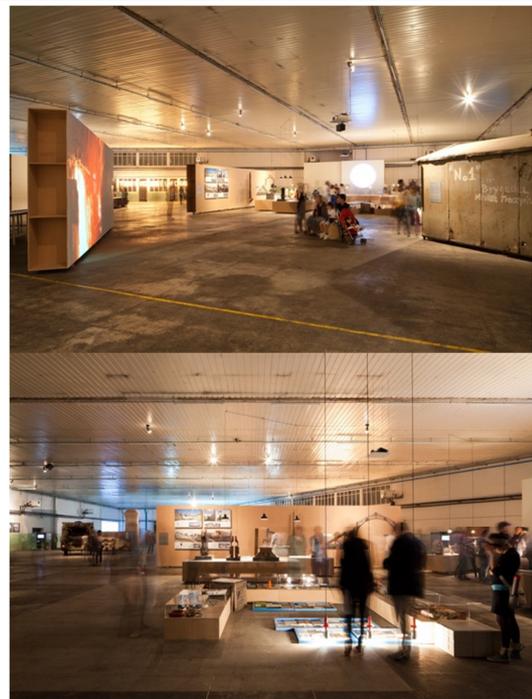co-curator: Aneta Szylak

Commissioner: Fundação Cidade de Guimarães, Guimarães 2012 – European Capital of Culture
Venue: ASA factory, Guimarães

Exhibition: September-December 2012

Books/Publications:
a) Buildings & Remnants, INCM+FCG, 2013
b) [www.buildingsremnants.com]

views of the exhibition, ASA factory
(Image: David Pereira)

Curatorial Project: **Buildings and Remnants** focuses on existing architectures and structures and explores it in different perspectives and scales: a techno-scientific reading of the potentiality of buildings, materials and the machinic, along with other less physical dimensions of materiality, as the concepts of performativity, spatiality, affectivity, or the even the concept of romantic. The project explores an interdisciplinary reading of post-industrial architecture, space and of industrial heritage through the perspective of visual culture, architecture and cinematic image, exploring in its unfolding the research tools of history, anthropology, or archeology (as field work, or as the documentation of traces).

Participants: Alicja Karska & Aleksandra Went, André Cepeda, Arturo Franco, Jordi Badia, Marius Waras, Paulo Mendes, Pedro Bandeira & Sofia Santos & Joana Nascimento. Dorota Nieznalska, Julita Wojcik, Michal Szlaga, Pedro Tudela, The Decorators. Jonathan Saldanha, Pedro Araújo & Ecomuseu de Barroso, Grzegorz Klaman, Frederico Lobo & Tiago Hespanha. Eduardo Matos, Konrad Pustola, Micael Nussbaumer, Patrícia Azevedo Santos, Rui Manuel Vieira. Archive of Post-Materials, Private Collections of Labels, Mariana Jacob, Muralha – Associação de Guimarães para a Defesa do Património, Nuno Coelho, Reimagining Guimarães, Sociedade Martins Sarmento. ISEP Museum, FEUP Museum, C&R Lab – IPTomar.

Display: The exhibition explores found-objects, materials, footage, and spatial structures, inviting authors and artists concerned, specifically, with the cultural dimension of physical space and with its intersections with the fields of cultural production. The exhibition takes place in the G Sector of the ASA Factory, thus creating a tautological continuity: a huge hangar belonging to a disused and established factory houses works which are a reflection on post-industrial spaces. In this special context, container-content, space-object, history-experience, work-memory, and productive-unproductive are rearranged in an ephemeral space where the contemporary rethinks itself, experimenting with new methodologies.

Entrance of the factory
(Image: David Pereira)