

**HOW IS IDENTITY RELATED TO MODERNITY?**  
MACAU MODERN GLORY:  
HOW IS ABSORBING MODERNITY  
ABLE TO CONSTRUCT AND CELEBRATE  
NEW FORMS OF IDENTITY? **P.25**



**RE-QUALIFICATION? RATHER “URBAN REDISCOVERY”**  
WE ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY  
A NUMBER OF ISSUES INSIDE  
A CLOSED BUILDING THAT REFLECT  
THE CITY’S STRUCTURE **P.21**



**“THE GRANARY OF THE NATION”**  
IMAGINING A SILO BEING REFILLED  
WITH AI WEIWEI’S “SUNFLOWER  
SEEDS”. FROM THE REMOTE  
JINGDEZHEN **P.29**

News from Portugal

October 201403

14th International Architecture Exhibition Venice

homeland

DIRECTOR PEDRO CAMPOS COSTA

One month of residency **P.6**

In the temporary home at Avenida dos Aliados learning about the city directly from its different users and inhabitants

Beyond the hype **P.11**

Because effective change occurs only with the support and the will of the inhabitants and the municipality – from architects to politicians

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A propositional conceptual agenda to balance the productive relationships between the built environment and global capital in a democratic arena

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Demolition can generate value

Architecture needs to go beyond the question of “how” things can be done and reach the “why” and the “where”

Architects would rather deal will constraints and solve issues with briefs that are presented to them and laws written by others than to influence the law-making framework. But, without this process, architecture is being increasingly strangled. **P.3**

All quiet on the western front

JOSÉ ANTÓNIO BANDEIRINHA

And nowadays, (...), where are we at? Free from any kind of typological or stylistic impositions other than those emanating from petty technical-municipal corruption, we are still merrily going around spreading our single-family houses over hills and valleys, taking infrastructures, networks, power and even collective transportation through miles and miles of municipal roads. We fulfil our moral obligations. We isolate the “external surroundings” of buildings. In our individualized villas, roofs, yards and backyard annexes, we freely produce wind, solar and photovoltaic power. We visit every single “sustainable architecture” website and we are having a great time with the guys from the neo-vanguards imagining a “gestating metropolis” in the houses still being built in the middle of nowhere. The product of all the “perverseness” that urban order can entail – moral too of course but mostly ideological “perverseness” – cities remain empty as their centres die a slow death, thanks to the last remnants of a services sector strongly protected by the State.

But most of them have wasted away for good, as if stricken by a transcendental punishment for their absurd collectivist ambition. Without any room left for irony, we are finally fulfilling the approach to our utopia of social organization. We have reached out Midwest. Even if we are overflowing from the hills, valleys and Gabion walls, we have reached our prairie. We are the ones who decide and provide, us and no-one else. We are “free-berals”. But we are penniless... **P.17**

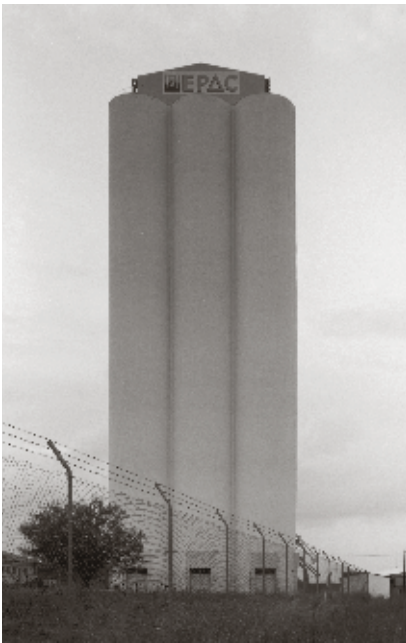
Portuguese Pavilion

Portugal is officially represented at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia through a newspaper.

Extensively distributed in three different editions, over the six month period of the exhibition, *Homeland, News from Portugal* intends to report news about current architectural, social and economic life in Portugal, reflecting on and informing about a variety of aspects of the modernization of the country over the past 100 years.

Specifically, *Homeland* aims to address the issues raised by architect Rem Koolhaas (Fundamentals – Absorbing Modernity: 1914-2014) through a critical and purposeful reflection on housing, a field of excellence for experimenting with modernity which has always been an essential element of urban and rural environments and a social and cultural reflection of its inhabitants.

Getting over Modernity **P. 29**



PEDRO VERDE (ARQUITETO)

Participation is the new black

(...) we need to see dwellers as experts. They are not experts on architecture, so it’s redundant to let them do the design, but they are for sure experts on living there.

We need to stop orbiting around the idea that people are incapable of adding any value to planning processes (no participation), or in opposition, that people are fully capable of designing the changes that they want to see implemented reducing the presence of the architect to a mere translator (soft participation). There is still room for an insurgent architect. **P.13**

Art, the dissection of the city **P.38**



# Summoning the collective

Probing into the real transformative capacities of contemporary architecture

MIGUEL EUFRÁSIA & ADOC  
photos HELDÉR SOUSA

In December 2013 we initiated a venture entitled Summoning the Collective, a propositional conceptual agenda that interpreted the Crisis – the enduring and pervasive concern of the Portuguese society for the last 5 years – as an architectural problem buoyed by the collapse of the real-estate market and construction industry and the political vitality unleashed in by acts of urban protest. The questions on our mind were: firstly, how can contemporary architecture truly represent democratic life given that economic processes have more transformative power in the urban realm than the rhetoric of architectural ideology; and consequently, how can architects contribute to the balancing of the productive relationships between the built environment and

global capital in a democratic arena undermined by the effects of an enduring and systemic social and economic recession? Our endeavour acknowledged two major matters of concern. First, given the government’s ever receding social housing agenda and shutdown on public spending, it seemed inevitable that the only effective way forward involved the establishing of alliances with the financial market forces, owners of an impressive volume of futureless real-estate in Portuguese cities. However, this engagement had to be critically premeditated. The worst possible outcome of the project would be to end up paving the way for further proliferation of profit-based developments, feeding into the endless cycle of boom and bust it wishes to stabilise. Secondly, we were convinced that there was a causality nexus between the struggling responsiveness of architecture to the current dramatic context and the existing schism between theory and practice. On that account, we set out to produce

an array of eminently provisional and unstable theoretical propositions, open to updating or even discarding, deeply rooted in the urgency of provoking/catalysing urban transformation. As a result, Summoning the Collective attempts to establish critical links between architectural thought and the political realm, with the objective of constituting an effective architectural agency capable of triggering the completion of unfinished buildings in Portuguese cities, abandoned in the aftermath of the burst of the real-estate market bubble.

The eight on-going projects here presented is the result of the intersection between a chain of speculative and prospective hypothesis and successful joint-ventures established with stakeholders (city council planners, real-estate fund managers, investment bank assessors, construction entrepreneurs...). By focusing on the engineering of consensus and compromises between agents that hold inexorably conflicting visions for the city

there is a feeling that we have hit a nerve. These commissions witness the critical lack of creative conciliatory mediation between the built environment and its agents and that the spectrum of the architectural milieu can still be a portal for challenging the rules of the game. Ultimately, the Summoning the Collective endeavour is admittedly born out of the volatility of the financial markets, the circumstances of contemporary life and the prevailing mechanisms of urban production. Hence, it adopts strategies that avoid closure and keep verdicts open, focuses on means and not ends and explores specific technical aspects of a project as the foundation of architectural expression. It aims to contribute to the broadening of the discussion regarding overlooked urban potentials while asserting architecture as the unstable field of genesis and mutation of spacial and material organisations that bind the sources of political agency and the collective in the era of abstract mechanisms of global financial operations.



**Ethics of explicit architecture**  
Barreiro Housing

Location Barreiro / Intervention Refurbishment/Upgrade  
Use Housing / Total area 11,400 m²

There is a vague ethical standpoint embedded in the profession against operations whose prime goal is extrapolating value from the urban territory. But instead of dwelling on the moral values against the profit-driven business model, architects should be open to the possibility that the problem is not that architecture has been ab-



sorbed by the mechanisms of the world of finance, but the fact that the discipline has not yet fully realised the productive architectural capital that resides in the relations between design and the conditions consigned by the financial rationale of the free market. If so, the rendering intelligible of these nebulous and tumultuous interactions can

be used as a tool for discovering creative agency for emergent design practices. The Barreiro Housing project exemplifies this approach that enables architecture to retake a leading role in urban change.



**The consistency of monotony**  
Ulmeiras Housing

Location Loures / Intervention Refurbishment/Upgrade  
Use Housing / Total area 3,850 m²

The scenario of massive and seemingly endless replication of ‘efficient’ housing typologies with ornamental peculiarities is representative of the homogeneous and insipid sea of sameness that portrays the housing market. But to oppose the conceptualization of the urban substance as a linear cumulative process of already totalled ide-



as and processes regarding historically and technically typified models does not inevitably implicate a breakdown of the existing housing paradigm. The Urmeiras project aims to trace a path of critical resistance that accepts and respects poorly conceived architecture without abdicating of the necessary architectural propositional

agenda. It conjures an approach that binds together a tactic of differentiation of housing typologies with a manoeuvre of external visual effect (balcony) that enhances the spatial possibilities for future tenants.



**The supremacy of the social**  
Póvo de Santo Adrião Market

Location Póvo de Santo Adrião / Intervention Change of Use/Upgrade / Use Mixed-use Development (Commercial and Offices) / Total area 11,400 m²

Architecture cannot simplistically be interpreted as a trade-off between capitalist development and social welfare – the relationship of architecture with neoliberalism is not reduced to the polarized stances of unreserved complacency or romantic resistance. To advocate the prominence of the social sphere in the hierarchy of architectural pri-



orities does not imply a severance from the market forces. On the contrary, it should implicate an investment in architecture’s vital role of building-up compromises between stakeholders with inherently opposing understandings and interests regarding the city. In order to embody public concerns, architecture has necessarily to mediate

private interests. In the case of the Póvo de Santo Adrião Market, a mixed-use public/private venture, the addition of extra volume enables the preservation of the existing building and, ultimately, brings life into an otherwise depressed urban social ecology.



**Degrowth?**  
Odivelas business incubation

Location Póvo de Santo Adrião / Intervention Change of Use/Upgrade / Use Mixed-use Development (Commercial and Offices) / Total area 11,400 m²

If Modern Architecture’s mainstream avant-gardes are inseparable from 20th century growth paradigm and state driven urban operations, how can progressive views of architecture emerge from the declining patterns observed in the economic, political, urban and ecological realms? Architects should avoid the temptation of consider-



ing the meagre prospects of our financial future as a motive for an architectural detachment from the speculative and profit-driven business model: Real game changing possibilities in city development are more likely to be effective when emerging from within the conditions established by the existing mechanisms of urban production. In the

Odivelas Business incubator project, the flexible mechanisms of economic and financial interpretation were absorbed as a potential and genuine source of architectural power. One must not forget that the aim of architecture is to progressively build up alternative futures, not to envision alternative presents.



**Crisis≠Less Desire**  
Odivelas Market

Location Odivelas / Intervention Refurbishment/Upgrade  
Use Mixed-use Development (Commercial and Offices)  
Total area 12,300 m²

One important idea to be kept in mind is that there should be no preset or automatic effect of the context of Crisis on society’s expectations regarding architecture and the built environment. The Troika enforced implementation of “politics of austerity”, notwithstanding its deleterious repercussions on urban subsidies and social standards of



living, do not lessen individual and collective aspirations regarding the space they inhabit. And given the lack of investment, cities are now more in need of architectural agency than before: Crisis demands architecture to become a more effective engine of transformation. In the Odivelas market, the project was driven by an amplification of de-

sign ambition. It progressed from an initial client’s intention of simple renovation to the addition of a large floating balcony to the existing building that resolves inherent functional problems while providing much-needed extra inner areas and as well as an exterior public space open to communal appropriation.



Collective



**Ruthless Pragmatism**  
Santo António dos Cavaleiros Housing

**Location** Loures / **Intervention** Refurbishment/Upgrade  
**Use** Mixed-use Development (Housing, Commercial and Offices) / **Total area** 8,000 m<sup>2</sup>

Given the dramatically adverse context that has halted the construction industry and the real-estate sector, the aptitude of enabling of a project, of drawing up a commission, of having a client is an important engine of urban vitality and therefore a valuable architectural asset. If the future of the urban sphere seems to be increasingly de-



pendent on an architectural ability to focus on the pre-conditions that enable it, lobbying for urban transformation is to become a top priority for architects. However, placing the laws of the system in the design's inception should not mean a turn towards an opportunistic architectural practice. It should be about ruthlessly expanding the pos-

sibilities of the architectural spectrum while maintaining a critical stance. In the Santo António dos Cavaleiros project for instance, the painting of the façade in vibrant gold colour is an ironic take on the concept of the architectural icon and intends to subvert the widespread mantra of rehabilitation in contemporary design.



**Designing without shaping**  
Barreiro Business Incubator

**Location** Barreiro / **Intervention** Refurbishment and Change of Use / **Use** offices / **Total area** 8,300 m<sup>2</sup>

To bring life back into an abandoned infrastructure is probably one of architecture's most challenging tasks. Even more so when the cut-rate budget offers very slim prospects of producing any adjustment to the already built form. However, despite the obvious predisposition to converge architectural thought into the modelling



of shape, design practice can still have a vital role in the urban sphere even if the external physicality of things remains roughly the same. Proposing minor adjustments can trigger other possibilities of use and attract investment. However, it is important to reject the concept of architecture as a mere managerial facilitator of the ur-

ban substance: Architecture has to exceed the role of mere conveyance of flexible space use options, and to unremittingly seek to transgress and subvert established guidelines. It was the compromise between these two opposing forces that allowed the occurrence of the Barreiro Business Incubator.



**Utopian Redux**  
Coimbra Business Incubator

**Location** Coimbra / **Intervention** Silos and Offices refurbishment / **Use** offices / **Total area** 18,300 m<sup>2</sup>

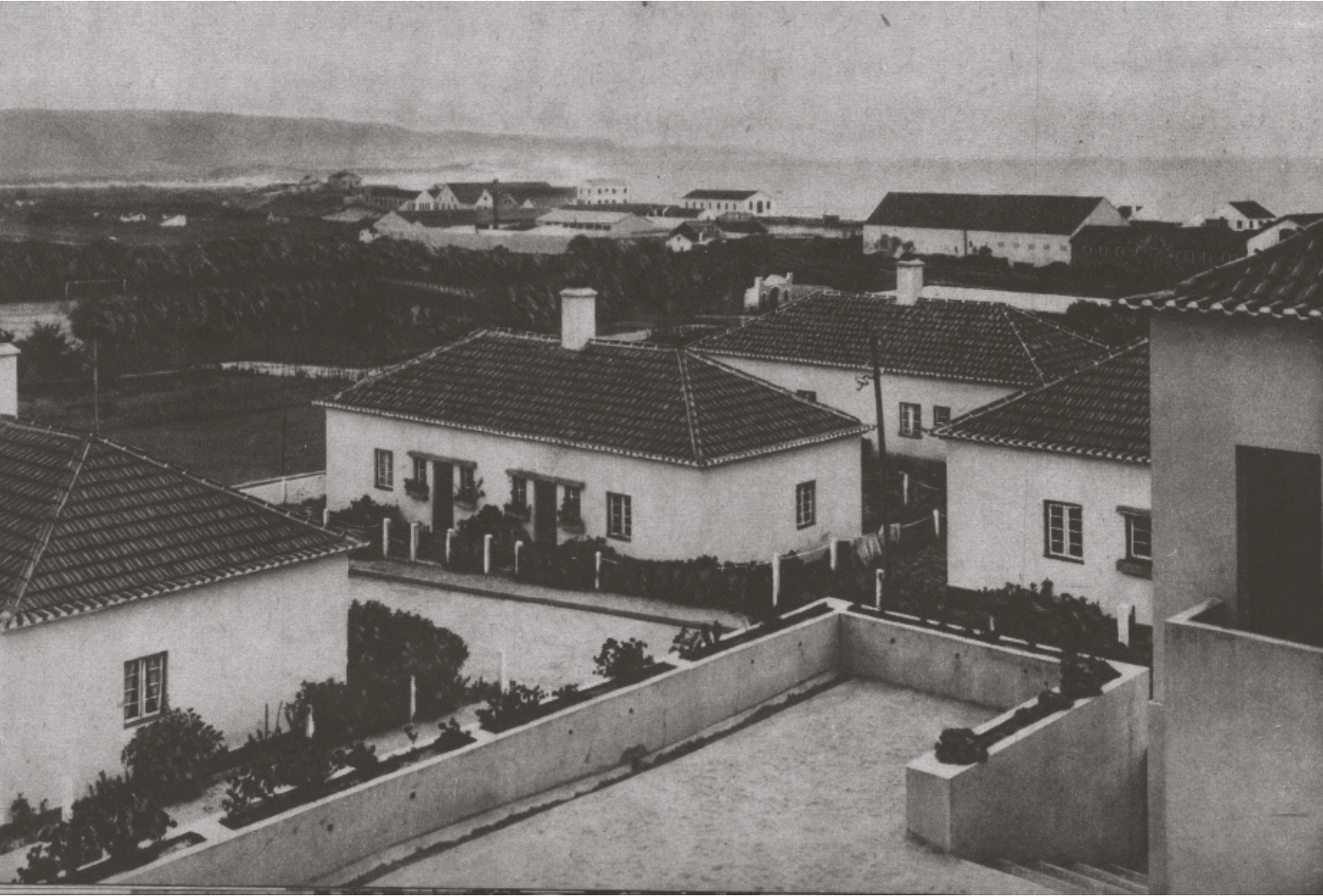
Arguably, 20th century leading architects were trying to change the world too fast. The pervasive modernist urban utopia that thrusted creative action seemed to be out of pace with society's predisposition towards urban and social restructuring. But given ever-increasing immediacy of the employment of sprouting technologi-



cal advances, the concept of utopia seems to be mutating: It is losing its naiveté, but gaining agency. As a result, today's most visionary or futuristic proposals appear to be much closer to its prospective feasibility than to an idyllic or artificial scenario, and the concept of utopia now seems to accommodate its etymological oppo-

site: real implementation. In the case of the Coimbra Business Incubator, the modern utopia is already built, and the project is not about its material rehabilitation or refurbishment... Rather, it is about the binding of design with the conjuring of tactics for occupation and investment strategies that will enable its use.

Politics



Fisherman's houses, 1942. Corporate State's public promotion housing at Nazaré – Nazaré – Bairro Novo dos Pescadores IN CADERNOS DO RESSURIMENTO NACIONAL OBRAS PÚBLICAS LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SPN

The product of all the “perverseness” that urban order can entail – moral too of course but mostly ideological “perverseness” – cities remain empty as their centres die a slow death

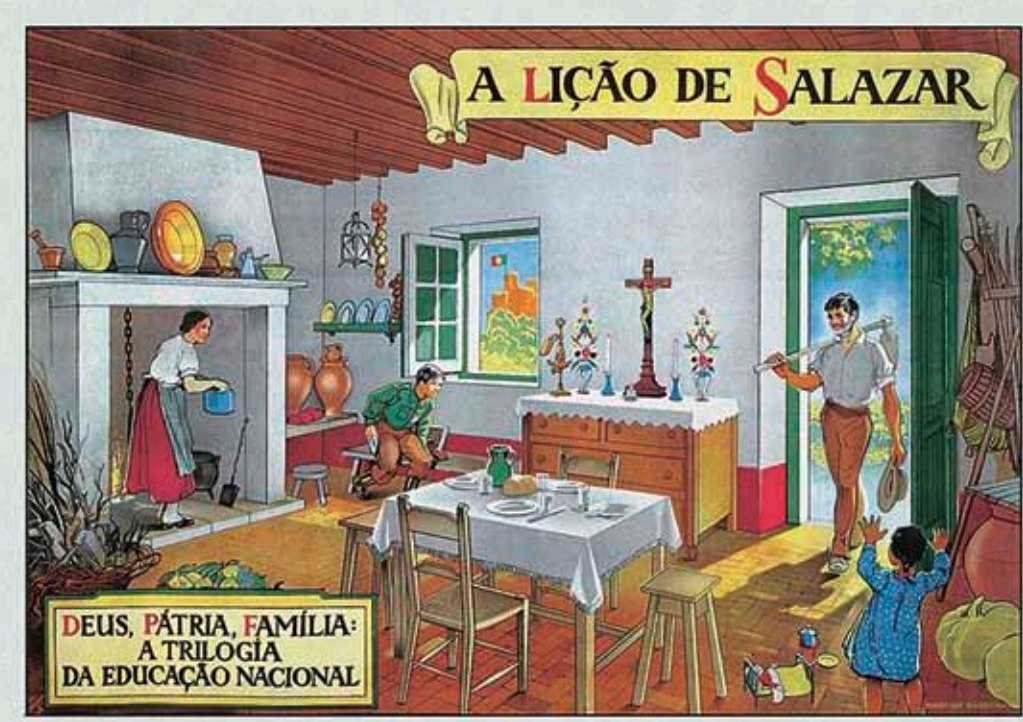
All quiet on the western front

**JOSÉ ANTÓNIO BANDEIRINHA**  
Architect, Professor and researcher at the Department of Architecture and at the Centre of Social Studies, University of Coimbra.

A group of young architects sharing ideological affinities met in Venice, namely, 28-year-old Colin Ward, John F. Charlewood Turner and Pat Crooke, both 25. Giancarlo De Carlo, 33 years old, welcomed them. The year was 1952. What united them was surely that ideological empathy forged in the pages of two libertarian periodical publications, the anarchist newspaper *Freedom*, founded in 1886 by a discussion circle that counted Peter Kropotkin in its ranks, and Italian magazine *Volontà*. In 1948, Giancarlo De Carlo had published an article in *Volontà* that attempted to approach the issue of housing, from the point of view of the libertarian ideal. Colin Ward who, decades later, would recount these events in the preface of John Turner's book *Housing by People*, translated De Carlo's article and published it in *Freedom*. But the reasons for the meeting went far beyond this as they were, above all, interested in debating the intense housing production which, in distinctly different ways, was taking place a little bit everywhere. They were essentially focused on debating fundamental aspects of housing and urban planning, namely, “who provides and who decides”.

As far as the European situation was concerned, it was clear to see that the State, whether the democratic Welfare, whether the aid-giving, authoritarian dictatorships, was both provider and the decision maker. What this group of young libertarian architects was committed to questioning was precisely the legitimacy of this ab-

stract entity to interfere in such an intrusive manner, in an issue so close to the heart and feelings of communities and so contrary to the possibilities of conscious and autonomous expression of their housing needs. Today, more than 60 years after this episode took place, the State no longer has any need to show itself as the prudish cover of the real decision maker, as in fact the only thing the State manages to decide is... not deciding anything. At present, when the State is shamelessly self-effacing so as to make a better show of the violent and inescapable determinism of the authority that controls it, we can carry on imagining Turner, Ward, Crooke and De Carlo in Venice, debating “who provides and who decides”, but this time a lot more ironically. In the early 1950s Portugal, we were still far from that kind of discussion. The State's commitment was almost completely withdrawn from the country's pitiful housing reality and was tangled up in the political meaning of typological or language options. It was committed in fact to sublimating the housing problem into the meanders of recommended stylistic “virtues” or ideologically enforced typologies. Among these, the key issue was that of the detached single-family house, or, in other words, the “uncontaminated nest” of the basic social unit, God, Motherland, Family. For the corporative and dictatorship-based Portuguese post-World War II State, more than providing homes in large enough numbers to tackle the housing crisis, the most important thing was that the houses continued to obdurately reproduce the decades-old ideological matrix of an idyllic and moralizing rural existence. These single-storey, tiny houses decorated with the rhetoric symbology of regional “identities”



Single family dwelling as the model for the trilogy God, Motherland, Family. One of the seven lessons of Salazar PUBLISHED BY THE SECRETARIADO DA PROPAGANDA NACIONAL, 1938.

were, above all, single units or semi-detached at best, although this was already an unacceptable concession to collectivism. Some pilot experiences in collective housing were nevertheless carried out throughout the 1950s, of which Alvalade, in Lisbon, and Porto's Bairros Camarários do Plano de Melhoramentos (Improvement Plan for Municipal Housing) constitute if not the only, then surely the most relevant cases. But they amount to very little if we consider the sheer size of the problem, made worse, on the one hand, by the influx of a predominantly rural population to the suburban areas of cities and, on the other hand, by the spiralling decay of the existing housing stock, urban as well as rural, owing to the distressing state of insolvency of an impoverished population.

And nowadays, more than 60 years past, where are we at? Free from any kind of typological or stylistic impositions other than those emanating from petty technical-municipal corruption, we are still merrily going around spreading our single-family houses over hills and valleys, taking infrastructures, networks, power and even collective transportation through miles and miles of municipal roads. We fulfil our moral obligations. We isolate the “external surroundings” of buildings. In our individualized villas, roofs, yards and backyard annexes, we freely produce wind, solar and photovoltaic power. We visit every single “sustainable architecture” website and we are having a great time with the guys from the neo-vanguards imagining a “gestating metropolis” in the houses still being

built in the middle of nowhere. The product of all the “perverseness” that urban order can entail – moral too of course but mostly ideological “perverseness” – cities remain empty as their centres die a slow death, thanks to the last remnants of a services sector strongly protected by the State. But most of them have wasted away for good, as if stricken by a transcendental punishment for their absurd collectivist ambition. Without any room left for irony, we are finally fulfilling the approach to our utopia of social organization. We have reached out Midwest. Even if we are overflowing from the hills, valleys and Gabilon walls, we have reached our prairie. We are the ones who decide and provide, us and no-one else. We are “free-berals”. But we are penniless...

Contemporary living patterns in mass housing in Europe

An international workshop on sustainable and collaborative housing design organized by the project “OIKONET”, a global multidisciplinary network on housing research and learning” co-financed by the European Union has just reached it's conclusion. The workshop took place at ISCTE-University Institute of Lisbon, with the collaboration of two associated research centers – ADETTI-IUL and DINÂMIA'CET-IUL – and of the digital fabrication laboratory Vitruvius FABLAB-IUL. The objective of the workshop was to develop a cross-disciplinary dialogue aimed at finding answers for the meaning, ways and forms of contemporary living patterns of mass housing in Europe. The overall housing design process has been addressed, starting from participation and ending with digital fabrication, with the digital tools of CAD/CAM. Portela de Sacavém and Bairro da Liberdade, were the two neighborhoods in Lisbon used as case studies. Representative of the formal mass housing, the first, and a typical neighborhood of informal mass housing, the second. Bairro da Liberdade is a suburban neighborhood in Lisbon formed in the middle of the XIX century. The site has a very strong community; people live together in closed yards and help each other consequently. Buildings are built by the population, with low resources and using as much space as possible. The Lisbon OIKONET workshop challenge was to expand a house that has a lack of space. Social services threatened to take the children away from a family if they don't give each child a room. This homeowner wishes to invert the stairs, to have an extra room for the children and also keep the terrace. The design strategy tried to find a low cost solution that could be achievable for the family. The advent of new advanced technologies has boosted new approaches to the process of thinking and doing. The main goal has been to explore these technologies and their contribution to solve real social challenges. The most significant feature of the digital revolution is that the design data is also the construction data. Thus, CAD/CAM techniques enabled the OIKONET students to prototype a full scale solution of a small part of the design at the end of the workshop. Now, the prototype has been built on site using customized prefabricated wood panels.





## Interview

## THE 6 ARCHITECTS EDITORS RESPOND TO 3 QUESTIONS ON MODERNITY ABSORBED IN PORTUGAL AND THE PROJECT HOMELAND

**‘We still care about one of the major and mostly forgotten or mistreated principles of modernity: the living space’**

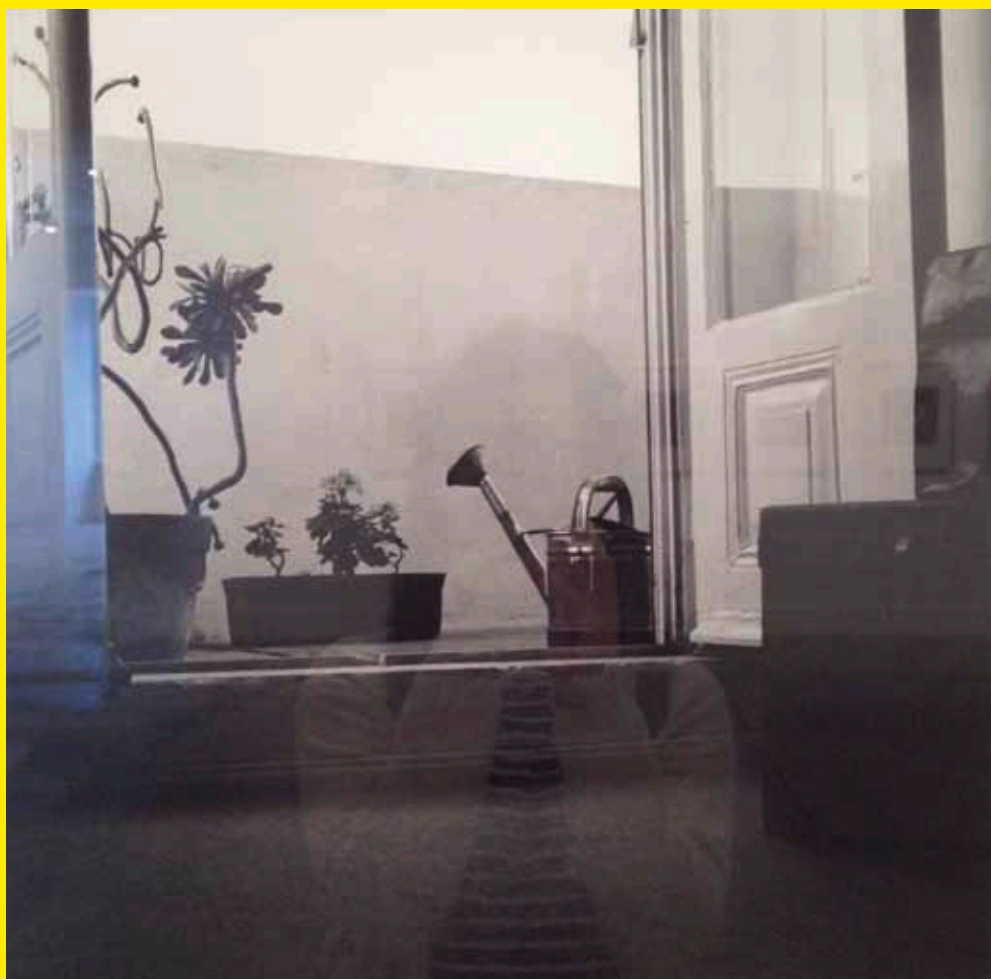
**Susana Ventura**

**Detached Theme** / with SAMI Arquitectos

**1 The modern Project is very atypical in Portugal. Can we see this present moment as continuity or as a kind of break away from modernity in Portugal? Can architecture (somehow) be an agent of modernity?**

I prefer to think about singularities which always come from leaps, ruptures and holes, instead of major processes. In Portugal, what I find particularly interesting is how we still care about one of the major and mostly forgotten or mistreated principles of modernity: the living space. There are several Portuguese Architects who understood it, but then it is only the work of one, two or three architects that I find interesting and always beyond the formal, functional and social constraints of the modern project.

**2 In the theme that you have been editing is there any opportunity for architecture? Is it possible to see architecture**



SENA DA SILVA APUD SUSANA VENTURA

**beyond design and typical commissions? Is it possible for a different kind of engagement between architecture, architects and society? Are architects out of the issues of policy and territory? Is that architecture?**

Since the beginning, the idea was to think about architecture and, in particular, about a theme that the three of us were (and still are) passionate about and not so much a desire for action. Of course, a space was created in the space of a journal and both are understood as architectural expressions. It may however be interpreted as more of a personal reflection than, again, a general answer towards a critical position of our time or a kind of manifesto from which we deliberately set off.

**3 Is there a kind of summary/ conclusion that you can make for this project/theme? It should be built.**

## Interview

**‘What does rural and urban even mean anymore? But expanding our role to work outside the “city” opens up a huge new domain’**

**Pedro Clarke**

**Rural Theme** / with Miguel Marcelino

**1 The modern Project is very atypical in Portugal. Can we see this present moment as continuity or as a kind of break away from modernity in Portugal? Can architecture (somehow) be an agent of modernity?**

Architecture should play a leading role in shaping our environment and how we adapt and do that is probably what will dictate whether we build on the legacy of modernity or splinter off at a tangent.

**2 In the theme that you have been editing is there any opportunity for architecture? Is it possible to see architecture beyond design and typical commissions? Is it possible for a different kind of engagement between architecture, architects and society? Are architects out of the issues of policy and territory? Is that architecture?**



Ceifeira MARCOLINO SILVA, 1964 / ARQUIVO FOTOGRÁFICO ONE

What does rural and urban even mean anymore? But expanding our role to work outside the “city” opens up a huge new domain. Doing so will require a different mind set, and yes we need to get involved in more policy and more planning if we are not to be sidelined.

**3 Is there a kind of summary/ conclusion that you can make for this project/theme?**

“Modernization” and “mechanization” of the “rural world” brought with it great advances, but also lead to a loss of jobs, changes to living patterns, migration to the city and further inequality, but let us think instead about what can be done now. We have a legacy of agricultural structures, buildings, villages and fields which are not currently being used, and we have a modern infrastructure, cultural traditions and identity which are (at least for now) strong. Connecting these dots will help plan for a more resilient future.



# This is the Portuguese Pavilion

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## Die Hard

To finish with a bang, this trilogy of articles inspired by films, we chose a box-office hit. In the first chapter of this saga a full haired, barefooted, trigger happy Bruce Willis, rescues an L.A. generic high-rise building held captive by East German terrorists. From this movie, we learn that an inextinguishable glass curtain wall is, after all, just a couple of chair blows away from being opened up.

Now that everything seems to already be built and the economy has gone bust, the time has come to do the aftermath. What can we do with all the evidence of architectural mistakes? Plant vines, as Wright proposed? Press “undo”, with the eloquence of C-4 plastic explosives? Or are we just to inhabit the wrecks?

In 1977 the Bouça Housing Complex was partially built in Porto. Only two of the originally four blocks planned by Siza were finished, leaving it in a state of limbo until 2006 when it was finally completed. The already then questionable *existenzminimum* spirit was kept alive with another 30 years on its back, as if the country’s social and economic conditions would remain the same. Of course that wasn’t the case and, in the meantime, most of the original recipients sort for a solution for their housing problems elsewhere.

Minimum housing, covered in highly praised architecture aura, became hipster paradise as more and more low-income young architects, graphic designers and artists of all sorts moved in- the shift into *existenzhipsterum* is well under march. We’re facing an unheard-of case of gentrification. The new dwellers, far from pushing the original ones away, actually adopted some of their living standards and codes: the houses were equipped with Pritzker awarded versions of *marquise* windows (see our last issue’s article), ironic porcelain dogs ornament some of their doorsteps and, once a year, for St. John’s (Porto’s city holiday), they bring out their IKEA furniture to sit side-by-side with the older inhabitants and their plastic tables and chairs, feasting on grilled sardines. As colourful as it may be, the fact is that the younger generations in Bouça live in truly monastic spaces compared to what they could get in the surroundings for the same price. It’s only bearable because the added value of architecture or a good dose of irony. As in the movie, our lives and expectations are being held captive by an invisible hand turning us into “the volunteer prisoners of architecture”.

Nothing illustrates this better than the most recent nationwide public building program to renovate secondary schools. Under the strict air and temperature quality directives designed somewhere in northern Europe, a great number of schools were equipped with expensive heating and cooling equipment that coincidentally are mainly produced at those latitudes. To comply with those regulations, windows were installed in a way that they can’t be opened, as our barbaric ancestors used to. Unable to support its operating costs, the machines were rendered useless.

However we still at least know how to design sturdy and heavy (Porto Poetic) furniture. Let’s now learn from Bruce Willis the art of defenestration and how to throw it through the window in the name of poetic justice.

IVO POÇAS MARTINS  
AND MATILDE SEABRA

Friendly Fire is an independent architecture collective interested in subversive and humorous narratives and practices. Its aim is to address the architectural culture and its effects on everyday life in an alternative and informal perspective. Friendly Fire is Alexandra Areia, Gonçalo Azevedo, Ivo Poças Martins, Matilde Seabra, Pedro Baia and Pedro Barata.



Portuguese Official Representation at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia 7 June to 23 November 2014

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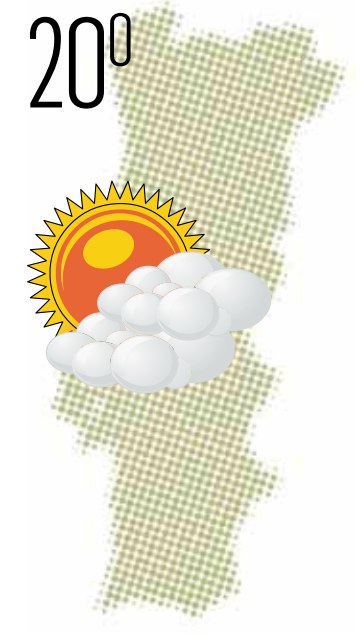


## at last

### INTERNATIONAL PRIZE PIRANESI PRIX DE ROME National Museum Machado de Castro in Coimbra

The Piranesi Prix de Rome is a recent award promoted by the Accademia Adrianea for Architecture and Archaeology, in partnership with several other Italian institutions (mainly from Rome), which celebrates works of architecture responsible for the re-qualification of archeological sites enhancing, at the same time, their important cultural heritages. This year the Piranesi prize was attributed (*ex-aequo* with the Cromatius Hall and Squares of the Basilica of Aquileia, by Tortelli e Frassoni Architects) to the National Museum Machado de Castro, in Coimbra, Portugal, a project by Gonçalo Byrne Architects. The museum is located in the *Alta* of Coimbra, a place of intense sedimentation and historical superimposition for over two millennia where the Roman Forum *Aemini-num* lies, as well as, the Romanesque church of *S. João de Almedina*, the gallery of Terzi, and the 18th Century Apse of the Tesoureiro Chapel. These fragments are an important inscription of the history of the city itself, of its specific topographical condition (the hill) and the evolution of several art periods as they are always the expression of their contemporary demands. Nevertheless, there is a lucid acceptance of contemporary criticism of these sequences, whence the constant mingling of “container” and “content” are the primary feature of the project in order to correct the rupture of scale and historical context caused by sometimes random juxtapositions. Two elemental volumes define a flooded neutral space, illuminated by diffuse light that silently rests on the collection pieces. The gallery occupies the entire volume of the trapezoidal shape, rising up four levels and creating a platform (the restaurant’s terrace) where a rectangular volume of transparent and translucent glass sits that, at night, becomes a sort of beacon. The lower volume adapts to the existing layout of the streets and from everywhere one is able to cross the public space of the museum and its dependencies, rescuing what once was the most important public space of the roman city: the *Forum*. The experience of space is thus revealed as a sort of condenser of the surrounding city, explained around the visit by similarities, analogies or contrasting perspectives of the city itself and its centuries-old history in a unified perception of beauty.

## Weather



**PARTLY SUNNY AND HUMID.**  
Moderate winds mostly persist and coastal breezes. Moderately high waves of greater length. Moderate humidity levels.