



Urban legacies  
of the late 20th century

# GRAND PROJECTS

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Paulo Tormenta Pinto  
Ana Brandão  
Sara Silva Lopes

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**WEDNESDAY, 17****THURSDAY, 18****FRIDAY, 19****9:30**

Parallel session Slot 1  
 T2 S1  
 T3 S1  
 T4 S1  
 T7 S1

Parallel session Slot 3  
 T1 S2  
 T2 S2  
 T3 S3  
 T7 S2

**11:00**

**SIDE EVENT**  
 Lisbon Waterfront  
 Buildings and Public  
 Spaces

BREAK

BREAK

**11:15**

**CLAIRE COLOMB**  
 Keynote Speaker

**CHRISTIAN  
 SCHIMDT**  
 Keynote Speaker

**12:45**

LUNCH+BREAK

LUNCH+BREAK

**14:15**

Parallel session Slot 2  
 T1 S1  
 T3 S2  
 T4 S2  
 T5 S1  
 T10 S1

Parallel session Slot 4  
 T1 s3  
 T3 s4  
 T6 s1  
 T7 s3  
 T8 s1  
 T9 s1

**15:45**

BREAK

**16:00**

**SPECIAL SESSION**  
 Ana Brandão,  
 Jorge Bassani,  
 Stefano Di Vita  
 Roundtable

**16:30**

**OPENING SESSION**  
 Tribute Vitor Mafias  
 Ferreira

BREAK

**17:00**

**JOÃO PEDRO  
 MATOS FERNANDES,  
 GONÇALO BYRNE  
 and RICARDO PAES**  
 MAMEDE  
 Roundtable

BREAK

BREAK

**JEAN-LOUIS COHEN**  
 Keynote Speaker

**17:30**

BREAK

**MANUEL SALGADO  
 and  
 JOSEP ACEBILLO**  
 Keynote Speaker

**MATOS FERNANDES,  
 GONÇALO BYRNE  
 and RICARDO PAES**  
 MAMEDE  
 Roundtable

BREAK

**JEAN-LOUIS COHEN**  
 Keynote Speaker

BREAK

**18:30**

**MATOS FERNANDES,  
 GONÇALO BYRNE  
 and RICARDO PAES**  
 MAMEDE  
 Roundtable

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## ORGANIZER'S WELCOME MESSAGE

PAULO TORMENTA PINTO  
Coordinator and Scientific committee member, Grand Projects  
research project member

It is with great enthusiasm that we hold this international conference *Grand Projects - Legacies of the Late 20th Century*.

This conference was held between 17 and 19 February 2021 and took place in Lisbon, using an online format due to the constraints imposed by the epidemiological situation.

This initiative was organised within the scope of the research project, funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology, entitled *Grand Projects - Architectural and Urbanistic Operations after the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition*, which results from a partnership between the Iscte, through DINAMIA'CET - Iscte, the Direção Geral do Território and the Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio.

In this research, which began in 2018, we have been discussing the transformations that occurred in Portugal after the great event that marked the end of the millennium and that has been a laboratory for a project culture that has expanded over the last 20 years, both nationally and locally. At national level, the multiple operations carried out in several Portuguese cities under the POLIS programme should be highlighted, and at local level, in the city of Lisbon, through processes of distinguishable and rehabilitation of public space and the construction of new urban morphologies.

The aim of this conference was to broaden the debate and invite other researchers to reflect on the dichotomies that can be established between the urban culture of the late twentieth century and the challenges facing contemporary society in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and the current climate and health crises.

On the eve of the launch of an ambitious economic restructuring plan covering all European states, it has become imperative to discuss the transformations that need to be carried out to make urban territories more sustainable and adapted to the lifestyles that are foreseen in the near future. The *New European Bauhaus* launched recently by Ursula Von der Leyen, represents a major challenge for the European Union to rethink architecture and urbanism according to the new standards of economy 4.0.

However, beyond the ongoing technological revolution and the carbon-neutrality goals of the *Paris Agreement*, we must not lose sight of central issues that remain unresolved, such as the right to the city, access to housing, improved transport networks, a balance of uses in metropolitan areas and better relations between urbanisation and reservation areas.

This congress intended to be a contribution to a reflection capable of building continuity between contemporary challenges and the legacy of the late twentieth century, uncovering the near past in its advances and excesses, thus contributing to project a future that still seems uncertain. Although, this future is still uncertain, it will reveal itself under the unique certainty that territory is the basis that will support all changes, thus making it unavoidable to understand its dynamics, its metabolism, its complexity and its differences.

## FOREWORD DINÂMIA'CET

PEDRO COSTA

Director of the research centre DINÂMIA'CET - Iscte, Scientific committee member and Grand Projects research project member

DINÂMIA'CET-iscte - Centre for the Study of Socioeconomic Change and the Territory, hold with great pleasure and interest this international conference "Grand Projects - Legacies of the Late 20th Century", and the publication of these Proceedings, as well as, naturally, the research project "Great Projects - Architectural and Urbanistic Operations after the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition", funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, that was in its origin and which can be seen as the structuring backbone behind it.

This research reflects some of the key-issues of the scientific practice conducted for decades in DINÂMIA'CET-iscte, starting by its own subject, which is a topic of natural interest for a research center which is focused on socioeconomic and territorial change, but also because of the interdisciplinary approach addressed as well as the envisioning of an applied research practice of unquestionable social relevance.

In fact, the International Conference 'Grand Projects - Urban Legacies of the late 20th Century' aimed to debate the transformations which took place in the urban territories over the last two decades, drawing upon a reflection on the impacts of late 20th century territorial dynamics and public policies. The multiple issues brought by the huge transformations and challenges raised from the beginning of the 21st century, in the different layers of our lives and in the organization of territories (from climate change to economic restructuring; from refugees and migrations movements to the global financialization of real estate market; from new lifestyles and consumption practices to the demographic changes; from terrorism menaces to new participation forms; from catastrophes and risks management to big data and privacy safekeeping) confront clearly the logics and the ethos of the architectural and urban practices of the late 20th century. The grand projects and the great actors are at stake and surely need to be problematized and discussed, as well as the way we project, build and live contemporary cities in the contemporaneity

To address this, we cannot do it within the frontiers and barriers of our own disciplines and interdisciplinary dialogue, confronting theories, concepts, procedures and methodologies is fundamental. This will help opening our minds and professional practices to innovative approaches, new perspectives and creative forms of



knowledge that arise from this diversity and from this dialogue, which are essential to understand and act in these present times.

Naturally we could not end without acknowledging to the team that conducted this research and particularly to all the ones that made this conference and this publication possible, with their hard work within the respective organizing and editorial committees, which enable us to reflect on the changes and challenges face by Portuguese territories in last decades at the light of international comparative research, and to the suitability of the “grand projects” concept to understand and plan the territories in contemporary new socioeconomic, cultural, environmental and technological realities

## CONFERENCE THEME

PAULO TORMENTA PINTO

Coordinator and Scientific committee member, Grand Projects research project member

The International Conference ‘Grand Projects - Urban Legacies of the late 20th Century’ aims to debate the transformations that have taken place in urban territories over the last two decades by considering the impacts of late 20th century policies and conjunctures.

The consolidation of European Union unity was monumentalized in the 1980s in several interventions that were carried out in the core of Paris. These interventions, which were based on the visions of then French President François Mitterrand, were part of a process that became known as ‘Les Grands Travaux’ (Grand Projects). Driving these, was the anticipation of an optimistic feeling that would feature at the end of the millennium.

The case of Paris would become a reference for a post-modern period that was also marked by the end of the cold war after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. This shift, which was described by Francis Fukuyama in his 1992 book titled “The End of History and The Last Man”, corresponded to the optimistic feeling that existed at the time about the social models of the world’s occidental democracies.

In the 1990s, the impacts of new technologies and the widespread use of the internet created a sense of globalization, which introduced new challenges to the world economy. The majority of local manufacturing industries in the EU became obsolete, as they were unable to compete on a big scale dominated by trade rules and controlled by multinational companies. The existence of a vast cheap work force ready to be hired in under developed countries, created the idea of a post-industrial era in the West. The tertiary sector of economy achieved greater importance through the general increase in purchasing power and the growth of tourism.

Many industrial areas became disactivated, creating a transitory urban scenario. These were considered by Ignasi Sola Morales as ‘terrain vagues’, as these areas were waiting for change and new investments. This process was particularly visible in the proximity of harbour areas, which constituted the main opportunity territories of the late 20th Century. The change of sea routes, the evolution of logistic technologies, and competition coming from aerial and road mobility forced a process of renovation upon harbours and their activities so that they

could maintain their competitiveness in the context of the new networks of people and the transportation of goods. These impacts were felt in the harbour cities of London, Barcelona, Genoa, Amsterdam, and Hamburg in Europe; Tokyo, Yokohama and Singapore in Asia; and in Buenos Aires in Latin America. In the majority of cases, the harbour areas located close to city centres reduced their activities, freeing up areas and old warehouses for real estate investments as well as idleness and cultural programs.

The speculation of vacant areas was also increased by international events, as a strategy to concentrate and canalize capital in new urban operations of change. In the short period of eight years four international events were organized – the 1992 Expo in Sevilla and the Olympic Games in Barcelona, the 1998 Expo in Lisbon, and the 2000 Expo in Hannover. Urban areas associated to each event were labs of architecture and urban design rehearsals, inspiring and seducing people's imaginary for new century landscapes.

The role of architects was decisive in this period, which was defined by exploring new shapes and typologies and a renovated sense of monumentality, both of which contaminated the public sphere. Bilbao's Guggenheim should be mentioned as a particular case, due to the huge impact that was generated by the Frank O. Gehry building in the context of the city's renovation.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001 in New York City, USA, can be seen as a first cooling off of this optimistic period. The collapse of the World Trade Centre towers was a hard blow, as an architectural symbol of The United States of America was destroyed. The towers were designed by Minoru Yamasaki, the same architect who designed the Pruitt-Igoue neighborhood, which when demolished in the 1970s was qualified by Charles Jenks as marking the end of the modern movement. Another moment of inversion was the subprime crisis of 2008, and the market bubble that resulted from the devaluation of housing-related securities.

Almost twenty years has passed from the “golden era” of the 1990s. The West is now committed to new challenges such as the need to respond to climate change, refugee crises and to new democratic demands. Nevertheless, the model pursued at the end of the previous millennium is still seen as being a viable alternative to boost the urban economy, as exemplified by Expo 2008 in Zaragoza Spain, the 2014 FIFA World Cup of Football in Brazil, the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Brazil, Expo 2015 in Milan, and the recent Expo 2020 that is currently in progress in Dubai. In this sense, the conference “Grand Projects”, intends to confront and analyze the impacts this late 20th Century legacy has had on urban territories and policies over the last two decades.

## FRAMEWORK OF THE CONFERENCE WITHIN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

ANA BRANDÃO

Organizing and Scientific committee member, Grand Projects  
research project member

This conference was part of a research project “Grand Projects – Architectural and Urbanistic Operations after the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition, funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology in Portugal. Lead by Paulo Tormenta Pinto (Iscte – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa), the research joins a team of more than 20 researchers and consultants from different areas – architecture, urban planning, sociology, economy, geography – and the partnership of three institutions, DINÂMIA’CET – Iscte, Direção Geral do Território and Lab Ticino da Accademia di Architettura de Mendrisio – Università della Svizzera Italiana.

Since October 2018, the ongoing work aims to identify, characterize and debate the urban policies and architectural works produced in Portugal as part of the legacy of the EXPO’98 exhibition and urban project. As an urban laboratory, the event had a very significant impact on the planning and design cultures, as it established a new paradigm of quality of urban space. In this sense, several public policies and transformation processes over the following decades took the EXPO’98 urban operation as a reference and benefited from the know-how, resources and forms of production constituted for the event. The research addresses this legacy in different territorial contexts, from the national scale, the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, to the local scale of the city of Lisbon, analyzing strategies, plans and projects developed or foreseen in the aftermath of the event. Overall, the research showcases important issues of the urban change process of Portuguese cities, namely urban and environmental regeneration, urban planning and management practices, public space renewal, waterfront and “terrain vague” redevelopment, the role of architecture and architects on spatial quality, etc.

Despite all the specificities of the Portuguese context, the EXPO’98 exhibition and operation were representative of the late 20th century urban policies, an era marked in the West by optimism and growth. It represents a strong effort for innovation, joining international models of competitiveness and territorial visibility as well as embodying a desire for integration in the European context and contemporary urban trends. Likewise, the different examples and processes of urban transformation analyzed – redevelopment of industrial and port areas, environmental recovery, urban regeneration – find parallels in other European and international cases, with widely referenced examples.

Thus, it seemed more than adequate to organize an international conference centered on the theme of the grand urban projects of the late 20th century and their legacy for the following decades. The goal was to foster a cross-cutting discussion on the common urban change dynamics, but also to highlight the differences of each context - territorial, social, political - and their results. In a further effort to provide connections between ongoing research, the different tracks listed for discussion at the conference, correspond to relevant problems on this international debate about megaprojects, events, star-architecture and urban competitiveness which are also addressed and analyzed on the legacy research on the Portuguese case.

For the research project, the results of the conference enabled a broader understanding of the framework in which the Portuguese experience is inserted, establishing bridges and relations to other territories and contexts, as well as highlighting its originality when compared to other cases. Finally, the debate on the suitability of the grand projects in the face of the contemporary challenges faced today fostered an interesting exchange of ideas and opened up new contributions for the construction of future cities.

# A Tribute to Professor Vitor Matias Ferreira

## Track 8: The role of artists and urban art

JORGE BASSANI (CO-CHAIR) | UNIVERSITY OF SÃO PAULO  
PEDRO COSTA (CO-CHAIR) | DINÂMIA'CET — ISCTE

With a view to discussing the legacy of policies at the end of the 20th century in the practices and theories of city production today, Track 8 of the International Conference 'Grand Projects - Urban Legacies of the late 20th century' proposed to researchers, planners and scholars working in the fields of architecture, urbanism and urban studies to present their reflections, based on the presence of artistic expressions in the events of the end of the century and / or today.

The large civic operations in the city at the end of the last century, notably from "Les Grands Travaux" by François Mitterrand in Paris, as well as the large urban economic operations, such as Battery Park in New York or London's Docklands, for instance, are characterized by profound transformations in the functional and productive structures of cities. However, they were also noticeably characterized by the spectacularization of ruined urban scenarios in late modernity. This may even be its main effect on the new urban culture, the mediatized image of the city. Similarly to what occurred in other fields of social life, the aestheticization of life and of the landscape was not strictly the responsibility of the disciplines of architecture (spectacular) and urbanism (strategic), as the visual arts also took a leading role in the environmental results of these major interventions, being and continuing to be decisive in the spatial and physical configuration of large urban projects.

However, in their historical condition, the arts, as broad expressions of society are not aligned with just a single discourse. That means that, if on the one hand, the arts were fundamental to qualify the image of the city built at the end of the century, on the other hand, the arts were fundamental to question and to counter-argue the aesthetic regime of the spectacular. These were evident in a variety of expressions, actions of groups of artists or civic movements for urban rights, transversal and dissonant regarding the main logic and formability of urban interventions.

Track 8 aimed at promoting the debate between these two preconceptions concerning the presence of the arts in urban transformation projects: the one that contributes decisively to the language implanted and, also, those that configure coping languages. We received papers from both of these streams, and five of them were selected for presentation at the Conference. They point to these objectives in a broad and competent way, as they cannot be reduced to positive or

negative opinions in relation to the arts in urban reconfiguration, but rather draw upon their effects to problematize public artistic expressions in the contemporary urban territories.

The research presented by **Rita Ochoa** (CIAUD-UL / UBI), entitled “**The Expo and the post- “Expo”: The role of public art in urban regeneration’s processes at the end of 20th century**”, is exemplary in this respect. It observes a positive character regarding the role of the arts in the configuration of the environments, and in a sensitive way, for Expo 98 in Lisbon, but it does not refer only to this effect in this environment, but rather to the wide discussion of public arts in Portugal, by seeing in the event of Parque das Nações a turning point in the panorama presented. The author considers the public art program for the Expo quite innovative in the Portuguese context because it conducted the invited artists to interventions that depart from the urban environment proposed, in order to generate physical, visual, symbolic relationships with the new space and provide different experiences to its visitors.

The article develops in two axes of analysis, based on the framework set up at Expo 98: the first is dedicated to the study of the public art program proposed to artists in confrontation with the results obtained; the second, is a critical observation of the impacts of this program on the development of public art in Portugal in the following decade.

The work presented by **Laura Pomesano** (ISTAR-IUL) also observes the role of art in corroborating the configurations of the new spaces of the neoliberal city, promoted by urban interventions at the end of the century, though with very diverse objectives. With the title “**Gentrification and public policies: art and culture in the urban transformation within the European context**”, the focus of the research is directed to the engagements beyond the formal and relates artistic events with the economic and political statements contained in the discourse of the interventions.

The article aims elaborating guidelines for public policies that, considering art and culture as a fundamental part of the construction of the citizen identity of metropolitan territories, can define a new role for brownfield areas abandoned after deindustrialization. To this end, the article begins with the scenario that emerges in the process of “deindustrialization” and its impacts on the economy and demography, causing discontinuous and fragmented territories with the resulting social marginalization, as well as feeding the speculation promoted by real estate market. In this context, the author places the “ambivalence” of the performing arts, both as promoters or moderators of gentrification, and the role of policies (and politics) in the evolution of this socioeconomic dynamic, from its first emergences in the 1960s to the present day.

Other research presented on this Track is more directly aimed at the legacies, that is, observes the panorama resulting from the frictions between the arts and urban restructurings/renovations, attending exclusively to the scenes configured primarily in the 21st century. This is the case of the article “**Horticultural parks in Lisbon: the “beautiful” and “good” in expectant areas?**” by **Ana Elisia da Costa** (UFRGS - Brazil / ISCTE-IUL). The paper focuses on the analysis of post-industrial expectant areas in order to problematize the conflicts between community actions and the capture of these expressions by institutional power.

The author calls into analysis the Lisbon Green Plan, conceived in 1997 and implemented in 2007, which proposes the physical articulation of the city’s green areas aimed at leisure and agricultural production. In this context, the proposed parks are similar to the “big projects” of the late 20th century, using a formal and regular type of morphology. In many cases, the implementation of these parks involved the replacement of spontaneous community gardens, which had quite organically developed, in expectant areas of the city, since the 1950s. These, despite some decadent and labyrinthine characteristics, were quite important for local communities.

The article evaluates, aesthetically and ethically, the ongoing operations, in a situation where urban fabrics are impregnated with memory. At the same time it points out the potentialities and limits of the insurgent artistic practices, giving visibility to these subtracted territories, and destabilizes judgments about them, facing the dilemmas imposed to those territories and practices.

The work “**The Estelita Case and the influence of grands projects on the formation and production of young professional collectives**” by **Bruno Lima and Fernando Moreira** (UFPE / Brazil) is in the same line of assessing recent practices that question the operations of urban transformation. These researchers observe the phenomenon of the emergence of horizontally organized groups, formed by professionals and students from different areas, notably linked to the arts, with the aim of, in dialogue with social movements, opposing the logic of urban interventions aimed at the reproduction of capital in real estate market operations.

Last decade was marked in the city of Recife (Brazil) by intense confrontations around the changes in the urban environment caused by the allocation of idle land around the José Estelita Pier, made up of large warehouses supporting the Port of Recife and a disabled rail yard. The renovation of the waterfront is foreseen in the project called “Novo Recife”, with the radical transformation of the pier and the consequent expulsion of the former residents. In reaction to the enterprise and the gentrification imposed by it, the Occupy Estelita Movement questioned the exclusivity of the renovation project and affirmed the need to focus on urban vitality with qualification of public spaces and on the integrity and legitimacy of the symbolic landscape of the city center.

In a session aimed at discussing the arts in the context of greats projects, the examination of the urban project itself in its artistic dimension could not be missed, and that what is proposed by the presentation of “**Malagueira. Landscape events - what things say**” by **Pedro Guilherme** (CHAIA / IIFA), **Nicolás Martín Domínguez** (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Spain) and **Sofía Salema** (CHAIA / Dep. Arq).

The researchers study the project and materiality proposed by Álvaro Siza for Malagueira in Évora, in 1977, based on its formal, scenic and poetic qualities. For them, the drawings show that “plan” and “project” create events in the landscape that connect and create a dialogue between the User and the Place; they are pieces of architecture that will be discovered walking around the place. Drawing, in its gradual approach to scale, reveals a geometric abstraction that becomes architecture. It is a joint project between Álvaro Siza and the user (inhabitant) where the first has a characteristic that the second will become a living part of the neighbourhood.

# 46 The ‘Expo’ and the post-‘Expo’

## The role of public art in urban regeneration’s processes at the end of 20th century

RITA OCHOA  
CIAUD-JL/UBI

### ABSTRACT

In 1998, the Lisbon Universal Exhibition – Expo’98 – led to an urban regeneration operation on eastern Lisbon’s waterfront. Following an international tendency, this event was a pretext to replace an urban fabric that was greatly degraded at the time and to re-connect the Tagus River with the city, through the creation of new public spaces. For these spaces, it was promoted a public art program, which can be considered quite innovative in the Portuguese context, mainly because it asked for interventions that could generate physical, visual, symbolic and experiential relationships with the place.

Although most of the implemented public art solutions didn’t achieve those objectives, the process had the merit of intensifying the discussion about art and public space, in the Portuguese context. At the same time, it drove a monumentalisation of the eastern riverfront, that began here and was later expanded to other contexts. Therefore, it is interesting to observe the increase of artistic interventions throughout the city, in the following years.

Behind this framework, this article aims to analyse the associations between public art and the dynamics of urban regeneration at the end of the 20th century, from the case of Lisbon. It proposes two moments: first, it will observe the Expo’98’s public art program, comparing its initial assumptions with the final results; secondly, it will focus on the impacts of this program, through the analysis of public art’s placements in the following decade (1999–2009).

Across these two main themes, the article will explore public art at the light of the dynamics of the waterfronts’ openings, revealing the spaces that were “conquered” to the port system. It is concluded that public art had a significant role in the urban processes of the late 20th century. This is quite evident in a discourse that considers public art as a qualifying issue of urban space, even as a mean of economic and social development of the cities.

**Keywords:** Public art, Expo’98, urban regeneration, waterfront.

With the case studies presented, it was possible to observe the complex way in which emerging work processes are incorporated into consolidated institutional environments such as those of the public authorities.

The examples demonstrated different ways of incorporating the collective procedures, sometimes as a means to achieve the established objectives, sometimes as a result of programmed actions. The tactical actions are, normally, limited by the specific contingencies in the context or moment, as well as by an experimental character.

For this reason, they can become an important instrument for the renewal of institutional practices, but they can also favor a wrong discourse at a time of growing criticism of the role of the state in the conduction of public services and urban planning.

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# 157 Malagueira

## Events in the landscape “what things say”

PEDRO GUILHERME<sup>1</sup>

CHAIA / IIFA – Universidade de Évora, Portugal

NICOLÁS MARTÍN DOMÍNGUEZ

Escuela de Arquitectura Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Toledo, Spain.

SOFIA SALEMA<sup>2</sup>

CHAIA / Dep. Arq – Universidade de Évora

### ABSTRACT

In 1977 Malagueira at Évora began to be built. Drawings show that “*plan*” and “*project*” have unfixed borders and the events on the landscape connect and create a dialogue between the user and the place.

The drawing, in its gradual approach to scale reveals a geometric abstraction that becomes architecture.

Events are pieces of architecture that will be discovered by walking across the site. We find them near the elevated conduct thru small urban spaces (squares), or hidden benches under its arches. Also close to the water line, in bridges, different each time in solution, scale and geometry, in dialogue with nature. At other urban features like the amphitheater, the dike and benches above the park look at the water as the protagonist in different positions.

They all provide character to Malagueira.

It is in these discreet events, unnoticed places, small objects that “*big projects*” reach their fullest intensity. Inhabitants do not understand great performances, but they inhabit and live these events every day. Malagueira belongs to citizens, it provides opportunities for neighbors to interact and meet, walk around and feel they belong to the place.

1 Principal Investigator (PI) at Center for Art History and Artistic Research (Centro de História de Arte e Investigação Artística, Universidade de Évora) of the Research Project: Malagueira: Heritage for all. Contributions for its nomination (PTDC/ART-DAQ/32111/2017 [UI&D: CHAIA/UE – Ref.ª UJD/EAT/00112/2020 – FCTI]).

2 Co-principal Investigator (PI) at Center for Art History and Artistic Research (Centro de História de Arte e Investigação Artística, Universidade de Évora) of the Research Project: Malagueira: Heritage for all. Contributions for its nomination (PTDC/ART-DAQ/32111/2017 [UI&D: CHAIA/UE – Ref.ª UJD/EAT/00112/2020 – FCTI]). Associated professor.

Álvaro Siza wants to leave a mark in the city, but as Roland Barthes “*death of the author*” explains it is the reader, in this case the user, that controls its reading on the city. This is done without intermediaries, and show its true “essence”, which was intuited in the aerial drawings. It is a participated project between Álvaro Siza and the user (inhabitant) where the former presents a feature that the latter will transform into a living part of the neighborhood.

Our presentation will reveal the original fundamental drawings of these events, and Álvaro Siza’s personal explanations: birth, evolution, and final construction. We will show them for the first time they will allow us to read in Malagueira “*what things say*”.

**Keywords:** Malagueira, Álvaro Siza Vieira, Urban events.

### Introduction

“Siza drew up the first sketches for the masterplan of Malagueira while looking out through the window of a plane.” (Fleck, 1995, p. 72).

From the air Évora must have looked impressive. Around a central urban historic center, a series of new illegal neighborhoods (Bairro da Senhora da Glória, Bairro de Santa Maria, Bairro Fontanas) grew along traditional rural vernacular preexisting structures (Quinta da S.ra de Aires, Quinta do Escurinho, Quinta do Sarrabulho, Quinta da Malagueirinha and Quinta da Malagueira) and spread on the territory.



Fig. 1 - Photography of the vacant site and Évora taken from the plane tour (Siza,1977)

A newly elected municipal administration commissioned Álvaro Siza Vieira to draw up a new social residential development proposal, with 1200 dwellings and a range of public and commercial services.

Although this complex and holistic operation for social housing has started more than 40 years ago it is still not finished. Siza engaged this plan-project for twenty years (1977-1997) and explored the relation to the city, to the limits and border neighborhoods, infrastructure networks and evolutionary housing, and the drawing public buildings (like the parish complex, a restaurant or tea house, a clinic, a hotel), the landscape and urban space.

Álvaro Siza took great attention to the limits and to the limits of the plan. On the first sketchbook we can read: “*Limit to take care. Limit to connect.*” (Fig. 2)



idea of boundaries and connections is present as a constant plea to plan's intention. On the first hand these areas were subjected to confrontation and dialogue between the existing built spaces and the expecting vacant areas under project. On the second hand the limits had to be defined as linking opportunities and not as borders, in direction to the city.

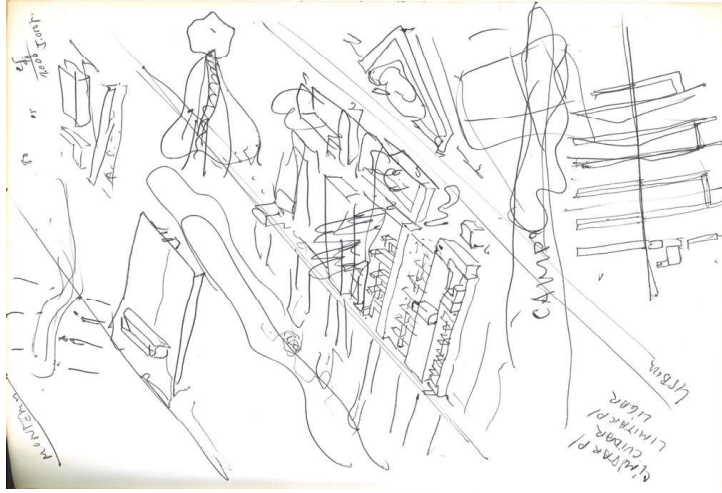


Fig. 2 - Caderno 1, p.8 (Siza, 1977)

Siza also writes about the importance of time: *“The hurry to conclude everything quickly, both in architecture and in the city, impresses me a lot. The tension for a definite solution obstructs the complementarity between different scales, urban and monument, between open space and construction. (...) At Évora the time for comprehend and to study, prolonged and endless, gave me the ability to avoid applying a predefined principle.”*<sup>3</sup> (Siza, 2000, p.107)

3 “Um aspecto que me impressiona muito, na arquitetura e na cidade do nosso tempo, é a pressa em concluir tudo rapidamente. Essa tensão para uma solução definitiva impede a complementaridade entre várias escalas, entre tecido urbano e o monumento, entre o espaço aberto e a construção. (...) Em Évora, o tempo da compreensão e do estudo, prolongado e infatigável, deu-me a possibilidade de evitar a aplicação de um único princípio pré-construído.” (Siza, 2000, p.107)



Fig. 3 - Construction site of Álvaro Siza's Quinta da Malagueira Évora, Portugal. (Collóvá 1979)

But to inhabit the landscape, Álvaro Siza needs, events that can anchor meaning. As Martin Heidegger states, *“We do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is, because we are dwellers (...) to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature.”* (Heidegger, 1951, p.97)

Aerial drawings show that “plan” and “project” have unfixed borders<sup>4</sup> and events on the landscape were used to connect and to create a dialogue between the user and the place.

These urban features are associated to necessary activities like those that are compulsory and that require a greater participation of those involved (i.e. everyday tasks either solo or in group greatly related to walking), and optional activities that are pursued or participated if there is time or place for them to occur (i.e. strolling, promenading, sitting of just enjoying a breath of fresh air). According to Jan Gehl (1987), *“When high quality of outdoor areas is good, optional activities occur with increasing frequency. Furthermore, as levels of optional activity arise, the number of social activities usually increases substantially.”* (p. 13) This “life between building” present in the modest “see and hear contacts” and a whole range of other social activities, despite their insignificant appearance, are most valuable and act as prerequisite needed for other more complex contacts.

4 Siza: “I have always had difficulty defining the border between plan and project” (Siza, 2009, p. 85).

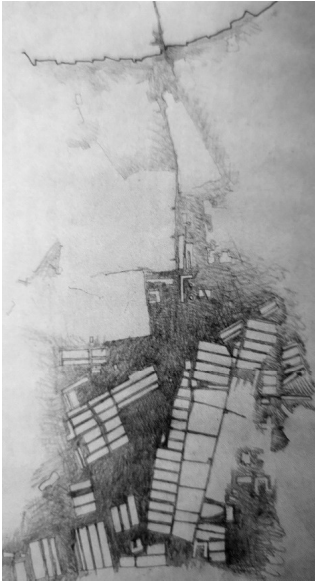


Fig. 4 - Empty spaces scheme (probably by Siza in Molteni, 1997, p.37)

The presence of events in the landscape, in their large-scale outline, serve multiple meanings. They help us to comprehend the conception of the plan. But the surprise is greater, when verifying that some of those strokes of the Bic pen, lines and points remain until their final construction. The project cannot stop being that way, and even in the larger open spaces, they continue to be events in the landscape that allow the project, in each personal discovery, to reach its maximum intensity.

Urban events or features can be moments and architectural landmarks that are discovered during both necessary and optional activities. In the case of Malagueira most occur at the central area, around or under the elevated duct - a major symbolic urban feature on the landscape - or linked to the watercourses that cross the Malagueira, defining small urban spaces that can be used by inhabitants.

Under the elevated service duct, or conduit, raised on concrete piers and rendered in unplastered concrete block, we can identify different possible uses and activities, hidden benches not obviously visible, inconspicuous, unnoticeable, and always different. We find them again, unexpectedly, close to or on the water line themselves. We find bridges over the watercourse, different each time in solution, scale, and geometry, in dialogue with the water line they preserve.

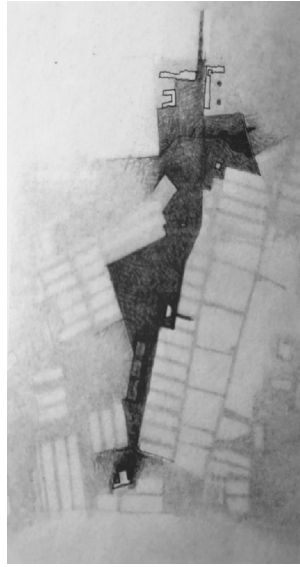


Fig. 5 - Central areas (probably by Siza in Molteni, 1997, p.38)

Some other events, like the amphitheater, act as an apparently odd pieces and alien to the performance. The dike, that retains the water coming from the stream, closes its final section and states its presence to us before returning to nature again. The benches above the park, which, acting like Malagueira characters, look at the water as the protagonist in different positions.

To incorporate users' considerations Malagueira Alvaro Siza followed SAAL's methodologies - as he had previously done at São Victor and Bouça - and continued pursuing an experimental model where architects would design housing projects in dialogue with local communities. However, designing this way was by no means an easy process:

*"Their attitude was sometimes authoritarian, they denied all awareness of the architect's problems, they imposed their way of seeing and conceiving things. The dialogue was very contentious... To enter the real process of participation meant to accept the conflicts and not to hide them, but on the contrary to elaborate them. These exchanges then become very rich, although hard and often difficult."*<sup>5</sup>

In this article we will focus on some urban events that Álvaro Siza includes in his initial design that favor the understanding of the plan and its message alongside the main east-west Axe that extended from Rua dos Salesianos (near Portas de Alconchel). Our research of Malagueira's archive held by Drawing Matter (UK) follows his sketches and other material to find the origin of these small pieces of architecture that Siza includes in Malagueira. We will try to show why are they diverse and share some light to their discreet but complex nature.

### Spaces for Walking, places for staying <sup>7</sup>

Álvaro Siza designed the spaces for walking taking into consideration the housing design and the distribution of individual housing in blocks, but also existing paths, around the main East-West axe from Portas de Alconchel to Quinta de Senhora de Aires. They are an integral way to comprehend the plan its urban design in its relation to the city, and to provide a network of spaces to stay with different opportunities to sit, to rest, meet and to see (or be seen).

In the first design phases he uses pre-existing land division, derived by the (unwanted) West development plan (Plano de Expansão da Zona Oeste da Cidade),

5 O Serviço Ambulatório de Apoio Local (Local Ambulatory Support Service, SAAL), ran from 1974-76, was a unique collaboration between architects and city-dwellers in need of decent, affordable housing in the wake of the so-called 'Carnation Revolution' of 1974. Álvaro Siza Vieira worked for the SAAL between 1973 and 1977 at S. Victor and Bouça at Porto.

6 France Vanlaethem, "Pour une architecture épurée et rigoureuse," ARQ: Architecture/Québec, no. 14 (August 1983), 18. Cited by Kenneth Frampton at <https://www.artforum.com/print/201603/typology-and-participation-the-architecture-of-alvaro-siza-58115>

7 From chapter 4 of Jan Gehl's "Life between buildings"

and its already decided protected green areas (that would later become the urban park). He considered existing rural roads to anchor the plan, incorporating all illegal neighbourhoods and farms.

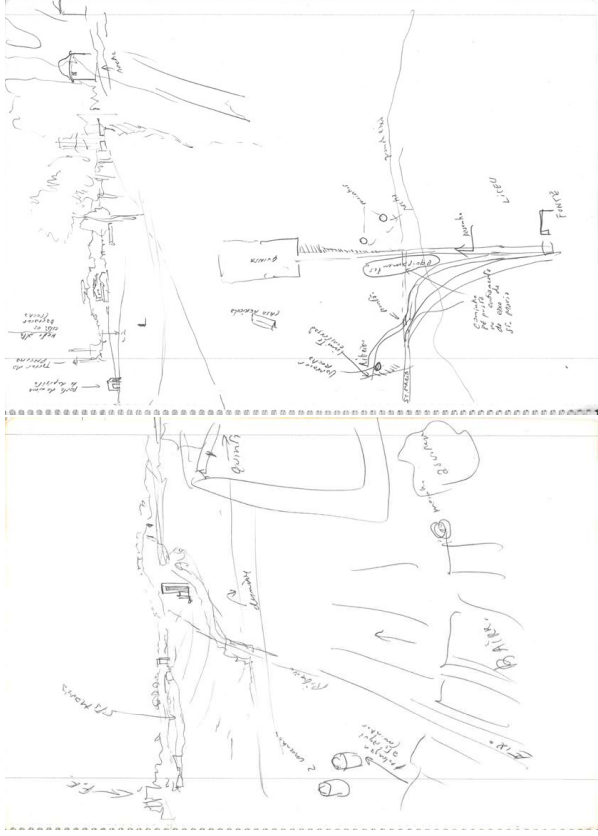


Fig. 6 - Caderno 5, p.32, p.43 (Siza, June 1977)

Paths were not merely designed at Malagueira but found by Siza on site's pre-existing conditions and opportunities. He would (re)use pedestrian routes ("caminhos pre-existent [para] peões") made by the existing inhabitants, some nomads at that time (gipsies), as they walked on the site or from the illegal sprawls. These pre-existing paths were used to organize the public space and to think about different geometries in the plan.

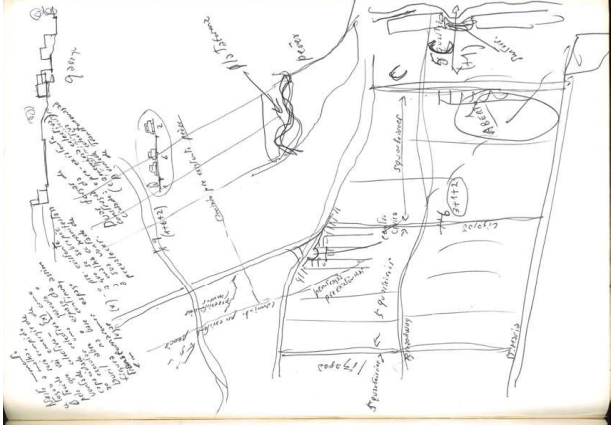


Fig. 7 - Caderno 18, p.28 (Siza, March 1978)

Some of these geometries stabilized over the time of the plan, while others changed and eventually were left behind. At previous articles (Guilherme and Sofia, 2019) we have shown their relevance to the positioning of the central commercial area and main square of the plan.

### The East-West path: the elevated duct

One of the most unusual devices Siza employed in Malagueira, following Kenneth Frampton article, "is an elevated service duct, raised on concrete piers and rendered in unplastered concrete block, which produced a pseudo-viaduct that meanders through Malagueira's episodic housing terraces like a relic from another time."<sup>8</sup>

Initially this elevated conduct was supposed to be "one covered with pedestrians along the east-west axis, allowing a quick and sheltered route from the sun and rain, and extending practically until the beginning of Rua dos Salesianos, by

<sup>8</sup> "TYPOLOGY AND PARTICIPATION: THE ARCHITECTURE OF ÁLVARO SIZA", 2021. Artforum. Com. <https://www.artforum.com/print/201603/typology-and-participation-the-architecture-of-alvaro-siza-58115>.

afforestation of this street”<sup>9</sup>. This covered path evolved into a complex path, of more vivid geometries and materials, that hold different urban events with different uses and design features.



Fig. 8 - Marble benches at the Elevated conduct (Britto 2020)

One of these events is a small geometric folly that defines a particular joint where two geometries collide. Two small white marble benches confronting each other at a change of geometry provide an occasional meeting point, a viewpoint of what is happening and a place to be seen.

This event is defined not only by its geometry but also by its materiality. The use of marble implies an exemplarity of design and qualifies space. Álvaro Siza uses marble to distinguish and give value to different spaces. These rather ubiquitous use of different materials makes them stand up and relate them to other decorative parts of more classical architecture. It is not only the material's iconic relevance or tectonic nature but the fact of its use in other commonly relevant decorative parts of architectural classical styles.

The subtle change of the perception of joints creates an instability of the apparent social character of Malagueira. Cement bricks and white plaster may seem low tech materials either of industrial or vernacular inspiration, but the selective mix use of richer materials like stone or red brick, confuse their reading.

<sup>9</sup> "...um coberto de pedras ao longo do eixo este-oeste, permitindo um percurso rápido e abrigado do sol e da chuva, e prolongar praticamente até ao início da Rua dos Salesianos, por arborização desta rua." Memória descritiva do Plano de Pormenor de uma Área de 27ha integrada no Plano de Expansão Oeste de Évora. Março de 1977.



Fig. 9 - Marble benches at the Elevated conduct (Britto 2020)

At the top joint of the elevated duct a larger sculpture is devised to hold and sign the plan's autonomy and contemporary design. Symbolic links to the old aqueduct of Água da Prata resonate at the arches that hide a small marble bench carved in-between cement blocks.

Time is slowed down as we observe the different geometries and their subtleties.

### The Urban Park

The urban park, with 8,5 ha, was developed by Álvaro Siza with the collaboration of landscape architect João Gomes da Silva, as “*Landscape as transformation*” (Gomes da Silva, 1987)

Gomes da Silva describes that the plan superimposes the different uses, programmes, typologies, and the natural matrix of the territory: its morphology, its water network (streams), and its climatic characteristics. Different relations of parallelism, fusion, transformation, transfiguration, and sublimation are cast into place to define the urban and natural dimensions of the site. Geometry and irregularity of natural forms shape tensions and fragmented interactions. The matrix of the Plan (in which the different typologies are placed through the natural territory) incorporate the fragmented multiple interactions, sometimes of contradictory nature, of both urban and natural elements. These complementary levels of action – as method and concept – accentuates both the border between plan and project, and the relation between analysis and proposal as a non-unidirectional movement.

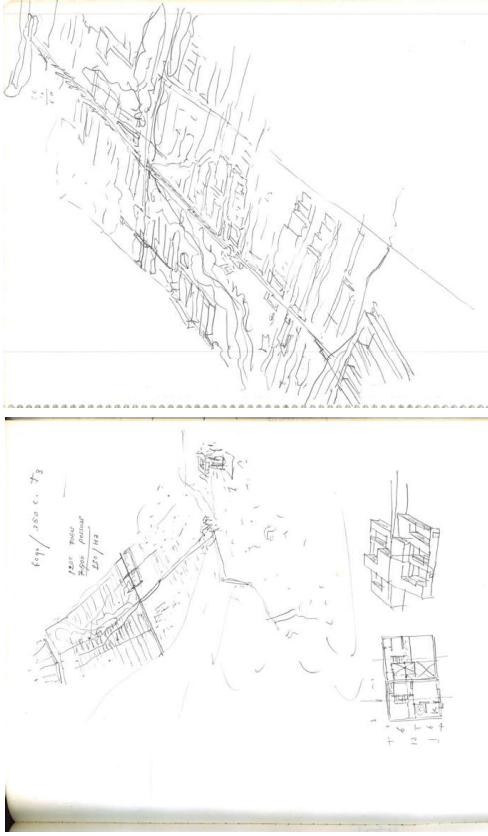


Fig. 10 - Caderno 3, p. 28 (Siza, May 1977) and caderno 5, p. 20 (Siza, June 1977)

The Urban park intends to change the existing nature of a rural area (in the periphery of the city but still with residues of the agricultural production) into an urban landscape.

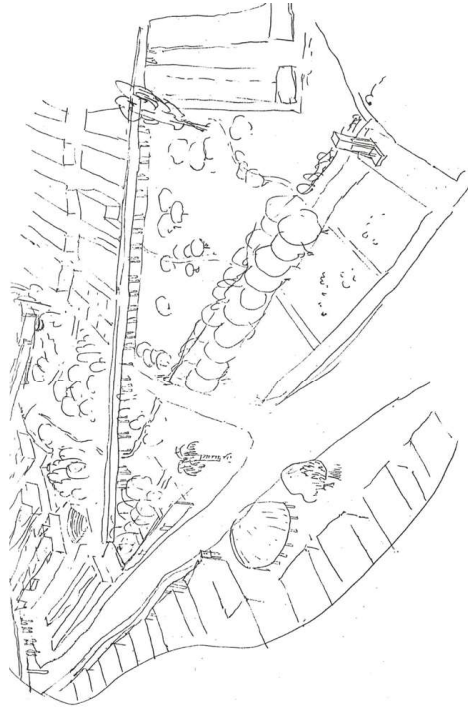


Fig. 11 - Drawing of the Urban Park, probably by João Gomes da Silva, included at his thesis, p. 35 (Gomes da Silva, 1987)

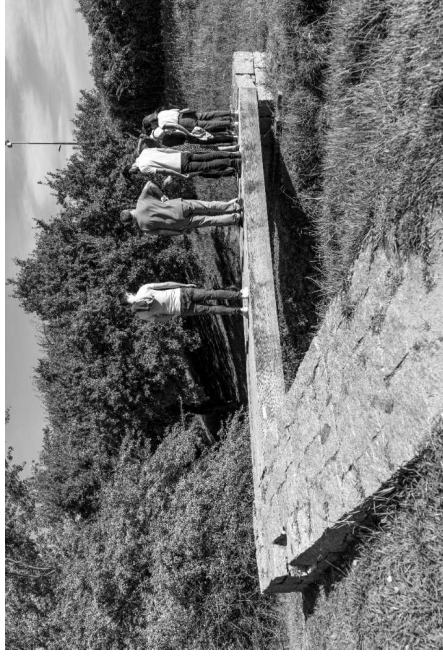
The drawings and sketches by Álvaro Siza speculate not only on the urban spaces but also how the urban green areas and natural elements (trees, streams, slopes, rocks) and built elements articulate and play together, “as fragments of imaginary cities.” (Gomes da Silva, 1987, p.11) This urban park is a place for spatial decompression and privileged visual relations with the city centre.

Álvaro Siza concludes: “The essential problem is to find a way to connect different things, because the city is today a set of very diverse fragments.” (Álvaro Siza cited by Gomes da Silva, 1987, p.19)

#### 4.1 The wooden bridge

A rather small drawing at Álvaro Siza’s archive reveals the final design for the wooden bridge over the water course. This bridge constitutes an extraordinary piece of design’s simplicity.

Its initial intentions, as any other bridge, are clear: to cross to the other side. However, its initial drawings appear to question the approach to the bridge by keeping the path along the stream. It is not anymore just a question of getting to the other side of the watercourse. It is a question of the user’s relation to the margin and the continues dialogue between the path and the water. Both follow their natural parallel flow and, when needed, at the optimal time, a shift of material and geometry shapes the new crossing over water.



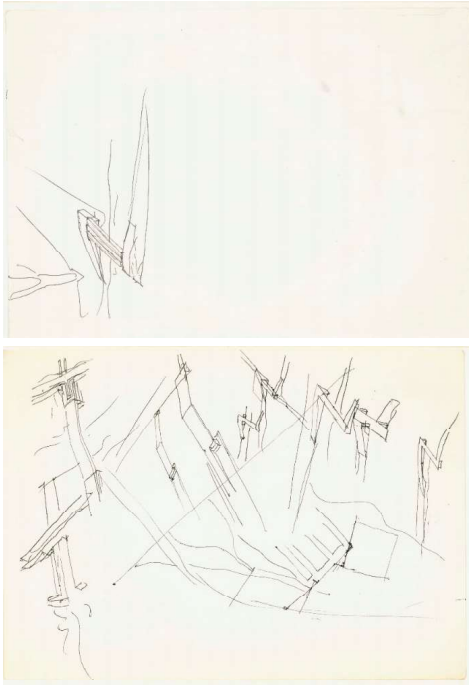


Fig. 12 - Photograph and undated drawings by Siza of the wooden bridge (Brito 2020, Siza n.d.)

Strangely, not as in other situations he uses granite and wood. Granite near the path and wood at the crossing. Materials are used in close relation to their needed mass, anchoring and stability.

#### 4.2 The water passage

The water passage below the East-West Axe, just before the lake and its dike, is a feature introduced to manage the water and to use it as a fundamental support for the urban green areas. Its brutalist design does not refuse the needs of engineers but enriches them with a complex network of paths, descending or crossing bellow or over the watercourse.

All existing wells and water mines were recovered and protected. Special attention was taken to the higher well and elevated deposit, that had proved relevant in previous draft years. Different well and water mines are still used to provide water to different areas.



Fig. 13 - Aerial view of the wooden bridge and the water passage (Brito2020)

The stream was qualified by Álvaro Siza and João Gomes da Silva due to its relevance as it enabled an enlargement of the views provided within the plan and served as a decompression space in relation with the city centre. Water assumes its primordial value for permitting life at Évora.

#### 4.3 The Amphitheatre

The amphitheatre is located at the west side of the lake. The “cavea” (or sitting area) is a concrete sculpture like stand supported by two pillars, facing west. The “arena” is an open, uncovered, terrace, enclosed by natural stones, resembling an old quarry. A square wall surrounds and defines the limits of the amphitheatre. Each element’s geometry intertwines with the holistic composition of the ensemble.

This space was not intended to observe the surrounding landscape, nor the urban park, but rather to permit an occasional use for inhabitant’s cultural events. It hosted on one occasion a celebration by gypsies and hosts frequent events of cultural, political, or academic nature.

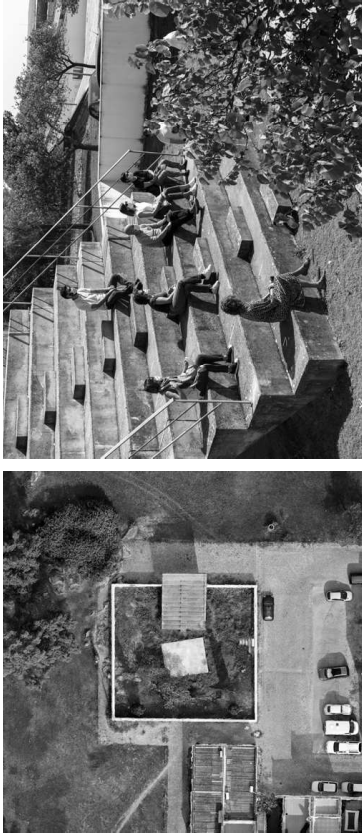


Fig. 14 - Aerial view of the Amphitheatre (Brito 2020)

Once again Álvaro Siza recalls a classical memory of scale and urban relevance to identify and give meaning to a specific space in the plan. The classical sequence of street, block, square and quarter, suggested by Peter Testa (1984) is “a theme underlying the city as an urban construct” (p.113) and questions the idea of Malagueira being some form of localism or regionalism.

By addressing these classical subjects, thru a contemporary (re) design of complex geometry, Siza relates to all history of mankind as well as the roman past of Évora and to its well-known temple.

### Conclusion

We are always surprised by the constant discoveries inside Álvaro Siza’s drawings and by the depth of the words written about them. The “obsession”<sup>10</sup> to relate nature and construction<sup>11</sup> led him to make the project in relation to the nature of the site. The master plan takes into consideration not only the needs of human construction, but also the emptiness of opens spaces and their natural beauty.

Drawing is an abstraction achieved by its geometry, pursued by Álvaro Siza, to its last consequences. The dialogue between its materials and its contrast with the landscape make them essential to comprehend the research behind every event at the landscape. Drawings, in its gradual approach to scale reveal a geometric abstraction that becomes architecture, because “Architecture is geometrizing” (Siza, 2003, p. 23)

These discreet events are embedded with grand design that permits them to reach

<sup>10</sup> Siza explains: “The relationship between nature and construction is decisive in architecture. This relationship, the permanent source of any project, is for me a kind of obsession” (Siza, 2009, p. 17).

<sup>11</sup> “architecture, construction made by man, geometry, rigor, etc., are always in an organic connection with the landscape” (Siza, 1993, p. 17).

their fullest potential. Sometimes inhabitants do not fully understand these great designs, but they inhabit and live these events every day. These features belong to Malagueira’s citizens, and provide opportunities for neighbors to interact and meet, walk around, and to feel they belong to the place.

Events that in their use, must be discovered, used, and sometimes forgotten. To be rediscovered again at each visit to Malagueira.

These small events provide clues of cultural significance are left behind for users to read, providing meaning that goes beyond the brief moment of the undergoing political and social change towards a cultural positioning in the world that links Malagueira to world heritage.

We believe these urban events and features should be understood almost as an artistic operation. The author wants to leave a mark in the city, but as Roland Barthes’ “The death of the author” it is the reader, in this case the user, that mediates its reading of the city. It is not the author that determines the use the inhabitants will make of the urban features, but the users that replace the privileged position of the author and suppress his position and give to the urban feature its meaning and use. This is done without intermediaries and show the true “essence”<sup>12</sup> of these features.

Our research aims to reveal the process of these events and its explanations: birth, evolution, and final construction. Siza’s freehand drawings become essential to this study.

Malagueira may be apparently unfinished:

“Paradoxically, the fierce critics came from the interpretation of those empty spaces as incomplete places and I was accused of «not completing them»” (Siza, 2003, p. 119)

Yet, despite all that is still unbuilt, the remaining allows us to read in Malagueira “what things say”.

<sup>12</sup> “... the important thing is that the expression of that kind of singularity is achieved which, without betraying what is its essence, nevertheless frees its design from overly obvious reasons. In this way, it is possible to define that touch of authenticity that attracts us in a non-aggressive way, but which at the same time, arises in part as banal” (Siza, 2009, p. 139).

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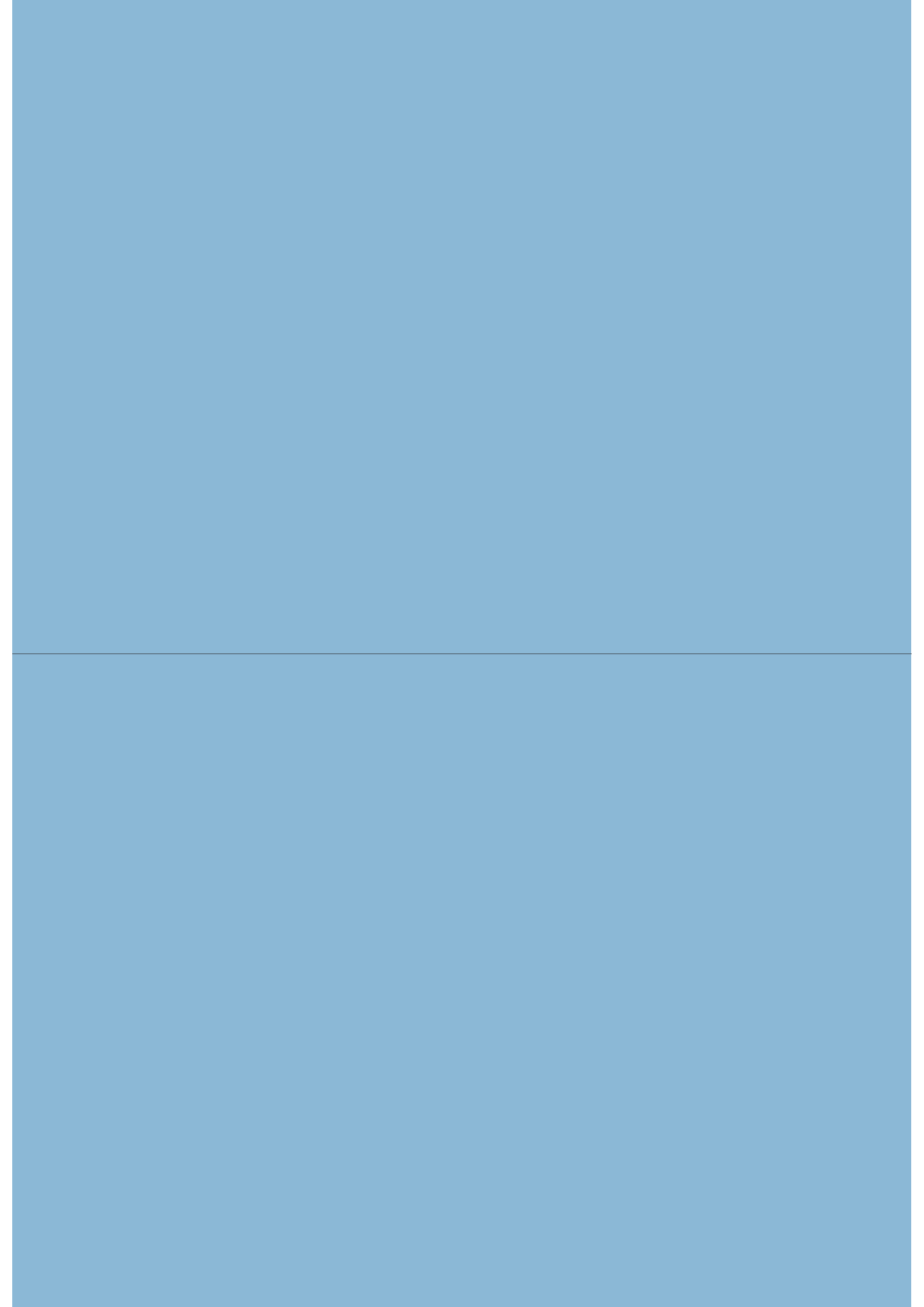
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