

A  
CURATORSHIP  
OF LACK

The ACARTE  
Department of the  
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
1984-1989



Ana Bigotte Vieira

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...someone had said there was a world in the cellar. I found out later they meant an old trunk, but at the time I thought they meant the world itself.

JORGE LUIS BORGES, *The Aleph*





PART I

# An Aleph

An Aleph. But it is not a place, it is a way of being.  
From all places we see all places. And people were all pretty  
much in all places and that is what I think is important for  
us to think through.

Interview with JOÃO PINHARANDA, September 2011

An Aleph is one of the points in space that contains all  
other points.

JORGE LUIS BORGES, *The Aleph*

# 1.

## INTRODUCTION: ALL TIMES, ALL PLACES: HETEROTOPIAS AND THE EXHIBITIONARY COMPLEX

In his essay «Different Spaces», Michel Foucault suggests the term heterotopia as an analytical tool to think about «real places, actual places that are designed into the very institution of society, which are sorts of actually realized utopias in which [...] all the other real emplacements that can be found within the culture are, at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed». Heterotopias are thus «sorts of places that are outside all places» (Foucault 1998, 178), even if their location is known. In trying to grasp the significance of these kinds of places over time, Foucault proposes a kind of «science» of their description – *heterotopology* – for which he lays out a set of principles grounded on a handful of concrete examples. In the fourth of these principles, in which he claims that heterotopias are often linked to specific segments or slices of time – *découpages du temps* – that open onto what might be called *heterochronias* (different times), he offers as examples libraries and museums. These are heterotopias of the infinite accumulation of time.

In *The Birth of the Museum*, Tony Bennet (1995), thinking within a Foucaultian framework and juxtaposing the simultaneous emergence, in the 19th century, of the museum and of spaces such as the school and the public library, the gallery, the arcades, the department store and the international exhibitions, coins the phrase «exhibitionary complex» to account for a set of institutions and places whose purpose was the self-formation of citizens in the then secularised states. According to Bennet, it is precisely by shaping the ways one circulates and acts in such places that a series of routines and social behaviours are established.

Allowing us to shed light on the connection between spaces as seemingly distinct, not to say antithetical, as department stores, fairgrounds and libraries, the notion of an «exhibitionary complex» complicates the relation between different cultural planes or spheres – the high and the low, the national and the international, the urban and the rural. It is thus a particularly apt term to bring to bear on what João Pinharanda is alluding to when he uses the image of the Aleph to describe

the Serviço de Animação, Criação Artística e Educação pela Arte [Animation, Artistic Creation and Education Through Art Department]/ACARTE of the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian [FCG] in the 1980s, under the direction of Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão, when, Pinharanda says, it was not so much a place as a «way of being», underlining that its defining element was the fact that «people were all pretty much in all places.»

Housed in the FCG's Centro de Arte Moderna [CAM] – the country's first de facto museum of modern art, since, unlike in other European countries, where such museums were built in the postwar era as beacons of democracy and freedom, in Portugal (under Salazar and Caetano's regime, the «Estado Novo», or New State), this would only occur in 1983, through private initiative<sup>1</sup> – the ACARTE was responsible for activities beyond the museum's galleries. And this was a museum, it should be noted, conceived as an «arts centre», and therefore including, besides and beyond the museum as such, a multipurpose hall, an open air amphitheatre, a temporary exhibition room, studios for artistic workshops and activities, and a children's art centre. All these spaces came under the purview of the ACARTE.

Multiple temporalities are at work here: the promise of having a museum of modern art, which goes back to the 1950s/1960s, but is only now fulfilled; the fact that it was housed in a distinctive 1970s-style architectural space inaugurated in the 1980s, the CAM; the fact that the latter included a Department, the ACARTE, that chimed in with the attempt to create a «Cultural Europe» so characteristic of the 1990s; or the fact that its project can be seen as a prefiguration of the curatorial turn towards the discursive and the performative that was to take place in the 2000s.

Similar to an *Aleph*, the 1980s ACARTE, operating from within the symbolic space of the museum, was a place where all places converged without merging into a single one, a focal point for a plurality of perspectives, and, simultaneously, a «way of being»: in other words, a heterotopia. Concurrently, it was part and parcel of the exhibitionary complex, inasmuch as its serial action gathered into one single place a tangled multitude of spaces and times, while also connecting with a network of new sites and forms of work, new leisure and consumer practices. Over this decade, the ACARTE was the place to go, the place to see and be seen, as well as the terrain in which a «way of being» would take shape and flourish.

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1 With a modern art collection assembled specifically for that purpose, which serves as an apt illustration of the regime's relation to modern art. On this matter, see Raquel Henriques da Silva (2014).

And yet the ACARTE may also be perceived as the culmination of two decades of research on Education Through Art and Arts Education, since its founder and first Director, Madalena Perdigão, not only created the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Choir and Ballet Company, but was also responsible for the 1971 reform of the Conservatory and for a failed project for the reconfiguration of National Art Education curricula, in 1978. Many lines intertwine and cross paths in this history, then: experiments in Education Through Art that took place in the Gulbenkian prior to the 1974 Revolution, the reform of the conservatory, the failed restructuring of the National Art Education curricula and Madalena Perdigão's own return to the Foundation in 1984. In this sense, the ACARTE activity in the 1980s is a continuation of the pedagogical experiments of the 1960s. But its project and activities may also be understood at the crossroads of a host of curatorial and programming practices. By tailoring its activities to «attend to what is lacking» – a notion that plays a pivotal conceptual role in this book – the ACARTE developed a unique approach, one that was able to accommodate aesthetic and political projects usually ascribed to different timespans, and to open itself out to the manifold ways in which its contemporaries perceived their own historical period.

ACARTE, a Department focused on contemporary culture and a centre for education through art aimed at children in a museum that is a cultural centre: a preamble

In 1984 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation inaugurates the ACARTE Department. Madalena Perdigão, founder and first Director, justifies its creation by explaining that

the Portuguese cultural scene was lacking a Department focused on contemporary culture and/or on a modern approach to timeless themes, as well as a Centre for Education Through Art aimed at children. It was necessary, then, to establish the conditions for the Modern Art Centre, created by the FCG on 22 August 1979 and inaugurated on 20 July 1983, to be not just a Museum, in the narrowest sense of the term, but also a Cultural Centre. (Perdigão 1989)

Created in 1984 by decision of the FCG's Board of Directors, the ACARTE safeguarded «the clear separation between [the museum's] acquisition policy and the cultural events and activities policy» (Perdigão *apud* Ribeiro 2007, 370). In 2000 the ACARTE became a Department of the CAM and by the end of 2002 it was dissolved. The ACARTE directors were, chronologically: from 1984 to 1989, Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão (1923-1989), also responsible for much of the 1990 programme; from June 1990 to 1994, José Sasportes; from 1995 to 1999, Yvette Centeno; from 2000 to 2002, Jorge Molder, with Mário Carneiro (the deputy director) as the ACARTE programmer.

In 1987 the «Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro/Dança da Europa» [ACARTE Encounters – New Theatre Dance of Europe] were created: an annual festival held in September that was to become one of the Department's highlights, to the extent that until the ACARTE's extinction it was often confused and conflated with the ACARTE Encounters, as if the ACARTE was nothing but this festival, or nothing but a permanent festival. There are also a number of emblematic projects and initiatives that began within the Department and would later, with changes in the Foundation's structure, become autonomous entities, such as «Jazz em Agosto» [Jazz in August, still ongoing] or the Animation Cinema courses – later replaced by CITEN – Centro de Imagens e Técnicas Narrativas [Centre for Images and Narrative Techniques, nowadays included at FBAUL].

This book offers a lens to peer into the first years of the ACARTE, from 1984 to 1989, under the direction of Madalena Perdigão. It is based on the research work that resulted in *No Aleph, para um olhar sobre o Serviço de Animação, Criação Artística e Educação pela Arte/ACARTE da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian 1984-1989*, a PhD thesis submitted to the Universidade Nova de Lisbon in 2016, available at the FCG Art Library (Biblioteca de Arte). The doctoral research was composed of two parts of equal weight: the standard printed dissertation and the «ACARTE Digital Timeline 1984-1989», created for that specific purpose. The research project, then, attempted to survey the activity of the ACARTE in and across its various contexts, while also offering access to selected documents from the ACARTE archive (organised, classified and digitised) so as to open this collection to future research in various artistic fields and disciplines. Thus, whether through hypertext navigation (in the Digital Timeline), or by attending to the startling coexistence of different eras in the heterotopic space of the museum, as argued in the PhD thesis, in both these contexts the Borgesian image of a point in space that contains all others – i.e. an *Aleph* – appeared as an axis. This image, which emerged in the interview

with João Pinharanda, became an epistemological grid that offered a specific view into the ACARTE during the period in question.

Both the dissertation and the Digital Timeline involved a labour of *situating*: not only in the sense of placing things into context but also of locating the object of research «within» the *Aleph*. While the ACARTE archive was being used and made digitally available for future use, a key concern was to lay the groundwork for a detailed and critical analysis of the ACARTE Department at the crossroads of various periodisations and geographical coordinates. The point was to circumvent a common-sense narrative, still pervasive in historical and art historical analyses, namely when addressing the performing arts, according to which the presumed Portuguese «backwardness» is presented as a kind of catch-all explanation: cause, driving force and *raison d'être* at one and the same time. From this backward or laggard soil, then, if we are to follow this narrative, there sprung – out of the blue, as it were – unexpected «bursts of modernity» – the ACARTE Department being, perhaps, one such fortuitous burst. It was important, then, alongside and beyond the research's own thread, to lay the foundations for a more detailed future research on each of the fields with which the ACARTE Department engaged or came into contact.

The specific features of this *situating*, or of the situated object, implied the unfolding of the multiplicity of times and spaces that find themselves folded within the museum's heterotopia, laying bare the distinct heterochronias of the particular *situation* of the ACARTE, namely the openness to what was *lacking or missing* – an «openness to lack», more succinctly – that defined its programming. This angle became a privileged way to access the perceptions contemporaries of the ACARTE had of their own historical moment and the coordinates that framed such perceptions – which, in turn, had to be grasped in their proper context. It is these coordinates, then, the layout of these reference points and their various frames of reference (across different times and spaces), that my research aims to unfold and bring to the surface. This means, for example, that throughout the three parts of this book, and especially in part II, to address X one may need to go back to Y and then make one's way back to X: the point one returns to (X) has changed in the process, and is now situated in a different framework, or frameworks.

By engaging with a recent event, the kind of historiography mobilised in this research is one in which the object and the archive are constructed gradually, in parallel with their description and from the point of view of the present, in a process closer to established approaches within fields such as Performance Studies and Contemporary Philosophy than to those one usually finds in more orthodox historical accounts.

Under the title *A Curatorship of Lack. The ACARTE Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – 1984-1989*, this book – divorced from its correlate digital archive – begins by situating the ACARTE in the space of a museum conceived as an art centre that is, in fact, the first museum of modern art in Portugal. Such a situation (or location, in the widest sense) is key to any understanding of its place of enunciation or of the scope of its actions as grounded on a productive notion of lack – defined as an openness, by the institution's agents, to what was missing across the various fields they engaged in. This, in turn, outlines both the institution's present and its future as plural and contested terrains. The book also aims to contribute to a more thorough understanding of a period – the 1980s – of great and sudden political, economic and social transformations. At the same time, it seeks to draw a subtle, relational and interdisciplinary genealogy of certain artistic practices, movements and moments, namely the «Nova Dança Portuguesa» (NPD – New Portuguese Dance), but also animated cinema, experimental music, theatre, performance art, fanfare bands, or even cultural curatorship and programming and event production – in short, the fields in which the ACARTE plays a foundational role.

The book is structured in five parts. In Part I, after describing the ACARTE in the form of a Borgesian «Aleph» in light of theorisations of the museum as heterotopia and as part of an exhibitionary complex, by Foucault and Tony Bennet, I take the first steps towards a problematisation of the cultural shift that took place in Portugal in the 1980s, following the lead of authors such as André Lepcecki, Luís Trindade, Rui Bebiano and Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Notions of modernity, backwardness and historical amnesia are brought into the equation, while underlining how new practices bring about new subjects and new bodies – or rather, corporealities.

In Part II, after a presentation of the ACARTE programme, by way of introduction, I analyse its section 3, entitled «What We Shall Not Be Or Do», tracing an image, in the negative, of the order of things in which its action is inscribed – bringing to light the action of this Department by way of a term (lack) that paves the way for an analysis centred on the notion of a *curatorship of lack*. The concept of «lack» is presented as discussed by Roberto Esposito and taken up as a useful conceptual tool for examining the role of Madalena Perdigão in the ACARTE. This discussion is framed by a wider debate on the concept of the «common» in culture, with particular emphasis on the role of cultural institutions. Then, with a view towards the problematisation of the notion of «curatorship of lack», I trace a path through the intertwined histories of curatorship and programming, which al-



lows me to situate the ACARTE (1984-1989) against the background of recent debates on the discursive and performative turn in curatorship and the place that performance has come to occupy in museums.

Part III is a detailed chronologically ordered journey through the history of the construction of Museums of Modern Art, as told by Nuno Grande (2009). Postwar Europe is one of the key sites of this narrative, yet, at the time, the latter bypassed Portugal, where the project to build a Museum of Modern Art was systematically postponed. The construction of the Gulbenkian Head Office and the subsequent opening of the CAM – Centro de Arte Moderna, is discussed through Diana Taylor's concept of *scenario*, which is a narrative that arranges the parts according to a preestablished script (2003). As a counterpoint to the notion of the Gulbenkian as a «scenario of modernity», I weight the idea of a Gulbenkian defined as *ours* [«a nossa Gulbenkian»], which places the action of this institution against the backdrop of discourses on the cultural «common». The suggestion, here, is that we perceive the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation with a keen awareness of the tension between its place of action and enunciation as a *scenario of modernity* and the gradual construction of what would come to be seen and understood as «our Gulbenkian».

In Part IV, Madalena Perdigão's role in the ACARTE is examined in light of her biography and, more specifically, of her work in the field of Education Through Art and Art Education in Portugal, which are linked with the projects developed by the Music (in articulation with teachers and schools) under her direction, in the 1960s and 1970s, in coordination with the Centro de Investigação Pedagógica [Pedagogical Research Centre] of the FCG. This serves to locate the creation of the ACARTE Department within a history which, though its roots can be traced to an earlier moment, unfolds along a temporal arc that extends from the 1960s to the end of the 1980s. This allows us to situate the opening of this Department as the final stage of a pedagogical experimentation project initiated in the «Long Sixties». As this section concludes, the coordinates are set to map the ACARTE Department from 1984 to 1989, described here in its various fields of action through a brief but sweeping account that uses the materials compiled in the Digital Timeline ACARTE 1984-1989, especially press clippings, programme notes and, above all, Madalena Perdigão's own texts introducing the various initiatives. Finally, as a kind of epilogue, by way of three stories that emerged from interviews to Jorge Silva Melo and João Fiadeiro, the analysis zooms in once again on the reconfiguration of the experience of corporeality. There, the path the ACARTE carved for what came after is underlined. The initiatives, performances and various shows the ACARTE

organised and hosted played a crucial role, of course, but its importance lies, to a great extent, in the way in which, in articulation with other places, it established itself as a space – and a moment – where one was present, and where gesture found a way to change and free itself, thus contributing to a reconfiguration of the experience of corporeality.

## The Museum and the order of things

In «The Museum and the Order of Things», Noémie Solomon (2012) traces a path through recent developments in the field of Museum Studies. She points out the ways in which the museum, through its various strategies for organising, assembling and displaying objects, bodies and events, works as a mediating apparatus – a *dispositif* – that exists in between different thresholds of visibility and signification.

Echoing Daniel Buren's words in *La Fonction du musée*, for whom the museum is defined by its capacity to arrange an amalgam of unrelated objects (Buren *apud* Solomon), thereby producing a series of «levelling» and «distorting» effects, Solomon claims that it organises the relation between the things presented and their meanings – inquiring thereafter about the ways of gauging the various effects singled out by Buren, which Solomon sees as matching the kind of specific knowledge that is produced by the museum. Wondering how to describe the paradoxical modalities of that functioning, Solomon resorts to Foucault's 1966 *Les Mots et les choses* – in a literal translation, *Words and Things*, but whose English title is, suggestively, *The Order of Things*<sup>2</sup> – and, more specifically, to the beginning of this work, where Foucault explains that what spurred him to write it was the unusual classification he found in Jorge Luis Borges' «The Analytical Language of John Wilkins» (in *Ficciones* [Fictions], of 1985). These classifications, «completely alien to the categories of our thought» brought to light the arbitrariness and constructed nature of a series of discourses and internally coherent epistemological borders, ushering in the possibility of imagining them and thinking them, as well as of building others.

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2 In the foreword to this edition, one reads: «A literal translation of the title of the French edition of this work (*Les Mots et les choses*) would have given rise to confusion with two other books that have already appeared under the title *Words and things*. The publisher therefore agreed with the author on the alternative title *The Order of Things*, which was, in fact, M. Foucault's original preference.» Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things – An Archaeology of Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1974).

Animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies. (Foucault 1974, xv)

At stake here is not only «the juxtaposition of unusual things, but mostly the ways through which their juxtaposition prepares the field in which that encounter becomes possible» (Solomon), mobilising new epistemological and affective territories.

Solomon frames those spaces of alterity generated by the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements in the light of the concept of heterotopia that Foucault enunciates in *The Order of Things* when dealing, precisely, with Borges's work. Foucault's book appears one year before the conference paper «Des espaces autres» («Different Spaces»), which is where he develops the concept of heterotopia. In the Preface to *The Order of Things*, the term appears twice, in the following passage:

Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this and that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy «syntax» in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to «hold together». This is why utopias permit fables and discourse: they run with the very grain of language and are part of the fundamental dimension of the fabula; heterotopias (such as those to be found so often in Borges) desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contests the very possibility of grammar at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences. (*Ibid.*, xviii)

It was in light of Borges's work, then, that Foucault created the concept of heterotopia<sup>3</sup>, which is why it seems apposite to deploy that very same concept to examine something described, in an interview, as «an Aleph» – a Borgesian image.

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3 The passage in full reads: «That passage from Borges kept me laughing a long time, though not without a certain uneasiness that I found hard to shake off. Perhaps because there arose in its wake the suspicion that there is a worse kind of disorder than that of the incongruous, the linking together of things that are inappropriate; I mean the disorder in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately in the dimension, without law or geometry, of the heteroclit; and that word should be taken in its most literal, etymological sense: in such a state, things are 'laid', 'placed', 'arranged' in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a place of residence for them, to define a common locus beneath them all. Utopias afford consolation: although they have no real locality there

## Heterotopias of the accumulation of time

In the wake of Foucault, Solomon sees the museum as a heterotopia of the accumulation of time, open to heterochronias and able, therefore, to extend or condense linear historical narratives, interrupting or disturbing their inherent continuity, juxtaposing accumulations, disappearances, omissions, accelerations and dilated times<sup>4</sup> – which is what is deployed here as way of reading the ACARTE Department from 1984 to 1989. Heterotopias, then, accentuate the fact that the space we inhabit is not empty to begin with. It is, rather, the result of a series of relations, a dense and complex interpenetration of spaces and times. It is a political and social construct.

By defining the museum as a heterotopia, Foucault breaks with the notion of the museum that Solomon regards as the hegemonic one throughout the 20th century – the museum as a «dead place» (a mausoleum), where works are sent to be preserved, thus becoming immune to History – and frames it, instead, in a productive and affirmative manner, while interrogating its specific functions according to equally specific contexts. Thus, between the late 17th century and throughout the 18th century, museums and libraries, heterotopias of the accumulation of time, undergo a significant transformation:

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is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold; they open up cities with vast avenues, superbly planted gardens, countries where life is easy, even though the road to them is chimerical» (xvii-xviii). On heterotopias, see also Johnson (2012).

- 4 On this issue, cf. Paul B. Preciado, until recently commissioner and curator at the MACBA, where he carried out various experiments around history and historiography, such as the project *Past Disquiet*: «The term ‘heterochronia’ tries to address the question of the politics of time (chronopolitics) by looking into the relationships between language (representation, narratives), power, and temporality. This is both an epistemological question and a methodology for constructing history. Michel Foucault borrowed the term ‘heterochronia’ from the biological language in the lecture ‘Des Espaces autres’ (1967) to interrogate the modern Western construction of time and its relationship with hegemonic historical narratives. Heterochronia does not refer to time as an abstract dimension of physics but rather to time as a social and political construction. Foucault thought of archives, libraries, and museums as ‘heterochronias’, political dispositifs that ‘accumulate time.’ A museum works as a time machine that configures chronological and visual fiction (Stephen Kern). What are the times that museums are accumulating? And what other times resist conventional narratives and reject accumulation as historical method? Building upon a critique of naturalised time already developed by Mikhail Bakhtin and Henri Lefebvre, Foucault’s notion opens up the possibility of understanding the museum as a collective abstract machine to construct ‘other times’, not only to question the storyline of the past but also to invent ‘other’ futures.» (Preciado 2014).

By contrast [with libraries and museums that were the expression of an individual choice], the idea of accumulating everything, the idea of constituting a sort of general archive, the desire to contain all times, all ages, all forms, all tastes in one place, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outsider time and protected from its erosion, the project of thus organizing a kind of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in a place that will not move – well, in fact, all of this belongs to our modernity. (Foucault 1998, 182)

Describing the shift from the collection (or cabinet) of «curiosities» to the idea of «constituting a sort of general archive», Foucault – according to Solomon – forces our gaze to focus on the ways in which the museum is enacted or performed. Its operations can thus be divided into two distinct paths: on the one hand, the museum organises things according to the general structures of knowledge; on the other hand, this organisation allows its heterogeneous elements to be ordered into distinct, singular compositions, allowing for differences to emerge. It is thus possible to interpret the museum in a continuity with the description of the archive put forward in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. In this work, Foucault clarifies that by «archive» he means not «the sum of all texts that a culture has kept upon its person as documents attesting to its own past, or an evidence of a continuing identity;» nor «the institutions which, in a given society, make it possible to record and preserve those discourses that one wishes to remember and keep in circulation»; but rather «the general system of the formation and transformation of statements», defining a «particular level»: a practice that causes a multiplicity of statements to emerge as so many regular events, as so many things to be dealt with and manipulated.» (Foucault 2002, 146). And yet, as Deleuze (1989) suggests, Foucault's understanding of the archive can only be seen in the light of a *use* of History «for something else», something that acts (from a Nietzschean standpoint), «against time and thus on time in favor, I hope, of a time to come.» Deleuze illustrates this with a passage from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* which he deems pivotal to a proper understanding of the whole of Foucault's work:

The analysis of the archive, then, involves a privileged region: at once close to us, and different from our present existence, it is the border of time that surrounds our presence, which overhangs it, and which indicates it in its otherness; it is that which, outside ourselves, delimits us. The description of the archive deploys its possibilities (and the mastery of its possibilities) on the basis of the very discourses that

have ceased to be ours; [...] In this sense, it is valid for us as a diagnosis. [...] In this sense, the diagnosis does not establish the fact of our identity by the play of distinctions. It establishes that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history is the difference of times, our selves the difference of masks. The difference, far from being the forgotten and recovered origin, is this dispersion that we are and make. (Foucault 2002, 147)

By borrowing the image of the Aleph as an analytical tool and, along with it, the concept of heterotopia as a way of thinking about the actions of the ACARTE between 1984 and 1989, my aim is not so much to carry out a historical reconstitution, but rather to examine the ways in which different times and orders cross paths, clash, emerge and collapse into each other – which also allows me to bring a series of practices and discourses into visibility. It is a question, then, of inquiring into specific occurrences and circumstances, of observing the way in which things and bodies, discourses and actions are arranged, always bearing into account the place afforded to them by the wider framework of the walls of the Gulbenkian and the art museum – in this particular case, CAM. This is a reading, then, that sees itself as acting *against time, for a time to come* – i.e., an attempt to see, or at least peer into, the present from a different perspective, under a different light.

## 2.

### ALMADA, MODERNITY AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF CORPOREALITY

Two years before Portugal joined the European Economic Community (EEC) and ten years after the April 1974 revolution, Madalena Perdigão agreed to return to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, where she had been director of the Music Department from 1958 to 1974.<sup>5</sup> In 1984, then, she becomes the director of the ACARTE Department, of which she is also the founder, and her first project addressed (and is based on) the work of the multidisciplinary modernist artist Almada Negreiros, as she explains in the programme notes for the play *De-seja-se Mulher*, directed by Fernanda Lapa.

The first project that came to mind when I decided to accept the invitation to return to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, was the Almada Negreiros project. Because he is a major Portuguese artist. Because he is a man of many talents, well suited to multidisciplinary cultural manifestations. Because his work has a particular relevance in the Modern Art Centre, since it serves as a doorway into its gallery space. Because he was always a man turned towards the future, on the side of risk and non-conformity.

Almada, then.

And why Almada's theatre?

Because Almada's theatre bears the yeast of novelty, the mark of modernity is imprinted on it.

And because it is theatre. Because theatre is trying to tread its own path in the modern world and because it falls upon us to help it find it.

Almada, an iconic figure turned thus into an exemplary and programmatic one, becomes once again a *nom de guerre*, to evoke the title of one of Almada's

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5 On her trajectory, see Part IV: Madalena Perdigão and the ACARTE.

novel (*Nome de Guerra* – literally «War Name»), borrowed by Ernesto de Sousa for the work included in the opening season planned by Madalena Perdigão for the inauguration of the ACARTE. Because, in the words of Ernesto de Sousa, «the critical revision of Portuguese culture and art remains a necessity, and all contributions are welcome.»<sup>6</sup> This is the very goal of ACARTE, in 1984.

In the chapters that follow, in dialogue with various cultural objects (such as the 1917 manifesto *Os Bailados Russos em Lisbon!*, by Almada Negreiros, Ruy Coelho and José Pacheko; the 1977 series *Descolagens* by Ana Hatherly; Salazar's famous 1936 speech (in the ceremony commemorating the tenth anniversary of the «May revolution», which put an end to the I Republic) or the letter he wrote to the president of the Coca-Cola Company, decades later; the Brazilian soap opera *Gabriela Cravo e Canela* in 1979; Alberto Pimenta's 1978 poem, *Abriu em Portugal*, or the emergence of the rock scene in the country in the mid-1980s) the books attempts to account for the difficulty of periodising the Portuguese 1980s and to set out some lines of enquiry for the period, taking its cue from authors across different fields.

For André Lepecki – who, in attempting to think modernity and corporeality together in the Portuguese context, will also refer back to Almada Negreiros – major historical changes such as those that occurred in Portugal in the last quarter of the 20th century imply a reconfiguration of the body and its expressivity. It was a matter, in this period, of bodies «intensely tied to, and constructed and destructed by, the multiple and heterogeneous discourses that permeated Portuguese society. Discourses on the nation, modernity, the periphery, Europe, dramaturgical and performative lineages», in which the terms «Nation», «Modern» and «Europe» were, above all, an appeal, the omnipresent slogan of an ongoing political choreographic process (Lepecki 1998b, 16). Given the fast-paced modernisation of Portuguese society at the time, this process, as mentioned above, entails a sweeping effort of amnesia towards the colonial war, the recent past of the PREC years (the so-called «Ongoing Revolutionary Period»), and the 48 years of dictatorship. On the other hand, it brings about, like any sudden historical transformation, a reconfiguration of the subject's experience of corporeality. This process is far from smooth, being crossed instead by tensions and contradictions of varying orders and intensities, bearing in mind that «the desire for a new body presupposes [...] the choice of a model, of an ideal image, of an Other (yet) to be». It is important then «to know what is the envisioned corporeality that each moment

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6 In the program notes for the Ernesto de Sousa's multimedia project Almada, *Um Nome de Guerra*.



of identity crisis, that each context of specific historical disruption, chooses as a privileged model of a body in synchrony with the desire to be new. And it remains to be seen what this 'new' means» (Lepecki 2001, 55).

In «Corpo Incerto» [Uncertain Body], an essay published in 1998, Lepecki points to two «incompatible models of corporeality that could mark the passage to a new era, distinct from the colonialist past». In a first moment, the Brazilian body put forward by the soap opera *Gabriela Cravo e Canela*, which premiered in 1977, a body positively valued and immediately introjected and mimetized by a Portuguese society that used it to distance itself from the recent past;<sup>7</sup> and, in a second moment, closer to 1985, when the national priority would turn to Europe, a «European» body that would consign the Brazilian body once again to the place of the underdeveloped and the «primitive».<sup>8</sup> The author borrows the notion, put forward by the anthropologist Michael Taussig, of a *colonial mirror* – a mimetic apparatus through which colonialism produces the reality of the Other through a constant reification of «description» [...] thus producing and maintaining, through the reification of description, a «colonial mode of production of reality» (1998c, 57) – and applies it to the relations between Portugal, Brazil and the Lusophone African countries, on the one hand, and Spain and «Europe», on the other. The terms *mimesis* and *modernity* play a key role in this operation.

While *mimesis* was, for Taussig, «an ability to become Another», inseparable, first and foremost, from «imagining and thinking as such», *modernity* would already be characterized, according to Habermas, as «the awareness of an epoch that relates to itself through its past [...] so as to see itself as the result of a transition from the old to the new» (*ibid.*, 58). It would then be necessary to address the modes of production of reality in contemporary Portugal by attending to the narratives and images that «form and demarcate, the status of 'peoples', 'races', 'pronunciations' and other [...] difference markers [...] looking for images of a skin and an imaginary of another kind, as well as a new speech, which then made their way into the country, bearing the sign of a possible and strangely familiar modernity» (*ibid.*); and with it the possibility of a *mimesis* and the manifold reconfigurations of the experience of corporeality, with different valuations at different mo-

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7 Lepecki mentions the nearly immediate opening of numerous samba schools that would take part in Portuguese Carnival festivities of the late 1970s/early 1980s or the masses of people that welcomed the actors of this soap opera upon their arrival in Portugal, in that same period (Lepecki 1998c).

8 On this issue, the author underlines how, in 1997, in the television entertainment program *Big Show SIC*, the figure of «the Brazilian» is once again reduced to the image of the «savage» (Lepecki 1998c).

ments – even if, as we saw in the above example of *Gabriela Cravo e Canela*, they are rather close in strict chronological terms.

It is in this terrain that the ACARTE will prove bountiful, with its parades of bodies (performing bodies, naked, urban, cosmopolitan, and multicultural bodies, moving either too fast or too slowly); with the hordes of people that rushed to its initiatives and spread through the gardens of the FCG, with its event cycles and seasons where participation and debate become common practice, and going to the museum becomes an ingrained habit.

In his problematisation of modernity and the reconfiguration of the experience of corporeality, Lepecki – like Madalena Perdigão in inaugurating ACARTE, a Department where modernity and experimentation were closely intertwined – would also go back to Almada Negreiros. More specifically, to the manifesto he wrote on the occasion of the *Ballets Russes*'s visit to Lisbon in 1917, which gives voice to a will to transform the «anachronistic» Portuguese body into a modern European body. For Lepecki, this manifesto is important inasmuch as it openly articulates the «political-metamorphic desire» embodied by modernity, insisting that a social and historical transformation «en route to modernity» must necessarily involve a «reconfiguration of the subjects' experience of corporeality» by way of self-learning (Lepecki 2001). In fact, and drawing on the *Ballets Russes* as an inspiration («one of the most beautiful stages of modern European civilisation»), Almada (alongside others) urges the Portuguese to learn how to «educate» themselves (Negreiros 1981):

#### THE BALLETS RUSSES IN LISBON!

Heed, Portuguese! It is you we address here. We have come to offer you your freedom! Listen: [...]

We know only too well the beauty that lies in the brutality of our mission. We are aware of the near impossibility of making a European out of you and yet we have decided [...] to hand you the method, so that you may reach freedom on your own initiative.

[...] Listen! THE BALLETS RUSSES are in Lisbon! This means: one of the most beautiful stages of modern European civilization is among us! [...]

Having assembled in themselves the extraordinary achievements of Modern Art and the wondrous applications of science the BALLETS RUSSES have all the instruments to enable an understanding of the attitudes that synthesize the entire duration of our youth up until this Great Victory of Modern European Civilization; the utmost individual discipline, an absolute control over personality.

This is precisely what you, the Portuguese, will learn from the BALLETS RUSSES: how to educate yourselves. To learn your duties both to yourselves and to all others. To learn how to untangle all your possibilities, that is, to learn to be complete, and to give yourselves, completely, to the Civilization of Modern Europe.

Enjoy it, then, you Portuguese!

Go see the BALLETS RUSSES.

Go and see how beautiful and luminous the mind of Europe is!

Go and see this imperious and sumptuous gesture of the Civilization of Modern Europe!

Go and learn how to be happy on your own initiative!

Go and learn the mechanics of the discipline to which your youth is bound until your general emancipation!

[...]

To you, Portuguese! To all the Portuguese! With this brutal energy of the pure blood of ourselves, conscious artists, with our eyes set on Europe, we demand that this colossal gap between servility and discipline be opened!

JOSÉ DE ALMADA-NEGREIROS FUTURIST POET

RUY COELHO MUSICIAN

JOSÉ PACHEKO ARCHITECT.

However, the desired general transformation through self-learning that Almada advocates here would only come about more than half a century after the *Ballets Russes's* visit to Lisbon. This may be gleaned from the renewed interest in Almada in 1984, shortly after the country entered the EEC and a decade after the April 25 Revolution, when a series of practices, discourses and institutions (from advertising to cinema, from pop culture to the opening of new spaces of consumption, work and leisure), among them the ACARTE, establish themselves as places, themes and experiences integrated into a process of learning new corporealities. This does not mean, however, that the 1980s had somehow fulfilled the utopia of 1910s modernism, or that in this period Portugal had recovered from its so-called «backwardness». <sup>9</sup> In this regard, it is important to keep in mind the kinetic nature of modernity, that is to say, the fact that it always lags behind a modernity that would be even *more modern*. It does not come as surprise, then, that Almada's dis-

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9 On this topic, see the next chapter, especially references to the work of Mariana Pinto dos Santos (2012).

course echoes that of many other futurists who, even in apparently much more modernised societies, voiced a similar yearning for social engineering and the transformation of the bodies – likewise fostered by the advent of mass culture.

Also symptomatic of this state of affairs is an anecdote narrated by the historian Luís Trindade, which tells of the astonishment of Pedro Ayres Magalhães, a member of the punk/new-wave band *Corpo Diplomático*, when faced with a static audience at a concert at the end of the 1970s, unaware that «you were supposed to dance to it» (Trindade 2014, 48). And yet

[...] in no more than a year or two, irony seems to have solved the problem, and it was through dance that a much wider public [than that of the band *Corpo Diplomático*, which had dissolved in the meantime ] appropriated songs such as «Chiclete», presented as (to quote from the lyrics) «*the finished product/ of the society of immediate consumption*» (*you taste it/ chew it and spit it out*), or «Portugal na CEE», in which the band GNR brought out into the open what was truly at stake in 1980s Portugal: «*and now that we got there/ we'll get all we ever wanted/ a PA for the voices/ and a Fender/ Oh, boy! How nice to be in the EEC.*»

In short: one would have to wait several decades after Almada Negreiros' manifesto for the Portuguese to finally «reach freedom» and give themselves over completely to the «Civilisation of Modern Europe», learning to «educate themselves», since this shift could only come about as a result of radical social, cultural and historical changes.<sup>10</sup> Only after the end of the colonial regime in 1974, in the context of a cultural openness to Europe and to the world, against the backdrop of a profound transformation which the end of the colonial empire forced upon the country's self-image – from a colonial to a European identity in the span of a handful of years – would these changes be possible on a *massive* scale (i.e., as a *mass* phenomenon). But these shifts were far from unambiguous or untroubled: they were, rather, the object of various negotiations, contestations, sedimentations and appropriations, situated in concrete places, practices, discourses and institutions, as a close look at the case of the ACARTE will make clear.

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10 Which the passage from modernism to postmodernism, as formulated by Frederic Jameson (1991), encapsulates; and, along with it, among other things, the colonisation of the unconscious by mass culture, and a radical change in everyday life.

## «The Portuguese do not have a body»

Only after these changes, Lepecki claims (2001, 28-36), could the perception of the national body shift from something non-existent – a «pure negativity» – into an agent of transformation. His words echo those of «Os portugueses não têm corpo» [The Portuguese Do Not Have a Body], an Op-ed piece by the critic Alexandre Melo (1995) published in the weekly *Expresso* in 1993, written after he attended the solo dance pieces *Perhaps She Can Dance First and Think Afterwards*, by Vera Mantero, and *Um Rei no Exílio* and *Nossa Senhora das Flores*, by Francisco Camacho.

In referring to this shift in the perception of the national body, from non-existent to agent of transformation, Lepecki reiterates Melo's claim that the body is absent from public discourses in contemporary Portugal. Mantero and Camacho's works were the exception, since in them the body appears sexualized, fleshy and creaturely, rather than metaphorical or abstract. Melo begins by listing a series of public scandals in the late 1980s and early 1990s in which the body, though taking centre stage, tellingly failed to stir much public contestation or indignation. He offers a number of such cases: a National Health Department psychiatrist who, because he disapproved of the «degenerate» lifestyle of one of his patients, a depressed HIV-positive gay man, refused to treat him; the acquittal of senior officials in the Ministry of Health accused of knowingly supplying HIV-infected blood to public hospitals; the lack of a public policy on AIDS education and prevention; the many deaths of haemophiliacs from medical negligence in the Évora public hospital; or the routine and «inexplicable» deaths of young recruits during their compulsory military service period. Faced with these omissions – i.e., with the public silence around these cases – Melo concludes that the body «has no place in Portuguese society's dominant discourses », and wonders whether the Portuguese do in fact «have a body» (Melo 1995, 175).

It should be noted that Mantero and Camacho were linked to the Gulbenkian Ballet<sup>11</sup> in the 1980s. Furthermore, like other dancers in the company, they were regular participants in the ACARTE's initiatives, which both considered one of the most influential phenomena of the time – in cultural, choreographic and even existential terms.<sup>12</sup> The fact that Melo's text addressed the sudden emer-

11 Camacho was there from 1983 to 1986, Vera Mantero from 1984 to 1989.

12 In the words of Vera Mantero, in an interview on 9 September 2011, in Lisbon.

gence, or presence, of the body in the works of these dancers, suggests that the ACARTE was as a condition of possibility for such a presence.<sup>13</sup> And Lepecki goes so far as to attribute to the ACARTE the status of a privileged platform for what he describes as the complicated process of activating a «dancing body, immersed in contemporaneity and reflecting the nervousness of history» (2001), a process which would be given the name of «Nova Dança Portuguesa» [NDP; New Portuguese Dance].<sup>14</sup> Having actively participated in the NDP as a critic, set designer, playwright and fellow traveller, the author claims that in post-New State and post-Colonial Portugal, the body – not as an abstraction but as a concrete matter, the point of convergence of the nervousness and pressures of history but also of its emancipatory potentialities – finds in dance a singular place for the evocation of images and discourses on these same tensions, thus becoming a field of social and existential experimentation. The performing arts, and dance in particular, would thus embody and give visibility to the contradictions that permeate the «brutality» of the mission laid out in the Ballets Russes futurist «manifesto» transcribed above, only achievable by way of self-learning and a commitment to the «Civilisation of Modern Europe», in other words, to the mission of «transforming» the Portuguese into Europeans.

With the Modern Art Centre as its operational hub, the ACARTE, «a space from where one could see all the other spaces» – to return to João Pinharanda's formulation – would become one of the emblematic places of 1980s Portugal, and, without a doubt, one of the sites where the NDP developed – where it gained a body, one might say. Singled out by those that took part in the NDP as one of their key influences, this Department seems to have operated precisely at the confluence between the institutional presentation of new performative and choreographic practices and the emergence of a series of places, discourses and social practices, alongside which it must be situated. It is symptomatic, then, that Almada was chosen as a founding reference, the same Almada that in 1917 had called for an urgent transformation in the corporeality of the Portuguese.

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13 But not, of course, the only one.

14 As will be shown later, what has been called «Nova Dança Portuguesa» is neither a movement nor a style, but rather the name given to a heterogeneous set of works by a group of choreographers who began producing their works in the late 1980s, early 1990s.

### 3. THE 1980S AS A QUESTION

In the words of the writer and cultural critic Eduarda Dionísio, from the late 1970s to the early 1990s «power gradually changes its relation to Culture (and Culture its relation to Power) and a new hierarchy in the arts is established, in a sharp break from the themes and attitudes that defined the period around the 25 April [1974]» (Dionísio 1993, 346). Later, especially from 1985 onwards, «Portuguese-ness» becomes a recurring topic, framed as a specific form of integration into the European context, while international visibility would become an explicit goal for cultural policies and for artists themselves. Later, in the 1990s, some of the effects of this process rise to the surface, amplified by the spectacular nature of international events, of which *Europália* 1991, *Lisbon 94* «Capital of Culture» and *Expo 98* were merely the most visible. Dionísio sees the 1970s and 1980s as diametrically opposed, which is understandable given the way in which the choreo-political process of the latter decade seems to run counter to the country's recent revolutionary past.

However, in the words of the introductory text of the conference «When were the 1980s?» – where the decade is framed in the form of a question – it is far from simple to determine «when enough time has passed in order to start writing the history of a period». This would make the 1980s, as an historical object, «both problematic and challenging» (Trindade *et al.* 2015). Following a line of thought that sees the national sphere in its relation to the international context, and echoing Raymond Williams' *When was Modernism?* (1987) as well as the problematisations around the periodisation and spatial contours of terms such as «modern/ modernity/ modernisation/ modernism» within subaltern studies,<sup>15</sup> Trindade points to the fact that nowadays the period in question seems associated with the «political and economic hegemony of the values of liberalism and with the consolidation of consumer culture in Western societies». These phenomena were, in Portugal as in other countries that had recently emerged from dictatorships, perceived as «part of

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15 Cf. Kapur (2000); Bhabha (1994); Williams (1989).

a wider political decompression, running alongside processes of European integration» with marked social, economic and political, but also cultural, features. Thus, although it is easy to pinpoint key moments and dates, it would be impossible at this juncture to draw the contours of the 1980s as sharply as those that define, for example, the «Long Sixties» (Jameson 1984), a term that identifies not so much a specific decade as a concept, an era «marked by widely accepted and chronologically established transformations» (*idem*) which, having started in the mid-1950s, would last until the end of the 1970s, including the protests and movements against the Algerian and Vietnam wars, the wave of decolonisation processes, May 68 and the *Hippie* movement, framing a period marked by intense social, existential and artistic experimentation with an emancipatory slant.

It would be easier, therefore, to situate some of the «defining moments in recent Portuguese history», such as the outbreak of the colonial wars in 1961 or the revolutionary process of 1974-75, «within temporal processes that are longer than, for example, the experience of the 1983 «Bloco Central» [a government coalition between the PS, centre-left, and the PSD, centre-right], the beginning of the so-called «Cavaquismo» [named after Aníbal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister between 1985 and 1995] in 1985, or the integration into the European Economic Community in 1986» (Trindade *et al.* 2015).

In Portugal, the socio-cultural backdrop to the 25 of April was marked by a growing discontent with the «Overseas» wars (as the colonial wars were then called), the mounting academic crises and the soon-dashed hopes of the Marcellist Spring (when Marcelo Caetano succeeded Salazar, promising a liberalisation of the regime); but also by the inauguration of the Gulbenkian Complex at Avenida de Berna, the rapprochement to the European Economic Community and the «Veiga Simão» educational reform. One could say, nevertheless, that some of the changes we normally associate with the «Long 60s» are only experienced by most of the country's population in the 1970s, in the wake of the revolution. Then, with the end of censorship, there would be a *massive* and recurrent presence on the streets, a wave of occupations, the return from the colonies – phenomena intrinsically linked to an intense experimentation, perhaps more of a *social* than *existential* nature. Among other things, this is because the massification of consumption would take place largely in the 1980s, in a radically different cultural environment, marked by the de-ideologisation and demobilisation processes that marked the end of the «April» period (i.e. the revolution and its most immediate aftereffects) and the subsequent euphoria around the European Union – to follow a hypothesis advanced



by Luís Trindade (2009) and Rui Bebiano (2010). When addressing «the transformation of «common culture» in the late stages of the Estado Novo», this author argues for the existence of what he calls a «*pop* people» as an agent of change, claiming that, during the Long Sixties, the autonomation of a newly-emerged popular culture took on a «dimension of its own, one that troubled the regime», helping to build another «people», ever more distant from the one advocated by Salazarism – bringing together what, after his downfall, would once again come apart.

This extended chronology would cover the revolution in customs and habits, but extend even beyond it, tracing a chronology wider than that of the political revolution. It both precedes and succeeds it. Or, as Luís Trindade summarizes it, «Portuguese politics [was] fiercely radicalized from the 1960s until the revolution», at a time where there were still «no mass phenomena capable of extending this radicalism beyond the more traditional forms of workers and peasant struggles.» The massification of urban society would only come «within the frame of the 1980s' individualist spirit, when the collective energy of revolutionary transformation» already seemed a thing of the past (Trindade 2014b). Its earlier figurations are then caricatured, seemingly reduced to these same worker and peasant forms, perhaps as a result of a conflation between «resistance» and the neo-realist aesthetic that was hegemonic in the postwar oppositional camp (Bebiano 2010). This hypothesis would go some way towards explaining some of the tensions, contradictions, paradoxes, but also potentialities and lines of flight seemingly contained in the Portuguese 1980s, namely when looked upon from the present moment and in the current European conjuncture.

In his *Pela Mão de Alice – O Social e o Político na Pós-Modernidade*, the analysis by sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1994, 84) seems to point in a similar direction. The author refers to a «short circuit between modernity and post-modernity», arguing that the semi-peripheral status of Portuguese society would bring along with it a twofold demand: that it should, on the one hand, «proceed as if the project of modernity were not yet fulfilled or had not even been called into question»; and, on the other hand, it seems to «assume [...] that the project of modernity has been historically fulfilled and that we can expect nothing from it, except for whatever may come from a paradigm shift».

In «Excessos de Abril» [The Excesses of April], Luís Trindade argues that Salazarism is a regime that, paradoxically, uses the modernist mass cultural media to negate modernity, thus instituting itself as a pre-modern regime. His argument, grounded on the coercive silencing of public debate, refers to a famous speech by

Oliveira Salazar, delivered in 1936, on the tenth anniversary of the National Revolution that overthrew the I Republic (Salazar *apud* Trindade 2004, 20):

To souls torn by doubt and the negativity of the century, we sought to restore the comfort of great certainties. We shall not discuss God and virtue; we shall not discuss the Fatherland and its History; we shall not discuss authority and its prestige; we shall not discuss family and its morals; we shall not discuss the glory of work and its duty.

The «century» to which Salazar is alluding to «is that era which discourses of modernity tells us about, one that is built on the project of clearing a space for conflictual political debate, within which the fate of societies is decided» (Trindade 2004, 20). Problematising the implications of Salazarist discourse, the author shows how modernity, as a space of potential conflictual political discussion, is discursively affirmed in the form of a negation, or denial: «We shall not discuss». It is not only discursively negated but also institutionally suppressed and repressed.

Spanning from the 1930s to the 1970s, Salazarism would turn «the main mass cultural media – sound cinema, radio, television – that emerged in Portugal into something altogether empty of political content» (*idem*), that is to say, voided of its potential to generate debate.<sup>16</sup> Questioning the place occupied by the exceptional and «modern» surge of participatory impulse around the 25 of April within the narrative of democracy, for Luís Trindade the revolution was «first and foremost, a reclaiming of the discursive, an openness to debatability» (*ibid.*), even if only for a brief moment. And he singles out two possible reasons for the brevity of «that modern moment, in the form of a revolution, in which a wide community shares a public space, through the mass media, to discuss politics»: on the one hand, «the fact that modernity was not able to leave in Portugal a trail of ideas embodied in political habits, civic engagement and the discussion of ideas»; and, on the other, the beginning of a new era, no longer «dominated by writing» (*ibid.*, 21). The 1980s are a period marked by a frenzy of discourses on «modernity» and the need for Portuguese society to «be modern», «to get up to speed with Europe»

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16 This analysis does not, of course, exhaust the totality of cultural manifestations, nor the inventive capacity or the resistance by some groups and individuals, dealing rather with Salazarism's «master narrative» about the country. It is also essential to bear in mind that the regime of the 1930s is not the same as that of the 1950s, 1960s, much less the 1970s, although, in fact, this ban on the modern interrogation of transcendental certainties (for a variety of reasons and employing different strategies, depending on the period) remains virtually unchanged as a prevalent discourse.

– a notion, as we have seen, shared by André Lepecki (2001). For Luís Trindade, this discursive frenzy – which one would need to examine further in its key moments and guiding themes, as well as in its chronology (its progression, advances and retreats) – established, in the aftermath of the revolutionary «April», a new silence which «consecrated the political void instituted by Salazarism» (Trindade 2004, 21), a deafening, celebratory, amnesic silence which buried and occluded the revolution and its aftermath.

There are a number of artistic works that address the condensed temporality that defines this «fleeting moment», such as António Barros' visual poem *Escravos* [*Slaves*], or the series *Descolagens* [*Décollages*], by Ana Hatherly, a set of canvases made with collages of scraps of posters torn from street walls in 1977 and which the author would later, after the revolutionary period had ended, rename, tellingly, as *As Ruas de Lisbon* [*Lisbon Streets*], underlining the archival nature of her gesture.

This series of collages, produced throughout 1977 in Lisbon, was made from real posters, assembled so as to reproduce the look they had when they were torn from the city walls for that purpose. While the political poster, emblematic of the period, is pervasive, the circus poster also makes an appearance every now and then, either superimposed or detached, as it is on the walls, since this kind of poster is one of the most commonplace in our country. This montage, besides its aesthetic purpose, takes on and aims to take on a dimension that sets it apart from other types of collages and décollages that have been made all over the world, because here it is a form of genuine historical assemblage: it is a matter of capturing, through a specific form of mural writing, a whole period in the life of the city and the country that *already* [in 1977] *seems distant: the 25 of April* (Hatherly *apud* Castelo Branco 2014, 147, *emphasis mine*).

In 1977, though it was still recent, «a whole period of life in the city and the country» was perceived as distant – as if it had been torn off, remaining only in the form of an absence, a silence. Eduardo Lourenço (1976; 1978), José Gil (2007) and Lepecki, each in their own way, all register this silence. In the case of Lepecki, this is done through the notion of «cultural anaesthesia» put forward by Allen Feldman (Feldman *apud* Lepecki 2001). As articulated in «the Portuguese do not have a body», it was a matter, for Lepecki, of the smooth progression of daily life being grounded on the suppression of dissonant sensory elements and presences – which he identifies, in this particular context, with a general desensitisation to the violence of the fascist and colonial past in a country that not only was involved in

a 13-year-long war, but also shaped its self-image around the idea of holding on to the colonies. To this one should add the obliteration of the recent memory of the revolutionary period, which would be replaced by the commemoration of a «25 April» where in fact the object of commemoration was the «25 November», that is, the end of the «troubled times» of the PREC. Dumfounded by what he sees as the disappearance of a number of themes, lived experiences and issues in Portuguese society from the late 1980s to the early 1990s – which Trindade’s thesis helps to contextualize and Hatherly’s work put on display – Lepecki claims that «neither in Italy, nor in Germany, nor even in the Soviet Union – places where the tendency to bury the past has become a kind of national mission – have we witnessed the production of a phenomenon of posthumous non-existence to this degree» (Lepecki 2001).<sup>17</sup>

Oh dear! I shall be late!

In the same essay, «Excessos de Abril», when attempting to spell out the reasons for this silence, Luís Trindade goes back to the rhetoric of «Portuguese backwardness» so as to examine it further. His analysis is similar to André Lepecki’s, addressing «modernity» as a state-led choreographic, amnesic and metamorphic project under «Cavaquismo» (i.e. under the premiership of Cavaco Silva). With the caveat that «nowhere did it take place exactly in this manner», Trindade then begins by explaining the «history as told from the point of view of modernity», a history that would be a «path of modernization and democratization» – one whose pivotal moments are the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution and whose outcome was the creation of «a social space that was, within the most advanced European societies, at one and the same time, market, public opinion and democratic electorate» (Trindade 2004). Intriguingly, he says, in Portugal this history has its corollary in the narrative of Portuguese «backwardness»: <sup>18</sup> Portuguese

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17 Lepecki seems to register here what José Gil (2007) in *O Medo de Existir* would call «non inscription», though for Lepecki this was less a trait of the Portuguese character and more a result of hegemonic discursive strategies.

18 On this narrative, within the frame of the History of Art in Portugal, see Mariana Pinto dos Santos (2011) «Estou Atrasado! Estou atrasado! Sobre o diagnóstico de atraso na arte portuguesa feito pela historiografia!».

society, so the story goes, is always lagging behind. This notion of backwardness was never questioned, not even by the dictatorship, which in fact seems to have embraced it and underlined it.

Concerning this insistence on Portugal's «backwardness», one need only read the letters from Salazar to A. Makinski, President of the Coca Cola Company in Europe, where the President of the Council takes pride in Portuguese backwardness, claiming to hate modernity and its famous (or infamous) «efficiency» (Count 2006, 79).

[...] I have always been opposed to its presence in the Portuguese market. The question here is what one might call «our moral landscape». Portugal is a conservative, paternalistic and – praise God! – «backward» country, a term I see as flattering rather than derogatory. The risk is that of introducing into Portugal what I detest above all things, modernity and your famous «efficiency». I shudder at the image of your trucks at full speed along the streets of our old cities, forcing our age-old habits to pick up pace as they go past.

The narrative of «Portuguese backwardness» fits, Trindade (2004) says, not only within common-sense discourse, but also in the Social Sciences and Humanities, especially those of a more conservative bent, «which let themselves be caught [in it], almost inadvertently», either by choosing as their object of study «that very distance between Portugal and the ideal» or by telling «a kind of Portuguese version of the History of Europe, based on objects that are irrelevant in Portugal». It is this same silencing and amnesiac logic, the basis for the rhetoric of Portuguese «backwardness», that Lepecki criticizes in the way the term «modernity» was used during the premierships of Cavaco Silva who, in 1989, would publish the book *Construir a Modernidade* [*Building Modernity*] – «modernity» being understood here as a synonym for a state-led choreo-political project implemented at great speed.

Echoing an idea common to Eduardo Lourenço (1979) in *O Labirinto da Saudade* [*The Labyrinth of Longing*] and Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1994) in «Onze teses por ocasião de mais uma descoberta de Portugal» [«Eleven Theses on the Occasion of Another Discovery of Portugal»] – texts written, respectively, before and after the period of time in which Madalena Perdigão directs the ACARTE (1984-1989) – Luís Trindade (2004) also draws attention to the relationship be-

tween the elites and the rest of the country, arguing that «Portuguese culture» had created «a decidedly erroneous image of society» because those that produced this image are «an elite that is far removed from, and therefore unaware of, the people they are describing». The «problem», then, was that «contemporary Portuguese literature and thought» had not «addressed anyone, since no one was listening», which led to a «simulation of Modernity», a notion proposed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1994) that seemingly echoes the concept of «simulacrum of modernity» put forward by Rui Mário Gonçalves (*apud* Nuno Grande 2009) to address the art world of Portuguese society at the time of the so-called «Politics of the Spirit» in the 1930s and 1940s. Yet, whatever modernity is, it was certainly experienced in Portugal, since nowhere has modernity ever been the consummate reality that the discourse of «backwardness» seems to presuppose, given that modernity is, first and foremost, a choreo-political project, a kinetics, all modern societies will have experienced and perceived themselves as incompletely modern (Jameson 1991).

For Rui Mário Gonçalves, the fact that Portuguese fascism did not have to «face an artistic modernity already inscribed into society, as was the case in Germany», meant it capitalised on «the anachronism of the dominant taste», and limited its action to «leaving things as they were and giving António Ferro the opportunity to create a simulacrum: a political smokescreen» (Gonçalves *apud* Grande 2009, 71). For Trindade, a possible explanation for this scenario, which stretches until nearly the present day,<sup>19</sup> would be the lack of a civically engaged middle class, with (modern) habits of discussion of ideas. In Portuguese society, then, the «key class of modernity» – a bourgeois middle class that is simultaneously a «literary market», a «public opinion» and a «democratic electorate» – did not come into being. Thus, in his words, «to speak of the country» would have amounted to «speaking of a people far from the cities, culture, and civic participation», which is why «discourses about the country, for lack of an interlocutor», were never «part of a confrontation», and therefore were also not «part of a political process» (Trindade 2004).

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19 «Nothing has occurred in Portuguese society in recent decades that could have decisively called into question the structural foundation that defines it as a simulation of modernity. The creation of democratic institutions – contemporaneous with Portugal's entry into the world market and the emergence of a consumer society that has utterly transfigured its appearance – could not by itself fill the void» (Trindade 2004).

However, and paradoxically, the narrative of modernity transcends the social phenomena on which modernity is built, that is to say, the fact that there is no middle class hinders «the formation of the social phenomena that make up the narrative of modernity but does not hinder the narrative of modernity as such» (*idem*, 23). In the Portuguese case, this would translate into the fact that while the country did not have a wide market, it did have «banks, capitalists and developmentalist political projects»; it did not have a civically-engaged public opinion with «a democratic critical density» but it did have newspapers and publishing houses and it had assimilated the «major ideologies produced in the centres of modernity»; it did not have an «electorate sufficiently engaged to form a liberal democratic society» but had elected governments and a parliament; finally, it did not have a «literary market» or higher education for the masses, but had a cultural elite that «mimicked the main European intellectual movements and aesthetic currents» (*ibid.*).

#### OPENED IN PORTUGAL<sup>20</sup>

Those who kept their mouths shut OPENED their mouths in PORTUGAL.

And those who had their mouths open?

Those who had their mouths open continued to open their mouths in PORTUGAL.

And those who kept their eyes shut?

Those who had their eyes shut could not see the mouths that opened in PORTUGAL.

The sky, in turn, never ceased to OPEN in PORTUGAL.

and the kiss? Is it the case that a kiss OPENED IN PORTUGAL?

«In PORTUGAL kisses are not permitted!» (Warden of Park Eduardo VII in April 1968, addressing a foreign couple kissing).

In any case an embassy did OPEN in PORTUGAL, and another embassy, and yet

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20 T.N.: The title of Alberto Pimenta's text is based on an untranslatable wordplay based on the phonetic proximity between «Abriu» (from the verb «abrir», to open) and «Abril» (the month April but also, more widely, the April 1974 revolution).

another one, and another and another, all of them aimed at fostering closer relations between peoples (and also between people, of course).

And the cleanliness of relations, did that OPEN as well? Did it OPEN? Did it OPEN in PORTUGAL?

«The Portuguese get stuck in the muck even when no muck is there» Padre António Vieira, «Sermão de Santo António» under the motto *Qui fecerit, et docuerit, hic magnus vocabilitur*).

But new names (rather pretty ones at times) have opened in PORTUGAL. And the files cabinets at the National Library, they have opened in PORTUGAL. And new opportunities to make use of old things have also opened in PORTUGAL.

and a whole bunch of people OPENED their consciousness in PORTUGAL and, after having been opened, that consciousness OPENED out to the whole world, but in the meantime, it has indeed REOPENED in PORTUGAL.

And coca-cola opened, a beverage that more than replaces water, wine, milk... and even other fizzy drinks, soda and orangeade. The burning sensation in one's stomach is a trifling matter and the eruption it triggers is most healthy.

In any case, a street vending stall OPENED in PORTUGAL and a «snack-bar» on the side of the road opened in PORTUGAL; and another street vending stall next to the other, and another «snack-bar» next to the other, and so on and so forth, and so on and so forth in PORTUGAL.

Alberto Pimenta, 1978

While a decade – the 1970s, say, or the 1980s – taken strictly as a measure of time, is ten years, the transformations (or characteristics) that are attributed to it as an historical period are obviously not always easy to situate with rigour within that time span. Or, in other words, the «fleeting period» described by Luís Trindade does not fit the exact, blow-by-blow, chronology, as can be seen in the polemics the ACARTE program would trigger, and which afford us a glimpse into the way the historical moment was perceived at the time. Alberto Pimenta's «Abriu em Portugal» (1978) – a poem published in the magazine *Raiz e Utopia* in 1978, with which Madalena Perdigão also collaborated – speaks to the non-synchronic nature



of the «openings» (and, later, the «closings») of April.<sup>21</sup> The poem tells of a growing number of openings, closings and re-openings since the first OPENING (in the original, ABRIU, presumably «ABRIL», i.e., the «April» 1974 Revolution). In Pimenta's text, we even get a glimpse of «openings» that fall outside of the period that is traditionally associated with «April».<sup>22</sup> Among these belated openings, one would have every reason to include the CAM, the ACARTE and the long-postponed birth of the First Museum of Modern Art in Portugal.

### *A logic of abundance: things and their images*

In his work *A Cultura de Direita em Portugal* [*Right-Wing Culture in Portugal*], António Araújo (2014) points to a series of new class-driven sociabilities that emerged in the 1980s, and which found their reflection in new media, such as the regular column «Meia Desfeita» in the recently created newspaper *Semanário*. He highlights the fact that these sociabilities, and their peculiar practices (such as the hefty entrance fee and the members gold card at the nightclub *Bananas*), would have been inconceivable in the period that immediately preceded it. In his own words, this was a «cultural – and mental – pattern that would have been unthinkable in the revolutionary period». Like Pimenta's «ABRIU em PORTUGAL», Araújo's text – though of a very different nature – braids different periods together, connects what comes before with what comes after. Pimenta's text links 1974, the year when «mouths opened», to 1977. Chronology is thus compressed. In Araújo's text, in turn, the revolutionary period serves as a counterpoint to an analysis that stretches to the 1990s, extending the timeline. In both, though, we find an array of things, spaces, practices, habits, episodes and figures. This, that and the other: all the things that had opened.

At stake here, among other aspects, is a kind of *logic of the abundance of things*, which both texts register. This sense of profusion was shared by much of the cultural production of the time – one of its paragons being, precisely, a 1986 book

21 It is in the magazine *Raiz e Utopia* that Madalena Perdigão publishes one of her best-known essays on education through art and art education: «Da Educação Artística. Perguntas e algumas respostas.»

22 Alberto Pimenta is perhaps citing the poem «As Portas que Abril Abriu» [«The Doors that April Opened»] by Ary dos Santos. The emphasis on the words in caps can thus be read as a kind of parody of the exalted tone with which this epic poem was read by its author.

entitled *A Causa das Coisas* [*The Cause of Things*]<sup>23</sup> – as well as by some of the writings about the period, where enumerations abound and products and practices are lavishly itemised.<sup>24</sup> To examine these multiple openings and temporal unfoldings would imply, then, an attention to the plethora of *things* in existence, a way of disclosing the causes of things and the things of such causes, heeding them, cataloguing them, attempting to peer into the logics undergirding their abundance (undeniably tied to modes of production, reproduction, and consumption) and noticing how, alongside them, gestures and habits change, corporalities are re-fashioned. These things are varied, and of a varied nature: places, objects, commodities, services and expressions – all of them the product of power relations. By addressing or interpellating us, these things constitute us, that is to say, they shape our subjectivities. Also, they are often themselves *and* their images: the projected image of whoever possesses or uses them. They become tied to certain lifestyles, segments of the population and subcultures, and become the leitmotiv for advertisements, TV series, talk-shows, soap operas and films.

As Kristin Ross (1994) suggests regarding the French context, it was a matter of attending to the transformations and corporeal and gestural learning processes brought about by modernisation, of acknowledging the way in which it rapidly «colonises» daily life, all the while perceiving it, in itself, as an «event». And it is also a matter of understanding the way it operates in parallel with other events also underway, such as – in the Portuguese case – the thirteen years of the Colonial War and, later, the swift decolonisation process. In *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, Kristin Ross analyses the cultural transformations in France between the Post World War II era and the 1970s and, at odds with the prevalent historiographic tradition of the *longue durée*, proposes to understand them as worthy of a specific analysis: in terms of what they change, of the responses they produce, the traumas they create or conceal. She also suggests that, while paying attention to the forms of consumption and artefacts in fashion, as well as to the images that accompany their use and dissemination (in cinema or advertising), one should cast a gaze at both colonisation and the Algerian war, inquiring into the sudden way in which the question of decolonisation seems to have vanished from interpretations of the

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23 *A Causa das Coisas*, by Miguel Esteves Cardoso, a collection of articles written for the weekly *Expresso* and published as a book in 1986 (Assírio & Alvim), can perhaps be compared to Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* (1957), inasmuch as both engage with the abundance of things that results from a period of mass consumption.

24 See Cusset (2006), Jameson (1990), or Dionísio (1993).

French reality of the time, a reality that in the postwar period describes itself as undergoing a form of Americanising cultural colonisation (Ross 1994).

In this sense, and mapping Ross's argument onto 1980s Portugal, the emergence of a new audio-visual culture is key to an understanding of the period – a culture that cannot be grasped separately and univocally, but rather as part of a particular historical setting, inscribed within a timeline. Several of the aesthetic proposals put forward by the ACARTE Department – such as Physical Theatre or Dance Theatre, which create forceful images or high-intensity performing atmospheres – would be part of this same turning point. In this regard, let us take another look at the example of the soap opera *Gabriela, Cravo e Canela* (Trindade 2014b):

As Isabel Ferin Cunha showed in «A Revolução da *Gabriela*: o ano de 1977 em Portugal» [«The *Gabriela* Revolution: The Year 1977 in Portugal»], the première of the soap opera – which serves here as a particular aspect of a wider phenomenon, that of the emergence of a new audio-visual culture that also includes the *festival da canção* [national song festival] – meant much more than a depoliticisation process. Through a close reading of what was written about *Gabriela* in the television reviews in some Portuguese newspapers, Ferin Cunha is able to discern a shift in the political subjectivities embodied by the characters and the narrative of the soap opera throughout the months it was broadcast. During this period, left-wing critics such as Mário Dionísio and Mário Castrim shifted from a reading that emphasised exploitation and social inequality in a system dominated by the colonels (it was, after all, the adaptation of a novel by Jorge Amado), to one much more focused on gender issues. In the space of a few months, questions more easily recognizable within the tradition of class struggle are intersected by issues of women's emancipation and the affirmation of desire. At some point, then, the soap opera could be perceived as an expansion, rather than a contraction, of the field of political subjectivities opened up by the revolution.

Focusing his analysis on elements of this new audio-visual culture, which he examines within the framework of more or less extended historical contexts, Luís Trindade stresses the speed with which some of these transformations take place, offering as an example the video clip and lyrics of «Bem Bom», the song by the band «Doce» that represented Portugal in the 1982 Eurovision Song Contest. In the song's lyrics, Sérgio Godinho's 1978 song «Hoje é o primeiro dia do resto da tua vida» (released just four years prior) is referred to as a track from an «old record» (*ibid.*).

The historical significance of this song can then be summarized as follows: «Doce» are a typical product of post-revolutionary culture inasmuch as they incorporate some of the forms of emancipation from the cultural revolution that spanned from the 1960s to the 1980s, on the one hand, while on the other they are already framed by the new emergent order of audio-visual culture. It is here that the third stanza that I referred to in the beginning [«listening to an old record»] becomes so important as a way of signalling the quick pace of the transformation.

Chronology is here, once again, experienced in a compact form, and the emergence of the new audio-visual culture surely contributed to this perception. This cultural context was also the terrain where the ACARTE operated, alongside a host of new sociabilities that emerged in newly-opened *indoor public spaces* – «doors» that include not only the more literal glass entrance doors of the *Amoreiras* department store or those of the *JUMBO* hypermarket in Alfragide, but also the fence around the Gulbenkian park and the roofed entrance to the CAM, or even the famous doorkeeper of the *Fragil* nightclub. Again, these are all sites of an exhibitionary complex that one should consider in their interrelation.<sup>25</sup> To understand these transformations, one would need to map these places, inquiring as to the use of the spaces and the gestures that defined them, linking them to the images that refract them and the audio-visual culture they are framed by, contextualizing them in their *raison d'être* and their historical density. In doing this, perhaps we could sketch a map in which supermarkets, hypermarkets, museums, discos, beaches and suburban trains (associated with the massification of consumption and urban growth, accentuated in the 1980s) as well as the occupied lands of the land reform, streets and factories (things one would associate with the revolutionary period), far from belonging to different realities and times, actually coexist and cross paths, allowing us to bring to the fore how specific spaces are inhabited and used by certain groups, classes and segments of the population, but also moments in which these dividing lines are blurred.<sup>26</sup> We can thus catch a glimpse of a movement that took place somewhere between the 1970s and the 1980s,<sup>27</sup> and which was anything but linear and far from smooth: from «outdoors» (more

25 Cf. Vieira (2015b).

26 On these chronological mismatches see Vieira (2015a).

27 One would need to think of this movement alongside a series of other «indoor public spaces» that played a key role in the creation of the socio-cultural atmosphere that preceded the fall of the regime, such as the Lisbon Goethe Institut ou the SNBA (Sociedade Nacional de Belas-Artes).

specifically, «the street») to «indoors». This was a time, then, when the very notion of «the public» is reconfigured, as noted by Jorge Silva Melo:

Before, all these people would meet on the street. In [the film] «Ninguém Duas Vezes» [1985] there is virtually no street, it's all interiors, in the theatre, the museum, the airport, cars... It was something that I started to sense, bit by bit: people had gone back inside, whereas the street had been the main *décor* both of the final years of the dictatorship and of the early years of the revolution. In the 1980s, everyone was now indoors, within four walls, dealing with their own private affairs.<sup>28</sup>

### A «*pop* people»

Rui Bebiano draws attention to the way in which, during the «Long Sixties», another «people» begins to take shape. This «*pop* people», as he calls it, draws further and further away from «the people» as defined and championed by the regime of Salazar.

Bebiano creates a subject of enunciation composed of a Portuguese word and an English word in italics, separated by a space and in inverted commas: «povo *pop*» («*pop* people»). The term graphically marks the *caesura* that defines it, an incision that signals not only the incompleteness that characterises any process of modernisation (caught in an endless kinetics, always lagging behind an even further, more thorough, modernisation), but also the contradictory forms this process took over the course of the dictatorship, and one which would shape its future inflections (Bebiano 2010). As a subject of enunciation, the unity of «*pop* people» is permanently undermined by the heterogeneous and contradictory form of its «being», split in half by the language (i.e. *povo*, in Portuguese, *pop* in English) and the slant of the italic type, in an unsettled mirror play in which the words «povo» and «*pop*» are neither translated nor inflected, but present themselves, rather, as markers of processes of subjectivation from distinct – and yet converging – planes. Grounded on two modern mass phenomena whose regimes of subjectivation do not, one would think, overlap – the people, identified with the nation, and *pop*, framed by a globalised capitalism – the «*pop* people» fails to coincide with either, even if, on the surface, one might perceive a sequential relation between the two: that is to say, the formation of «pop» would depend on the pre-existence of a «people» that could

28 Jorge Silva Melo in a conversation with Francisco Ferreira, in 2013, on the retrospective of his work in the Lisbon & Estoril Film Festival (emphasis and square brackets mine).

be grasped and managed *en masse*. And yet «*pop* people» short-circuits this supposed sequence and underscores it in the gap between the two terms, thus allowing us to grasp the polysemous nature of each of the terms (bringing to the surface the passage from peoples to people, and from the original English «pop» to the italicised *pop*, an anglicism already integrated into the Portuguese language), all of these elements coming together in a manifold entity that Bebiano proposes we treat as a historical subject. The interval – the blank space – between «povo» and «*pop*» would then enable us to bring the *Sixties/Eighties* «disjunction» underlined by Luís Trindade (2009) to the centre of what might be called an emerging urban middle class whose formation stretched from the Postwar to the 1990s: to the centre, that is, of each one of the individuals that compose it, and into their very bodies. But while the middle class is first and foremost an *economic* category, «*pop* people», insofar as it refers to a people (or to its formation), is eminently – in its essential vocation, one might say – a political category (Agamben 2010).

In proposing this term as a way to account for the Portuguese «Long Sixties», Bebiano draws on Adérito Seda Nunes's view of Portuguese reality in 1964 as a two-speed society, registering the latter's gradual opening to «international society» (Seda Nunes *apud* Bebiano 2010, 447). This takes place partly by way of personal connections that resulted from the largest export the Southern European countries had to offer to those in the North – emigration; but also through an opening to tourism; the increase in long-distance postal, telephone or travel services; the expansion of the publishing market, with an ever-growing number of books and magazines and a greater variety of articles and news pieces; or through the audiovisual media, such as the radio and the recently emerged television. Underscoring the fact that this is a «generational» transformation, mostly affecting the younger segments of the population, Seda Nunes writes:

More and more, or in increasing numbers [...] individuals tend to act, think, feel and desire, not only on the basis of stimuli, images, opportunities, solicitations or conceptions internal to the society they were born in and in which they live, but also on the basis of stimuli, images, opportunities, solicitations or conceptions they receive from outside their society, or which they experience outside it, by means of the constant flow of information. (*Ibid.*, 447)

A crucial factor in this process was the expansion and feminisation of the student population from the 1950s onwards. This led to the rapid formation of a young and highly educated middle class, with an increasingly international training and horizon of expectations. After completing their studies, this «*pop* people»

found employment in the service sector or in the liberal professions, nurturing, within the cultural and material framework of Salazarism, a «feasible discipline», a form of cultural consumption perceived as a way of «cultivating a world», and, as the years progressed, they would make up

a social segment with an identity of its own, residing mainly in urban centres and in the less stagnant regions along the coastline, composed of former or current students, alongside certain marginal segments with whom they had regular contact, ready to absorb less stable values and acquire new cultural habits, from which they withdrew, if not a critical perspective on, at least a strained view of, the world order which the culture of the regime presented. (*Ibid.*, 447)

What Bebiano is seemingly underlining is a familiar tale of the rise of a certain middle class and its cultural «taste». However, by choosing to label it as «a people», he ascribes it a political weight which the more strictly economic category of the «middle class» does not bear. This was, then, a heterogeneous group, materially privileged when compared to most of the population, which, «within a society closed in on itself for a number of decades», distinguished itself «from the other social sectors – and from other segments of the middle class, especially from those more closely linked to the regime – mainly through its habits, tastes, values and ambitions, with a worldview that was tendentially cosmopolitan, open to the multiplication of novelty and to the naturalisation of a «process of change» framed as utopian projection and horizon of expectations» (Bebiano 2010, 447).

The emergence of the Calouste Gulbenkian and the beginning of its activity – even if, and despite, the support of the state – would converge with the formation of this «*pop* people» whose cultural aspirations it would help to nurture. As a *scenario of modernity*, as will be argued later, the FCG would play an active role in the construction of this more or less explicitly politicised «*pop* people» and, above all, in the cosmopolitan worldview that went along with it.<sup>29</sup>

Explaining how «in fact our ‘*pop* people’ of the 1960s inhabited a very contradictory universe, in which the attraction to social and cultural renewal influenced by the ‘outside’ contended with an ‘oppositional culture’ – largely determined by the circumstances imposed by the regime’s authoritarianism and the gruelling colonial wars – which tendentially rejected such an influence», Rui

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29 In time, perhaps the Goethe Institut – and later, in the 1980s, the Instituto Franco-Portugais (thinking of Lisbon institutions in particular) – would come to operate, as mentioned earlier, as *scenarios of modernity*.

Bebiano offers an account of the tensions that traversed the individuals that were part of this heterogeneous group, suggesting that two distinct social imaginaries often converged (and collided) in them: «The first came from a euphoric mass culture, mainly of Anglo-American origin, while the second emerged from a Marxist left-wing tradition, structurally averse to consumerism and to an appreciation for the principle of leisure at the expense of militancy and work ethics» (*ibid.*, 452-453).

To consider the ways in which, in each specific context – and especially in countries where authoritarian regimes make them the exception –, certain spaces that fit into the category of *scenarios of modernity* were used and appropriated as «our own» by the local populations would perhaps contribute to the earlier discussion as to what a perception of culture and its institutions from the point of view of «the common» might look like. As Bebiano (*idem*) says:

Immediately after the fall of the regime, the diversification of Portuguese society split what the regime had somehow managed to unite. During the biennium 1974-1975, but mainly during the subsequent years of «democratic stability», these two trajectories began to follow increasingly separate paths: while political militancy with roots in the anti-fascist struggle followed a path of resistance to the reorganisation of capitalism or adapted to the context of parliamentary democracy, what remained of this «*pop* people», having contributed to an undermining of the moral foundation of the regime, would become diluted in an increasingly complex and conformist social mass.

This middle class – the so-called «*pop* people» –, which emerged under very particular conditions, can only be adequately understood through a spatial lens that can include it in phenomena that clearly go beyond the national scope (and the museum of modern art is an exemplary object of this); and by looking through a temporal lens that can situate its formation within markers and milestones that also come from other traditions. It is in the light of this problematisation of the 1980s – the 1980s *as a question* – not so much as a rigid chronological frame than as a series of superimpositions that define a manifold time, marked by zones of acceleration and distension, in which reasons and logics of different orders converge (because they had been formed before, or because they extend into the 1990s) that the ACARTE is addressed here in the years between 1984 and 1989, with a particular focus on the way its action is bound to a host of simultaneous transformations in corporeality.



PART II

A Curatorship of Lack

PAGES 51 TO 54: Madalena Perdigão, ACARTE program, manuscript, 1984 |  
FCG — Arquivos Gulbenkian.

## Fundación Cultural Kyushuiana

Centro de Cultura y Ciencias Artísticas  
~~de la Fundación Cultural Kyushuiana~~  
de Educación del Arte  
PROGRAMA

### 1. D. que conviene

- Vamos como grupo, vamos con los otros. Vamos pronto a que otros vayan mejor a cualquier hora.
- Vamos en una forma que sea de acuerdo a la forma de vida.
- Vamos en un local de encuentro de artistas.
- Vamos a los estudios de enseñanza e investigación.
- Vamos en un lugar en un ambiente artístico e en desarrollo de técnicas.
- Vamos a hacer actividades con un nivel artístico más - talleres, que algunas veces, con algunas exposiciones.
- Vamos en un espacio vivo, en que se haga de una actividad e un espacio de trabajo en el tiempo, en que se cree e un espacio e se haga una - programa de un tipo en que - talleres de un grupo, en que se participe con espontaneidad en que todo sea natural y en que todo sea natural.

\* Vamos a hacer e colaborar con e de profesores, artistas, músicos, escritores, <sup>escritores</sup> fotógrafos, bailarines, ~~escritores~~ artistas plásticos e músicos para hacer una obra multidisciplinaria.

### 2. En que condiciones

- Que a Arte e esencial a vida.
- Que a Arte e una forma superior de expresión.
- Que e parte de la dignidad individual e social.
- Que e parte de la dignidad individual e social e de Paz.
- Que todo debe ser en favor a Arte, con una verdadera forma.

### 3. D. que sea mejor en una forma

- Que como preferencia sobre a cualquier otra.
- Que como adopte cualquier actividad de recreación artística.
- Que como la formación que e a forma artística con gusto - formas de expresión consideradas más en una obra.
- Que como la comprensión artística.
- Que como cualquier una forma de hacer de Arte Kyushuiano como una obra en e Kyushuiano en País e en extranjero.
- Que como cualquier una iniciativa de otros artistas de hacer e de forma de Fundación Cultural Kyushuiana, con un fondo de una verdadera actividad.

4. O que pertencem a ficção4.1. no Teatro

- produção ficção, no caso de projetos multidisciplinares
- elaboração em linguagem de grupo <sup>teatral</sup> (incluindo a possibilidade de co-produção)
- trabalhando em linguagem com grupo em estruturas de circulação
- apresentando de formas inovadoras de grupos de teatro estrangeiros
- apresentando de grupo autôno

4.2. no Cinema

- produção ficção, no caso de projetos multidisciplinares
- apresentação de projetos inovadores de grupos <sup>cinematográficos</sup>
- criação de trabalho em linguagem estrangeira de produção apresentando em português
- apresentação de filmes, curtas em grupo de design estrangeiro de resgate.

4.3. no Livro

- apresentando de filmes de arte
- experimentos de resgate de filmes que emergem
- possibilidade de filmes de animação
- ~~apresentando de filmes~~ apresentando de espetáculos dirigidos por autores estrangeiros

~~apresentando~~ projetos de formação de rede de filmes de emergência em rede com o Royal College of Art, Londres?

4.4. no Dança

- criação inovadora à luz da dança para apresentação de grupos <sup>cinematográficos</sup>
- criação de grupo no nível profissional e no âmbito de arte livre
- criação de projeto de dança contemporânea ~~em rede com autores estrangeiros~~ ~~em rede com autores estrangeiros~~
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>
- trabalho de dança <sup>em rede com autores estrangeiros</sup>

4.5. na Literatura

- projetos interdisciplinares
- criação de projetos "Quilômetro além do e além" "de um dia"
- leitura comentada de livros literários
- trabalho de literatura

4.6. no Artes Plásticas

- formação de grupo autônomo
  - projetos interdisciplinares
  - experimentos teatrais e
  - experimentos de teatro
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
  - trabalho em rede com autores estrangeiros de teatro, dança e de arte
- 4.7. no Vídeo
- VIDEO
  - MÍMICA
  - CIRCO
  - MARIONETAS, etc.

Os serviços e Defensores competentes  
do Conselho Federal de Educação  
e, mais particularmente,  
o Conselho de C. E. de São Paulo,  
são convidados a emitir pareceres  
para todos os interessados  
do Serviço de Educação, Serviço de C. E.  
e Serviço de P. E.,  
para fins de elaboração de um programa educacional  
e educacional dos serviços,  
em tanto quanto for necessário e possível.

São Paulo, 13 de Junho de 1954

Cláudio Machado de Oliveira Rodrigues

Conselho Federal de Educação  
Brasília

TERCEIRO ANEXO, TERCEIRO ANEXO

PROGRAMA

PROGRAMA

1. OBJETIVOS

- Fazer com que os alunos, desde o primeiro ano, tenham acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Fazer com que os alunos tenham acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Fazer com que os alunos tenham acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Fazer com que os alunos tenham acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
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- Fazer com que os alunos tenham acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.

Conselho Federal de Educação  
Brasília

2. OBJETIVOS

- Que o aluno tenha acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Que o aluno tenha acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Que o aluno tenha acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.
- Que o aluno tenha acesso aos métodos modernos de ensino e de aprendizagem.

3. Qual sua visão de um país?

- Me vejo preferindo trabalhar no comércio eletrônico.
- Me vejo sempre buscando melhores condições de trabalho.
- Me vejo sempre buscando a qualidade e sempre trabalhando em equipe e tendo a experiência com diversos tipos de áreas.
- Me vejo sempre buscando melhores.
- Me vejo trabalhando no campo de ensino de Artes (artes) nas áreas de ensino à distância de arte e de artes.
- Me vejo sempre em busca de novas habilidades, em outras palavras, sempre em busca de novas habilidades, sempre em busca de novas habilidades.

4. Como gostaria de ser?

4.1. em 2010

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional, profissional e profissional de qualidade do governo, com qualidade em termos de resultados de trabalho.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.2. em 2015

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.3. em 2020

- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.4. em 2025

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.5. em 2030

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.6. em 2035

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

4.7. em 2040

- profissional eficiente, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.
- relacionado aos objetivos de grupo, profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.
- profissional de qualidade, profissional de qualidade.

Os serviços e departamentos administrativos de qualidade de trabalho, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas, ao lado de pessoas altamente qualificadas.

Lima, 12 de Maio de 2007

(Assinatura do Sr. Getuliano Lopes)

# Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

## Serviço de Animação, Criação Artística e Educação pela Arte (ACARTE)

### PROGRAMME

#### 1. WHAT WE SHALL BE

We shall take risks, we shall make mistakes. We shall allow others to take risks and make mistakes.

We shall be an open forum for the discussion of cultural problems

We shall be a meeting place for artists.

We shall be open to innovation and experimentation.

We shall be demanding in terms of the works' artistic quality and discipline.

We shall try to keep a close contact with the public, and we want them to be a critical, rather than merely consuming, public.

We shall foster the collaboration between composers, musicians, theatre directors, actors, choreographers, dancers, visual artists and graphic designers to create multidisciplinary works.

We shall be a living space, where you go from an exhibition to a theatre or dance show, where you watch a concert and stay for the screening of a film or for the reading of a poem, where you take part in a show where all this happens or where anything can happen.

#### 2. WHAT WE BELIEVE

That Art is essential to Life.

That Art is an imperative form of Education.

That it is the source of individual and social progress.

That it is a factor in bringing people together and bringing about Peace.

That everyone should have access to Art in its multiple forms.

### 3. WHAT WE SHALL NOT BE OR DO

We shall not give preference to specific schools or aesthetic currents.

We shall not adopt narrow concepts of sterile nationalism.

We shall not have any bias towards artistic genres or forms of expression deemed more or less noble.

We shall not have resident companies.

We shall not restrict ourselves to the spaces of the Modern Art Centre but rather open ourselves to an itinerant presence both in the country and abroad.

We shall not compete with initiatives from other institutions, inside or outside the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, but fill in any gaps that may exist.

### 4. WHAT WE AIM TO DO

#### 4.1. In the THEATRE

In-house productions of multidisciplinary projects.

Collaboration with Portuguese Companies or Groups (including co-productions), namely with itinerante Companies or Groups.

Presentation of small foreign companies or theatre groups.

Promotion of young authors, favouring research-based projects.

#### 4.2. In DANCE

In-house productions of multidisciplinary projects

Presentation of series of shows by independent Portuguese dance groups.

Working sessions with foreign and Portuguese key figures leading to performances.

Presentation of small foreign avant-garde companies or dance groups.

#### 4.3. In CINEMA

Screening of art film.

Organisation of film screenings for children.

Screening of animated films.

Organisiton of cycles, namely of Contemporary Cinema.

Project for an Animated Film direction course in collaboration with the Royal College of Art, London.



#### 4.4. In MUSIC

Informal lunchtime concerts featuring young musicians.  
Jazz concerts in the Multipurpose Room and in the Open Air Amphitheatre.  
Contemporary Portuguese music concerts.  
Fanfare Bands and Popular music concerts in the Open Air Amphitheatre.  
Promotion of young composers.  
Interdisciplinary Projects.

#### 4.5. In LITERATURE

Interdisciplinary Projects.  
Conference series.  
«Writers talk about themselves and their work».  
Commented reading of literary works.  
Bio-bibliographical exhibitions.

#### 4.6. In the VISUAL ARTS and ARCHITECTURE

Promotion of young artists.  
Interdisciplinary artists.  
Thematic and didactic exhibitions.  
Presentation of contemporary art pieces and current research outcomes.

#### 4.7. And also VIDEO, PHOTOGRAPHY, MIME, CIRCUS, PUPPETRY, etc.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's relevant departments and services, in particular the Centre of Modern Art, will be key consultants in all the activities of the Animation, Artistic Creation and Education Through Art Department, which has requested the collaboration of these services, as much as possible and necessary, for the execution of its programme.

Lisbon, 13 May 1984  
(Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão)



#### 4.

### «WHAT WE SHALL NOT BE OR DO»

«1. WHAT WE SHALL BE. We shall take risks, we shall make mistakes. We shall allow others to take risks and make mistakes. We shall be an open forum for the discussion of cultural problems» – Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão writes on 17 May 1984. This scene, the founding moment of the ACARTE, takes place at the recently opened Modern Art Centre of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, with the presence of journalists, artists and FCG staff. At the same time, the Almada Negreiros project is announced as the first initiative of the ACARTE Department. The press, particularly the newly created cultural supplements, are called to attend the occasion, and journalists, artists and Foundation employees are among the public.<sup>30</sup> Sitting at the conference table are Madalena Perdigão, director of ACARTE, José Sommer Ribeiro, director of CAM and Margarida Acciaiuoli and Isabel Guedes, from the Documentation and Research Departments of the Museum of Modern Art. Madalena Perdigão continues to read aloud from the first point of ACARTE's programme:

We shall be a meeting place for artists. We shall be open to innovation and experimentation. We shall be demanding in terms of the works' artistic quality and disci-

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30 The ACARTE had a core or, as Eugénia Vasques put it in an interview on 4 August 2009, a «nuclear family» of workers and artists close to the institution, among which were Emília Rosa, the production director, key figure in the ACARTE, but also artists such as Constança Capdeville. This nucleus – formed by people working there under contract or on commission, coming from other FCG departments or picked by the teams that carried out the different projects – has ample experience in the performing arts. Emília Rosa, the production director, for example, came from the independent theatre scene (namely from the theatre company *Os Cómicos*); and Orlando Worm, at the time an FCG employee, and the light technician for several of the works presented at the department, has a long career in the milieu. These were not bureaucrats, technocrats or graduate staff, but rather people with a know-how and a vision honed through practical experience, which was consistent with a long-standing FCG policy in the field of the performing arts, and beyond: the care in accompanying the trajectory of the artists they supported, which at times meant hosting them again, which in turn meant their artistic path could be observed up close and generated a close circle of artists.

pline. We shall try to keep a close contact with the public, and we want them to be a critical rather than merely a consuming public. We shall foster the collaboration between composers, musicians, theatre directors, actors, choreographers, dancers, plastic artists and graphic designers to create multidisciplinary works. We shall be a living space, where you go from an exhibition to a theatre or dance show, where you watch a concert and stay for the screening of a film or for the reading of a poem, where you take part in a show where all this happens or where anything can happen. (Perdigão 1984a)

Madalena Perdigão's discourse uses the first-person plural. She speaks in the name of a Department that establishes itself as, at one and the same time, a place of enunciation, a physical space and an organising entity, taking on a stance that is both ethical and aesthetic. The tone is simultaneously that of a programme, of a declaration of principles and of a manifesto.

A few years later, the addenda WHY and WHAT FOR are added (Perdigão 1989). There, one reads that «it became necessary to offer the Modern Art Centre [...] the possibility of being not only a Museum, in the narrow sense of the term but also a cultural centre», as we can read in the 1989 bilingual leaflet that presented the ACARTE (Perdigão 1989).

#### «WHY»

The Portuguese cultural scene was lacking a Department focused on contemporary culture and/or on a modern approach to timeless themes, as well as a Centre for Education through art aimed at children.

It became necessary to offer the Modern Art Centre, created by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on 22 August 1979 and inaugurated on 20 July 1983, the possibility of being not only a Museum, in the narrow sense of the term, but also a cultural centre.<sup>31</sup>

#### «WHAT FOR»

1. To contribute to the communication between the work of art and the public and to the former's dissemination through forms of «animation»; to the development of «artistic creation», to the progress of «education through art».

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31 TN: For reasons of terminological consistency, the passages from the leaflet quoted here are translations from the Portuguese text, rather than the original English text.

2. To create new and more knowledgeable publics for the galleries of the Modern Art Centre and its collection.

In this same period, also in 1989, which would be Madalena Perdigão's final year as a director, there was a debate in the ACARTE multipurpose room about whether the continuous actions of this, «throughout its five years of existence, had changed the taste of the Portuguese».32 Sociology of culture was taking its first steps in Portugal and the conference under the title *Operações do Gosto* (*Operations of Taste*), organised by the sociologist Orlando Garcia, examined the action of institutions like *Casa de Serralves*, the *Árvore* cooperative, the independent art school *Ar.Co*, or, of course, the ACARTE, which hosted the event.

In December 2003, the ACARTE was definitively extinguished by decision of the FCG Board of Directors, who considered that «the initial programme, focused on performing art practices», had been fulfilled, on the whole, and that this «had changed the national landscape of these same practices, becoming a model adopted and developed by other institutions, across the country».33

Fourteen years separate these two assessments of the ACARTE's activity: while the first one is an internal evaluation by Madalena Perdigão, answering a question in the form of another question, the latter is an external appraisal by the Board of Directors, in the affirmative. In both cases, it is a matter of retrospectively assessing the importance of the ACARTE. In 1989, the discussion revolves around how the ACARTE had changed the *general* taste of the Portuguese. In 2003, it is argued that an initial programme *focused on the performing arts* was not only fulfilled but came to *serve as a model* for other institutions in the country. This book's subject matter lies in the interval between these two statements.

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32 «The ACARTE's cultural policy has been guided by criteria of innovation and experimentalism, not as goals in themselves, but as means of intervening in the evolution and development of Portuguese cultural life. The purpose of providing our artists, our critics and our public with vast and diversified 'information' about what is happening abroad, together with the desire to encourage national artistic creation, can be seen as two constant and defining vectors in the Department's programming. Perhaps because this dimension was lacking – or rather, insufficient – in the Portuguese cultural panorama, the ACARTE's activities have been met with a favourable response from the public and the media. It can even be said that a core audience (80% of which are young people) has been created, one that previously was not drawn to events of this type. Whether the ACARTE's activity, during its five years of existence, has changed or not the taste of the Portuguese people, is a question that will be debated in one of the sessions of this Colloquium», Madalena Perdigão, programme *Operações do Gosto*, May 1989.

33 See Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian 2007, 382.

Let us now return to 17 of May 1984 and, more specifically, to the press conference where Madalena Perdigão presents the ACARTE programme, so as to trace the coordinates of the period from which it emerges, bearing in mind that they are part of the same set of circumstances that spurred the resurgence of Almada Negreiros in the 1980s as an emblematic and exemplary figure, in a process of rediscovery that would serve, simultaneously, as an affirmation of the potential of the era to come.

In being publicly presented at a press conference, the ACARTE programme functioned performatively as a kind of manifesto. The presentation ceremony marks the beginning of the new Department and its programme is a declaration of intent, a written document turned speech act (Austin 1962) that would steer its action, a mission that begins to be fulfilled, precisely, in the act of its public enunciation.<sup>34</sup>

How did the ACARTE programme become so effective that one could say it had been «on the whole, fulfilled», or that the community with which (and to which) it speaks had come into being?

Following closely some of the parameters suggested by Martin Puchner (2002) for the analysis of the performative quality of manifestos, a careful examination of point 2 of the programme, «What we will not be nor do», allows us to glimpse, in the negative, into the order of things in which its actions are inscribed and which it seeks to break from, thus bringing to light the context of its emergence:

##### 5. WHAT WE SHALL NOT BE OR DO

We shall not give preference to specific schools or aesthetic currents.

We shall not adopt narrow concepts of sterile nationalism.

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<sup>34</sup> As José Bragança de Miranda reminds us, the importance of the materiality of writing is bound with the «projectivist structure of modern discourses» (*apud* Lopes 2012, 17). From this point of view, the written document *programa do ACARTE* [ACARTE programme] has an instituting character, as do the FCG Statutes, written in 1956 by Azeredo Perdigão: they stipulate the lines and limits of action of what they define as the scope of the institution they inaugurate. As António Pinto Ribeiro said in an interview, the FCG has had two programmes, in two different historical periods: the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Statutes, of 1956, and the ACARTE programme, of 1984 (Ribeiro 2007, 372-373). This points to a necessary understanding of the ACARTE's action as part of a redefinition of the cultural action of the FCG in democratic times, with the Gulbenkian complex *as a whole* fully operational, including its southern wing (the CAM and the ACARTE). This view is seemingly shared by Delfim Sardo, in a paper presented on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the CAM, where he claimed that since the CAM, unlike the ACARTE, never had an autonomous programme, its action was always guided by a degree of ambiguity (Sardo 2014).

We shall not have any bias towards artistic genres or forms of expression deemed more or less noble.

We shall not have resident companies.

We shall not restrict ourselves to the spaces of the Modern Art Centre but rather open ourselves to an itinerant presence both in the country and abroad.

We shall not compete with initiatives from other institutions, inside or outside the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, but fill in any gaps that may exist.

What seems to be at stake in these statements is:

- 1) The affirmation of a doubly expanded territory, in terms of both the geography of artistic genres and the topography of countries;
- 2) the affirmation of a general kinetics of internationalisation and itinerancy – an important element to bear in mind in a period where nationalism returned as a theme, and one also marked by a «discovery» of Europe, as were the 1980s in Portugal;
- 3) a break with a specific mode of production – the company model;
- 4) and an affirmation of what I shall call a *curatorship of lack*, a mode of programming based not on the affirmation of a supposed stable or competitive identity, but rather on paying attention to perceived lacks, that is to say, on attending to what is missing, or lacking.

Let us take a look, then, at these various points, starting with the last one, which is of a more general nature and seems to set all the others in motion, and can thus be used to clarify the aforementioned term: *curatorship of lack*.

### *Communitas/immunitas* and a non identitarian thinking on community

«To fill in the gaps» or «what is lacking»: on numerous occasions Madalena Perdigão focuses on the issue of the *gap* or *lack* (in other words, what might be *missing*) as both the «why» the the «how» of the ACARTE Department. As I see it, this openness to «lack» would imply a radical questioning of an identitarian definition of the Department, and its subsequent de-hierarchisation.

In *Communitas – The Origin and Destiny of The Community*, Roberto Esposito (2010) proposes a theorisation of the concept of lack in which it appears not as something negative – a fault, a deficiency, a deprivation – but as something prolific, intrinsic to (and a generator of) community. Wondering what is «the ‘thing’ that the members of a community have in common», he inquires into the etymology of *communis*: «he who shares an office [*carica*], a burden [*carico*] a task [*incarico*]» – i.e., a *munus* – from which he surmises that *communitas* would be «the totality of persons united not by a ‘property’ but precisely by an obligation or a debt; not by an ‘addition’ [*più*] but by a ‘subtraction’ [*meno*]: by a lack, a limit that is configured as an onus, or even as a defective modality for him who is ‘affected,’ unlike for him who is instead ‘exempt’ [*esente*] or ‘exempted’» (*ibidem*, 6).

It is in the contrast between *communitas* and *immunitas* that Esposito locates the traditional opposition associated with the alternative between the public and the private. If *communis* is the one obliged to perform a task – or bestow a *grace* – *immune* would be the one who is excused from doing that, thus remaining ungrateful. Yet his journey through the etymology of *communitas* shows that «the *munus* that the *communitas* shares isn’t a property or a possession» but «a debt, a pledge, a gift that is to be given, and that therefore will establish a lack. The subjects of community are united by an ‘obligation,’ in the sense that one says ‘I owe you something,’ but not ‘you owe me something.’» The «common» is thus «not characterized by what is proper but by what is improper, or even more drastically, by the other; by a voiding [*svuotamento*], be it partial or whole, of property into its negative; by removing what is properly one’s own [*depropriazione*] that invests and decenters the proprietary subject, forcing him to take leave [*uscire*] of himself, to alter himself» (*ibid.*, 6-7).

Esposito’s interpretation continues a debate that emerged precisely in the decade in which the ACARTE operates, the 1980s, the first milestones of which are Jean-Luc Nancy’s *La Communauté desoeuvré* (1982) and, as a response to it, Maurice Blanchot’s *La Communauté inavouable* (1983). After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Giorgio Agamben’s *La comunità che viene* (1993) and Esposito’s *Communitas – origine et destinie della comunità* (2010) would continue the debate. Both these authors were attempting to build a notion of community in which the latter could not be summed up within the framework of an identitarian logic of the «proper». It was, in fact, its opposite: it referred to something constitutively *other*; something that was not a substance (neither soil, nor blood, nor creed, or any other substantive affinity) but a *lack* that pervaded its members and contaminated them (Esposito 2013).



Only a handful of years before 1989 and 1991, both Nancy's and Blanchot's thinking gravitated around the «community/communism» duality, which they tried to unravel as a form of derivation, that is to say, as if one were the «natural» future development of the other, leading, evidently, to a hecatomb, as testified by the then agonizing Soviet regime and the narratives on the «end of History». Nancy and Blanchot seek to locate the community not in the realm of *finality* but rather in the realm of *finitude*. Blanchot and Nancy would start from «the generalised realisation of the radical crisis and the dissolution of [the very idea of] community in our time – which manifests itself in two fundamental directions (which converge, in the end), as the final crisis of the capitalist utopia and the dismantling of its organised opposition in the form of historical or state communism» (Leão 2014). But, as Nancy concludes, *society* was not built on the ruins of *community*, «nor is the community ahead of us as a possible or foreclosed horizon: nothing has been lost, which means nothing is lost. A conflagration of community in our time, therefore, or the end of the modern myth of community coinciding with the end of *that myth*» (Leão 214).

As Esposito points out, despite the theoretical fruitfulness of this proposal, the fact that it places emphasis on *cum* rather *múnus* and that it privileges the figure of the *relation* above all else means it runs the risk of blotting out its most essential content – i.e., the object of that reciprocal exchange – which makes it difficult to translate the proposal into political terms (Esposito 2013). Focusing instead on the meaning of *múnus*, the author seeks to extend the potential political reach of this set of proposals. *Múnus*, which can be read ambivalently as both «gift» and «law», is a kind of «law of the unilateral gift to others», allowing the author to remain within the semantic field fashioned by the deconstructionists, understanding community as a form of expropriation.

To *communitas* Esposito opposes *immunitas*, the subtraction from this law, which results in a closing on oneself that may generate a form of «autoimmunity», a devitalising excess of protection and closure, lethal to the community itself. By suggesting a twofold action which, alongside breaking down the immunity bonds and barriers that define a community's identity, creates *common* spaces, spheres and dimensions within which a coming-out-of-onself may take place, Esposito is putting forward a notion of the common not subsumable under the opposition between the public and the private. It belongs, rather, to the sphere of the «common good», which frames the notion of something beyond possession, an example of which would be the opposition to the privatisation of water, but also of

knowledge, health and a number of other resources essential to life (*ibid.*) But he warns us that we don't yet have a satisfactory lexicon to speak of something like «the commons», which falls outside of the modernisation and globalisation processes. With the term «common», Esposito is not referring to «the public» – as the dialectical opposite to «the private» – nor to the global, as the reverse side of the local. The «commons», then, would be largely unknown – an untapped zone – within our conceptual grid, which has for so long been held captive by a kind of general immunity system. However, the challenge of a biopolitics that affirms life rather than operating *on* life is at play precisely in the possibility of thinking, not to mention acting, within this horizon.

«To be lacking», a *curatorship of lack* for a common use

By locating the origin of the common not in a trait or property but rather in a «lack» or «gap» (a lacuna), Esposito allows us to think of community as discontinuity: a community that is not a given, not something whose identity would have to be affirmed in competition with other more or less «strong», «developed» or «backward» identities, but rather as a living elaboration, open to the needs as defined by a given context. A community in which there would be a host of «commons» to share and to build, that would have a series of «commonalities» that need to be thought of beyond the public/private dichotomy and removed from a supposed immanence of the community to itself.

An openness to lack would enable a privileged access to a variety of common (and at times mutually incompatible) perceptions that contemporaries had of their historical moment, drawing more precise grids and more refined periodisations, in which notions of backwardness and periphery (or semi-periphery), far from appearing as single and inescapable explanations, could instead be seen as «engines», «burdens», «obstructions», «advantages», or «conditions». It also enables a series of specific outlines and nuances to be drawn, depending on the subject of enunciation, the historical moment or the chosen reference points.

In this sense, one could perhaps place the action of the ACARTE, which, as argued here, operated precisely through an attention «to lack», in line with the reflections of Charles Esche, director and curator of the Van Abbemuseum (and, at the time, of the 31<sup>st</sup> São Paulo Art Biennial), in a conference given at the Calouste

Gulbenkian Foundation in 2014. Highlighting the ways in which some artistic institutions embodied the concept of the common *in themselves*, and framing museum collections as a form of shared property, he claims: «Although this is the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, essentially belonging to the Gulbenkian family, the way in which it was created allowed all the Portuguese to have a sense of ownership of it. [...] An idea of the common is inscribed into artistic institutions». Interestingly, this would be signalled in a polemical debate published in the weekly *Expresso* in 1975, during the PREC, with the telling title «Which Gulbenkian do we have? Which Gulbenkian do we want?».

Doubtlessly unaware of this episode, Esche was speaking during a moment of crisis of the welfare state and of the idea of the nation itself, at the peak of the Troika intervention (IMF, ECB and European Commission) in Portugal suggesting that, in this framework, museums and art centres should rethink their social function and see themselves as shared, common property (Esche 2014) rather than as organisers of «blockbusters» or mass-tourism events, obeying purely economic reasons. It is in the sense of an «openness to what is lacking» rather than that of «filling a lack» that Esche understands the role of the museum, which, more than assuming a philanthropic role (which rests on a ground of inequality between the giver and the receiver), should see itself as constitutively *common*.

Between 1984 and 1989, operating under a private foundation that occupies a very singular place in the Portuguese context, the ACARTE would programme, produce and host a wide array of works of various genres and across different media, responding both to external solicitations and to a will and need to continue earlier events. By grounding its programming on what we have called a «curatorship of lack», or rather a «curatorship of lacks» (since they were many of them, and specific to each case), through her programme-manifesto Madalena Perdigão inaugurates a space which, rather than being *filled* by its own identity, is open to what «is lacking», willing to be marked by this openness and to use it as means to leave its mark on an era.

The notion of «lack» (or «gap» or «lacuna») seems to have already been at the centre of Madalena Perdigão's previous work, or at least of her assessment of it in 1989, near the end of her life: in an interview with João de Freitas Branco, already in her role as the director of the ACARTE, she claims that the foundation of the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Choir and Ballet (created in the 1960s, when Perdigão directed the Music Department of the Foundation) were not part of the initial pro-

gramme outlined for the Department, having emerged as a response to «lacunae» identified in the Portuguese musical milieu (Branco 1989, 19).

When and how the notion of «lack» becomes central to her action could only be pinpointed through a detailed analysis of both her professional trajectory and her complete writings, which is beyond the scope of this book. But if we return to the polemics that seem to have led to Madalena Perdigão's dismissal from the FCG in 1974, it is precisely this concept (and its perversion) that grounds one of the main criticisms aimed at her actions. The emphasis on «what is lacking», when such lack is unambiguously enunciated, may also have wayward consequences. Because, paradoxically, by placing the emphasis on lack one risks, on the one hand, actually instituting it (one knows only too well that the lack instituted by the discourse of power often coincides with lack understood in the sense of «being in debt»); and, on the other hand, it opens the door for interpretations of one's action whereby the latter, perceived as a form of *work*, would appear closed from the outset – inasmuch as it is directed in the univocal sense of filling the said lacuna.

Mário Vieira de Carvalho, one of the main critics of Madalena Perdigão's project within the Music Department, refers precisely to this notion when he says, in May 1974, apropos this Department, that «a Foundation cannot simply become what is lacking, but needs to create the financial conditions for the lack to emerge» (*apud* Vargas 2011, 430). Vieira de Carvalho accuses the Gulbenkian of, among other things, becoming too central to the musical life of the country, to the extent that «the musical country [would have been] reduced to the spaces of the Foundation». For the then music critic – whose position at the time can be seen as expressing a «vision of cultural activity close to the positions of the Portuguese Communist Party in a period of open struggle for power» (Vargas 2011, 432) – the Gulbenkian Music Department functioned essentially as a «third force [in relation to the already existing state and private initiatives] acting mainly through competitive mechanisms: a) competition with existing orchestras, by creating a new orchestra, and competition with existing semi-professional choirs by creating a new choir; b) competition with official and private entities that promote concerts, in hosting an array of musical performances; c) competition with other venues by constructing new venues» (*ibid*, 428). Thus, its activity tended to develop «in concentric circles of progressively smaller areas until they virtually coincide with the space occupied in Lisbon by the Avenida de Berna facilities [i.e. the Gulbenkian buildings]», instead of what would have been, as he saw it, a more pro-

ductive and supportive approach: «the promotion of groups such as the Quarteto do Porto or the Grupo de Música Contemporânea de Lisbon» (*ibid.*).

In *Música e Poder: Para Uma Sociologia da Ausência da Música Portuguesa no Contexto Europeu*, António Pinho Vargas (2011) devotes a chapter to the analysis of how the FCG's action had been perceived as pivotal to the Portuguese cultural field, especially the musical field, arguing that said action was defined by an «ambivalence [towards] both the dissemination and promotion of Portuguese music and towards the active promotion of a knowledge of the canon in Portugal» (*ibid.*, 421). This work pays particular attention to the way the Gulbenkian positions itself in the face of the dichotomy «inside/outside», and thus, by placing emphasis on a territory that has always been permeable, one in which Portugal appears as something other than a hermetic or stagnant entity, supplying some important clues to an understanding of what may be at stake in enunciating what is «lacking». However, the place of enunciation occupied by the ACARTE Department, even if it originates in the same institution, is quite different from the one occupied by the Music Department and the Gulbenkian Head Office Building. This difference needs to be attended to. Moreover, different times also make a difference.

By not competing with other entities, as mentioned in line 3 of its programme, «inside or outside the Foundation» (such as the Music Department), and by not founding or supporting established companies, focusing instead on supporting specific and incidental projects, which were growing in number at the time, as a strategy to respond to what «is lacking», the ACARTE, to an extent, met Vieira de Carvalho's criticism about the Music Department, trying not to repeat old «mistakes». However, one might also understand its action as a prefiguration of a future path towards what is nowadays a «project-based» funding of the arts, a «grant-giving» stance with no continuity between projects, leading to a precarisation of (artistic) work. One should keep in mind, however, that the fact that a Gulbenkian Orchestra, Ballet and Choir *already* existed in 1983, when the ACARTE department was founded, on the eve of the creation of a State Secretariat for Culture<sup>35</sup> (autonomous from the Ministry of Education and the Council of Ministers), helps to contextualise that creation.

While one can discern from Mário Vieira de Carvalho's criticism that the places and cultural forms that flourished around the ACARTE, however cos-

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35 Subsequently, between 1981 and 1985, it would be once again promoted to a Ministry of Culture, and then demoted to a Secretariat of State of Culture from 1985 to 1995.

mopolitan, interdisciplinary and multicultural they may have been, would prove incapable of altering the elitist structure of Portuguese culture if they could not extend beyond the Gulbenkian offices at Avenida de Berna, one should nonetheless emphasise that the aforementioned «openness to lack» seems to widen the scope of this Department well beyond its walls. This is all the more relevant if this action is understood alongside and in connection with a series of other democratic and democratising practices and institutions which, though in fits and starts, do come into play on multiple fronts. A description of these practices should be overlaid with the aforementioned map of the cultural sphere in which recently opened shopping centres, occupied land, nightclubs, touristic beaches and suburban trains, far from belonging to apparently distinct and insurmountable realities and times, intersect each other as possible spaces for the construction of a *common* – the same common that would turn the Gulbenkian into «our Gulbenkian». And a common, one should add, that we should attend to, in the various ways in which it is put into practice, so as to contribute to the construction of, to borrow Esposito's phrase, a new and necessary lexicon.

## Programming or curating?

If, according to Esposito's definition, lack is always «incurable»<sup>36</sup> (since it is defined, precisely, by a voiding of property in its negative form, by a coming-out-of-itself), why would one propose, as a way of characterising Madalena Perdigão's *modus operandi*, the notion of curatorship rather than programming, or even, more simply, of direction?

Having at her disposal a clearly defined Department and its facilities, for which she outlined a programme, Madalena Perdigão was undoubtedly a «programmer» even before this term entered into common usage.<sup>37</sup> But the indepen-

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36 To use a term employed by Jan Ritsema in the magazine *Fracija*, in a special issue on the topic «curating performing arts» (Ritsema 2010, 6).

37 According to António Pinto Ribeiro, one might even claim that Madalena Perdigão – having at her disposal «an effective cultural facility, a budget which, though never very large was increased for several seasons by the chairman of the board of directors (who supervised the ACARTE), and a programming manifesto and a degree of organisation» – was the first Portuguese cultural programmer of the 1980s (Ribeiro 2007, 371).

dent style of event organisation and initiatives that the ACARTE pursued, very different from the rest of the Gulbenkian complex, namely the Head Office, and the fact that its field of action is outlined on the basis of the space that lies «beyond the Museum galleries»,<sup>38</sup> will bring it closer to what has been called the expanded field of curatorship.

From the Latin «curare» – «to care for» – the term seems to have evolved in the English language to the term «guardian», in the sense of «one who cares for/has the care of someone or something». While in the 14<sup>th</sup> century «curare» would refer, first and foremost, to «persons unable to take care of themselves», such as minors or the insane (Fowle 2007, 26), or take on religious connotations, referring to the person in charge of the care of souls, in 1661 the term was already used to denote the person in charge of a bookshop, a zoo, a museum or an exhibition space, with hierarchical connotations. The curator presided over the destinies of something, in a close relationship between care and control (*ibid.*). As Kate Fowle and Rebecca Schneider (Schneider 2010) tell us, only belatedly did the word refer directly to the museum space, and it was only in 1870 that the *Oxford Dictionary* included it in the sense of «To act as a curator of (a museum, exhibits, etc.); to look after and preserve» (*ibid.*, 65).

The interconnections between care and control were extensively studied by Michel Foucault, for whom the Paris General Hospital was «a sort of semi-judicial structure, an administrative entity which, along with the already constituted powers, and outside of the courts, decides, judges and executes» (Foucault *apud* Fowle 2007, 26). The scope of action of a museum or public gallery would then be the administration or governance of culture as much as the care and preservation of works. Fowle stresses the imbrication between the pedagogical and political action of the museum in which works belonging to the local hierarchy are exhibited, reinforcing social distinctions, and the purpose of caring for the culture of the population, whose «manners would become more delicate and less rude» by virtue of frequenting these places (*ibid.*). Without conflating the philanthropic and the propaganda gestures, the author recalls how art and exhibitions can fulfil propaganda goals, offering as an illustration of this the 1917 Soviet Union (where, for example, exhibition-trains circulated to carry news of the Revolution to the peasants) or the exhibitions that, in Nazi Germany, served to disseminate and/or help

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38 This phrase serves as the title of a text by Madalena Perdigão included in the catalogue that accompanies the ACARTE's participation in the 1985 *Exposição-Diálogo* (Perdigão 1985).

control moral and social standards (the best known of which was the *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibition, an indictment of modern art).

The author specifies that by being in charge of researching, acquisition, documentation and the public exhibition of art, the curator becomes a disseminator of taste and information, which means that, in the process, they «refine» themselves and become «connoisseurs». Taking MoMA as an example, whose construction was the result of a social process of personal self-fulfilment for its founders, Fowles links the process of becoming a «connoisseur» with what Foucault called «the care of the self», a set of practices performed since ancient Greece among the small, cultivated elites, for whom the «art of existence» could be achieved only through this process of «caring» for oneself. For Foucault, this would end up cementing itself as a social practice, giving rise to relations, conventions and institutions that developed and circulated through a set of procedures, practices and formulas of (self) regulation.

Keeping with the example of MoMA, now through the figure of its first director, Alfred H. Barr – who travelled across Europe and Russia and studied at Princeton and Harvard, where he became familiar with methods of analysis that focused on the syntax of isolated works – Fowle sees in the figure of the curator-connoisseur the ultimate example of this «care of the self». However, for Barr it would be less a question of enlightening the masses than of placing the «sanctity» of the immaculate space of the *white cube* (as it would later be called) at the service of the autonomy of the work of art, both controlling and caring for what might (or might not) be considered worthy of attention. Barr would become one of the first and most widely celebrated curators and would receive awards on several occasions for his contribution to the study of modern art, whose movements and key artists he helped to establish, thereby helping to create a narrative cemented during the Cold War period which remains hegemonic to this day.

From the 1950s onwards a number of artist-led initiatives contributed to a shift in the exhibition scene. And they did so in terms of what is exhibited and the spaces of exhibition, but also at the level of the curatorial function, now distributed in a less hierarchical way by artists' committees.<sup>39</sup> The perception of the role of the public also shifted, from spectator to participant. One example of this, from 1952 onwards, is the London Independent Group, gathered around the

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39 An example of this, still in the early 1950s, is the Hansa Gallery, founded in 1952 by students of Hans Hoffman such as Jean Follet, Allan Kaprow and George Segal.



Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA). Made up of artists, critics and architects who claimed to be anti-elitist and anti-academic and who examined the links between high and low culture (among them Herbert Read, the main theorist of Education Through Art, which is thus tied to the activity of a concrete space, the ICA), they transformed this place into a forum for debate and discussion, organising talks, lectures and film screenings.

From the 1960s onwards, the understanding of the curator's role was virtually emptied of the charitable and authoritarian sense that had doubly defined it, opening itself to reinterpretations and becoming both more flexible and more vulnerable. It is against this background that curators such as the Swiss Harald Szeemann or the American Walter Hoops, nowadays regarded as the first «independent» curators, would begin to operate (Fowle 2007, 29).

In the exhibition *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form: Works-Processes-Concepts-Situations-Information*, organised in 1969 by Harald Szeemann, the then director of the Kunsthalle Berne, the gallery space would be converted into a studio, hosting actions and installations that would spill out into the street. According to Bruce Altshuler (1998), this exhibition, with works by some 70 artists including Joseph Beuys, Carl Andre, Allighero Boetti, Mario Merz, Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer and Eva Esse, would mark the beginning of what he calls the rise of the «curator as creator», an understanding of curatorship as in itself an eminently experimental, critical practice.

Having left his position at the Kunsthalle (where the board of trustees did not approve of his methods) shortly after this exhibition, Szeemann developed projects for a series of other museums, galleries, biennials and unconventional spaces, the best known of which would be the curatorship of «Documenta 5», in 1972, conceived as a 100-day event. Perceiving the practice of organising exhibitions as something autonomous from the regular programming of the institutions, Szeemann prefigured, to an extent, the emergence of the figure of the curator as we understand it today: as someone who, responding to a specific context, provides an occasion for the ideas, works and interests of artists to gain visibility; someone who, with experimental inclinations akin to those of artists, enters into a dialogue with their time. Pointing out the many tasks that the development of the role of independent curator would involve over time, Fowle stresses that Szeemann would never refer to himself as a «curator», but would rather use the expression *Ausstellungsmacher* or «exhibition maker», describing his roles as those of «administrator, amateur, author of introductions, librarian, manager and accountant,

animator, conservator, financier and diplomat» (*apud* Fowle 2007, 32). The vulgarisation of the term would thus come relatively late, and the recent wave of books, magazines, conferences and postgraduate courses on curatorship, both a cause and a symptom of this, generated a new context in which exhibitions rather than works gain artistic autonomy.

Putting forward the notion of the «expanded field of curatorship», the author proposes a re-reading of «Sculpture in the Expanded Field», Rosalind Krauss' famous 1970s essay in *October* (Krauss 1979) that mapped a series of new artistic practices (precisely the ones sponsored by Szeemann), suggesting that where one reads «sculpture» one should read «exhibition». Curatorship, which increasingly includes the production of temporary works, publications, residencies and events (with a single exhibition/presentation, for example), would thus be an expanded field requiring more than mere management or care, in the sense of looking after the works or administering the museum. It calls for an attitude of permanent dialogue and questioning, keeping an eye on where ideas may flourish, on art works, exhibitions, on the formation and reformulation of opinions, and also a sense of anticipation of their effects both in the art world and in society in general, increasingly focused on the immaterial and the relational rather than the artistic object itself.

It is in the light of this expanded sense of the term that I wish to address the action of Madalena Perdigão in the ACARTE Department, thus helping to situate it within the framework of current debates on curatorship, performance, museums and culture as a *commons*.

## 5.

### MUSEUM AND PERFORMANCE

As a series of recent initiatives carried out by contemporary art museums demonstrate, we are at a moment when the body, live and in action, not only in performance art but also in contemporary dance or even the theatre, has been invited to come through the main door of the Museum and is welcomed into its exhibitions. A careful genealogy of this turn, looking for its precedents, may well include the ACARTE under Madalena Perdigão. But such a genealogy should look out for the specific elements brought about by the live presence of the body in the museum space, underscoring how this changed the usual way in which the museum is performed, altering the ways in which it lays out things to be seen and performed, mobilising new affective and epistemological territories and questioning the order of things.

This, as mentioned above, presupposes an understanding of the museum as a dynamic knowledge platform, simultaneously a heterotopia and part and parcel of an exhibitionary complex. This means framing it not as the assemblage of what a culture wants to preserve and put on display, but as a living series of «events» made possible by the arrangement of things and their meanings across temporal dispersions, overlaps, zones of contact and points of convergence – which, as Noémie Solomon (2012) warns us, should not obscure the structuring role of the museum as a powerful *dispositif* for the maintenance and dissemination of hegemonic forms of power. Articulating the description of the *epistemes* – that is, the various ways in which things and bodies have been and continue to be known and understood, as laid out in Foucault's *The Order of Things* with the transformations the museum has undergone over time – Solomon stresses that these cannot be perceived as belonging to completely and radically different historical periods. There are, instead, overlapping orders.

Therefore, and even though for Foucault the museum as heterotopia, as we know it today, with its «desire to contain all times, all ages, all forms» (Foucault

1998, 182) belongs to the classic *episteme*, one should bear in mind how the institution of the Museum has organised knowledge differently over time, as well as how it can embody various epistemological orders simultaneously. Or, in other words: the museum can be understood as, in the words of Beth Lord, «exhibiting not so much objects, but the ways in which these relate to words, names and concepts: making systems of representation visible» (*apud* Solomon 2012, 32-33). By means of complex systems of collection, organisation, cataloguing and animation, the museum makes *the orders of things* visible. But if the meaning of things is not contained in the things themselves, it is their *assemblage* that gives them meaning. According to Solomon, this opens up a field of research that includes the study of experimental museums and the assemblages of heterogeneous elements that they propose.<sup>40</sup> This is the kind of framework the present study fits into.

If «museum» and «performance» are two words seemingly in tension, this interest in the live presence of the body in the museum space raises a number of questions, both on a symbolic level – why are museums nowadays so interested in the body in performance? – and in terms of modes of production – how can they present these «living bodies», and how can they ensure reproductive tasks that are essential to it, or project their presence in a space traditionally intended for the exhibition of objects?

In this regard, it is symptomatic that in Marina Abramovic's retrospective at MoMA in 2010 several performers fainted due to excessively long hours of work and the nature of the tasks they were asked to perform. More and more museums, accustomed to dealing with art objects rather than with persons, use performing arts producers to meet to the challenges posed by the recurrent presence of performances and performing arts in the museum.<sup>41</sup>

One of the criticisms that has often been levelled in this context concerns precisely the regimes of labour exploitation, framed by the post-Fordist turn, pointing

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40 This is the terrain of Solomon's research on the Musée de la Danse, the project by Boris Charmatz, who, when taking over the direction of the Centre Chorégraphique National de Rennes et de Bretagne in 2009, suggested replacing the word «centre», then the word «choreographic» and then the word «national», and renamed the institution, simply, as «Musée de la Danse». Charmatz's gesture may be seen as an echo of the curatorial shift towards performance, which brought exhibition spaces traditionally associated with the visual arts closer to the worlds of dance and theatre – which in turn became increasingly interested in these spaces. But it can also be seen as sign of the growing interest in the public exhibition of counter-narratives, of which the work undertaken by the network of museums L'Internationale and theorised by Claire Bishop (2013) in *Radical Museology* is exemplary.

41 «Dance and the Museum», a collection of statements published by Movement Research, seeks to further investigate some of these links. Cf. Levine and Daunic (2014).

out the permanent and ongoing need that many of these spaces seem to have for presenting more and more activities, performance being an apparently cheap and quick way of «animating» their programmes.

Bringing living bodies, whether in shows, performances or debates and conferences, into the museum space was precisely what the ACARTE Department did, transforming the museum into a culture centre. The CAM included the Museum of Modern Art and the ACARTE, the latter operating *beyond the museum galleries*, under the direct supervision of the Board of Directors, which guaranteed «a total separation between the policy of acquisition of works of art [by the CAM] and the policy of cultural activities [by the ACARTE]» (Grande 2014).

Although they share the building, there is a sizeable difference between what is presented in the galleries of the Museum of Modern Art, under the direction of Sommer Ribeiro, and what is presented in the rest of its space, by the ACARTE Department, under the direction of Madalena Perdigão. A difference, namely, in terms their respective places of enunciation – one which, in a strict sense, could be said to derive from a difference in the means of circulation. While the museum's galleries are directly linked to the visual arts scene and to the works of the then newly-built Modern Art collection, the ACARTE Department might at first glance seem to be linked, rather, to the sphere of action of an «Educational Department» in the worst sense of the term, that is, as an *ad hoc* element «at the service» of the museum's exhibitions, often with the abstract purpose of attracting audiences, without ever being involved in the exhibition or being truly a part of it – something, in other words, easily dispensable.<sup>42</sup>

This point of view, as we shall see, is not only insufficient to understand the ACARTE'S action, but is in fact inaccurate, since the project of this Department – a Department autonomous from the Museum but under the direct tutelage of the Foundation's Board of Directors – was not limited to the animation of the Museum's exhibitions, but was rather invested in turning the CAM into a «cultural centre in the true sense of the term», contributing «to the expansion of artistic creation» and «to the progress of education through art»; as well as to «the communication between the work of art and the public» (Perdigão 1989),

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42 On this issue, see the section on the CAI – Centro Artístico Infantil [Children's Art Centre] (chapter 10). In the CAI not only were there annual training courses for teachers in the area of the so-called «expressions» (drama, music, visual arts, philosophy, storytelling, etc.) but it also collaborated with institutions and schools from all over the country (to create play libraries, travelling exhibitions and projects, among other things).

defining a new stage in the cultural action of the FCG, now in a democratic context.

The ACARTE Department, whose creation is linked to the construction of the southern part of the Gulbenkian complex and to the reconfiguration of the FCG's action in the post-revolutionary period, should be understood within this framework. In the words of its founder, «the Portuguese cultural scene was lacking a Department focused on contemporary culture and/or a modern approach to timeless themes, as well as a Centre for Education Through Art aimed at children». The ACARTE, grounded in the Museum but extending beyond its collection, continuing the work of supporting artistic creation that had underpinned its foundation, would come under the supervision – the care – of the «curator» Madalena Perdigão. This allows us to draw a more direct parallel between our analysis of the ACARTE's scope of action and the present moment, which will hopefully prove useful to gauge some of the implications of its activities, bearing in mind, in particular, the decisive role played by the ACARTE in making the CAM into a cultural centre rather than simply a museum.

But one could pursue other analytical routes. Going in the opposite direction, trying to trace clear disciplinary borders (an approach alien to the ACARTE and the epistemological tradition of understanding art to which it belongs), one could underline the discontinuity of places of enunciation, stressing the difference between the Museum and a Department whose scope of action lies *beyond* the space of the museum galleries (though located in the same building); or the fact that Perdigão does not claim the term «curator» or even «programmer» for herself; the way in which the ACARTE's programming continues the Music Department's project and efforts in the sphere of Education Through Art.

From this point of view, the action of the ACARTE would be entirely the result of very specific circumstances and could hardly be placed in parallel with the present time or allow questions coming from present experience to throw light on it. Unless – and this is the key reason for this attempt to establish a connection – it was perceived in terms of the specificity of the space and time in which something that would place it in this relation was at play. As if the particular space of the ACARTE, with its openness to lack – inside the recently opened CAM building, alongside the galleries of the museum of modern art, in Lisbon, in 1980s Portugal – and, albeit inadvertently, as a result of the particular history of the country, occupied the same temporal frame as the era in which the aforementioned *performative turn* moves from the margins to the centre and in which there is a mass

shift from an economy of the production of objects to an economy where what is at stake is the production of subjectivities able to acquire/consume what was produced, whether material or immaterial. This framework would place the ACARTE in relation to other historical trajectories, allowing us to widen the scope and range of the questions it raises. An analysis of this kind enables us to situate its action within the space of a museum that is an integral part of the metropolis as a social factory, that is to say, understood as a site where raw materials are found and commodities circulate; where the workforce is cooperatively mobilised and consumption takes place, feeding the global economy. Prefiguring the role of the museum as the epitome of the «creative city» paradigm<sup>43</sup> in an era marked by the generalisation of a mode of work that is as much material, in the effective and affective gestures of those who carry it out, as it is a form of so-called immaterial production of ideas, services, concepts.

*«Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive?»*

While it is true that museums' current interest in performance seems to be related to (and/or reflect) the current shift in the labour sphere towards immaterial work, the quintessential figure of which would be the «virtuoso» or the performer – the one whose work needs an audience and is accomplished through a masterly performance (Virno 2004) – it is equally true that the presence of the body in action in the museum space seems to offer some resistance to this framework. This is the question addressed in «Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive? The new performance turn, its histories and its institutions», an event organised at the *Para-Site* gallery in Hong Kong in April 2014, where the set of issues raised by this relation is very eloquently systematised. In the programme notes, one reads: while «the past twenty years have seen contemporary dance emerging as a new field of discourse and thinking», one which «has produced some of the most powerful works of our times, reflecting the major intellectual directions and changes in the world over these decades», the «writing within and about these developments is still in its infancy», bearing in mind that these areas have only recently entered the institutional sphere of contemporary art, with more and more museums, art cen-

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43 On this issue, see Steyerl (2009).

tres and biennials taking an interest in them (Costinas and Janevski 2014). Addressing the performative turn that brought dance into the museum, and focusing on «the economic and political conditions behind this shift» it acknowledges «that ‘performance’ has a double meaning, as a live element in the arts and as a reference to economic productivity». This points us towards the ways in which these performative practices seem, on the one hand, to resist the process of commodification that has been taking over the art world (a world based on art «objects») and, on the other hand, the ways in which they are privileged products for the immaterial plane of the economy, memory being one of its main commodities.

Addressing the «proliferation of living bodies in exhibition spaces, and of dance in museum programs», the programme questions performance «as a new instrument of curating and organizing meaning», while also asking «whether there has been a crisis of the vocabulary of curating that has been conveniently suspended by the energy of performance». Looking more specifically at the museum, it considers the issue of the acquisition of these ‘immaterial’ works with a view towards their future exhibition; and in addressing unknown (because marginal or peripheral) decentralised histories of performance art, it seeks to understand «how and why these histories are being recuperated, translated and integrated or on the contrary excluded from the new institutional realities of contemporary art. Which histories are privileged, and which ones are dismissed? Does the new paradigm of performance need these histories and are these histories legitimate historical precedents for this new paradigm? Or is the new performance turn too much a product of our times and its roots in the performance art of the late avant-garde too vague?»

It seems undeniable that there is «a history of performance art as a category of visual art», one that has been «written for a longer period of time, and [...] composed of multiple, fragmentary and geographically dispersed stories, many of them marking older turning points in their respective contexts, be it around the 1950s in Japan, 1960s and 1970s throughout Latin America and Eastern Europe, 1980s in China, or the 1990s in parts of South East Asia and Eastern Europe». One would gain, then, by approaching them as interconnected, grasping them as elements useful to an understanding of the present moment and of the performative turn. A global art history that would attempt not to narrate the successive conformity of the peripheries to the supposedly stable centres where canons are formed, but would instead disclose decentred, divergent and overlapping geographies and chronologies.



A look at the specific case of the ACARTE, seeing it as potentially an integral part of this history and taking into account the particulars of its action, would corroborate this hypothesis, and could perhaps help us to trace it in finer lines, as well as to bring the specificities of the Portuguese case into the equation. From this point of view, it is as if, through its desire to turn the CAM into a cultural centre, and to avoid, perhaps, competing either with the Museum itself (whose programming was much less permeable to young artists or their conceivably interdisciplinary practices), or with the Music Department (which was in charge of the Ballet, the Choir and the Orchestra) or even with the Fine Arts Department (which included the Theatre), the ACARTE Department had ended up welcoming the turn to the performative, the discursive and the relational, which only much later would come in through the front door of the museum and join the then emerging circuit of performing arts (European contemporary dance in particular). It is in this later context that the figure of the programmer comes to the fore.

## Performing arts: programming or curation

In «Shuffling the Deck, Shifting Positions – Curating as Environmentalism», an essay published in the issue of the Performance Arts magazine *Frakcja* devoted to *Curating Performance Arts*, Elke Van Campenhout seeks to address a number of recent practices that have grown out of, and in opposition to, the programming style of the performing arts institutions that had emerged in the 1980s. These are starkly different from the theatre companies that marked the Postwar era, which had firm roots in the city they were located in, where they would extend a given repertoire for a long period of time; or from National Theatres, which in specific periods would include companies from other nations in their programming; or even from the independent university theatre groups that marked the Long Sixties' counterculture.

For Florian Malzacher (Malzacher 2010), Gabrielle Brandesetter and a number of other protagonists in the world of the performing arts over the last thirty years (Brandesetter *et al.* 2010), the emergence of a new type of performing arts in the 1980s and, with them, new practices in both the programming and the dissemination of performances, was grounded on a set of major changes in the economy of these arts. To wit: new forms of organisation and the decline of the

company model; the emergence of theatre forms that do not fit into traditional structures and whose reception is far from straightforward, demanding instead a form of specialised criticism and communication; the link with interdisciplinary institutions labelled as art centres whose construction, especially in the Flanders region, multiplies throughout this period; a growing internationalisation of the arts scene and the exponential growth of the number of festivals, increasingly perceived as events in themselves, autonomous from the institutions that host them. It was against this background that the figure of the performing arts programmer would become widespread, as a cultural intermediary who, in giving visibility to artists, creates and constructs him or herself.

Inscribing these changes into the history of the performing arts in Europe, Brandsetter traces a continuity between the emergence of the figure of the programmer in the performing arts scene and a series of radical experiments in the European university theatre of the 1960s and 1970s that would lead to the creation of the first off-site spaces and the emergence of new forms of theatre, closer to dance and to the performance art experience. This was the period marked by figures such as Ritsaert Ten Cate or Hugo de Greef, in the Netherlands (spaces and figures which the ACARTE would contextualize in its programs and leaflets, namely in the 1988 «Mostra de Teatro Holandês» [Dutch Theatre Showcase]), who from the end of the 1980s would coin the aforementioned «new» style of programming that Campenhout was referring to. It was also the time when the figure of the dance dramaturg became more common, while new critics emerged and programmers gained prominence – a host of figures that often coincide or which would later tend to converge. For Malzacher, it was in and through the concrete «making» of this new type of performance aesthetics that this first generation of programmers and producers, but also critics, technicians and even artists, would be formed. In his view, this first generation became, on the whole, more bound to the institutions and to the institutional way of operating they helped to shape, whereas the current generation of independent curators – no longer programmers, but curators in the truest sense –, a product of the former (whom they served as assistants or apprentices), is less attached to institutions, either because there was no place for them there or for reasons related to the current labour mobility and the expansion of an increasingly international market.

Although it does not fit into the context of a reaction to the emergence of the figure of the programmer in the 1980s and 1990s, Perdigão's action can nevertheless be placed in relation to the initiatives carried out at the time by «other entities,

inside or outside the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation», with which the ACARTE claims not to compete. Thus, the latter also responded to the company model, placing itself at the epicentre of a moment when new forms of theatre were emerging in Europe and, later, when new art centres equipped with smaller and more versatile rooms. And this against the background of a growing internationalisation of the art scene and an exponential increase in festivals, thought of as nodes in a network where the territory is no longer simply that of the nation. Perdigão's style of programming would thus be markedly different from that of the rest of the Gulbenkian Complex – in which there were resident companies and a programming structured around «seasons». This difference was not always welcomed, inasmuch as it represented, to a degree, an institutional «break», as many of the interviewees put it.<sup>44</sup> Her action, in turn, would mostly be organised around multidisciplinary thematic cycles where a topic, an interrogation or a figure served as the trigger for a range of events. It also was often the case that initiatives called for a follow-up, either to accompany the trajectory of a particular artist, or because once the event was over there was a sense that it should be further explored: to map out artistic peers, discern influences and affinities, provide context. Furthermore, the ACARTE would often external proposals, produce or present shows, debates, cycles and events deemed fundamental by those who submitted them to MAP. Very near the end of her life, Madalena Perdigão went on to say that the ACARTE's activity had, for the most part, stabilised (Branco 1989):

The ACARTE's activity has, for the most part, stabilised: «Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro/Dança da Europa» [Acarte Encounters – New Theatre Dance of Europe] in September; Jazz in August; Fanfare Bands in the Amphitheatre in August/September; Dance in the Open Air Amphitheatre in July; two seasons of Contemporary Dance a year (usually May and November); theatre by Portuguese artists (twice a year, once in October); Lunch Time Concerts in May/June and, «in the interim», multidisciplinary projects, performances, puppet shows, film screenings for children, video screenings, etc.

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44 In this context, I conducted interviews with the following persons: António Augusto Barros, António Pinto Ribeiro, Arquimedes da Silva Santos, George Grugmans, Carlos Zíngaro, Eugénia Vasques, Fernando Aguiar, Gil Mendo, Hilde Teuchies, João Fiadeiro, João Pinharanda, Jorge Listopad e Helena Simões, Jorge Silva Melo, José Oliveira Barata, Luiz Francisco Rebello, Margarida Bettencourt, Maria de Assis, Mark Deputter, Mercedes Vostell, Molissa Fenley, Natália Pais, Orlando Garcia, Orlando Worm, Paulo Brandão, Paulo Graça, Rui Neves, Tiago Porteiro, Vera Mantero, Wim Vandekeybus, Zepe (José Pedro Cavalheiro).

Even so, as one can infer from this passage, what had «stabilised» were the thematic areas of the programme, not its specific contents. And there was still room («in the interim») for the unforeseen, where «multidisciplinary projects, performances, puppet shows, cinema screenings for children, video screenings, etc.» would come in. While the passage allows us to discern how a certain periodicity and some clusters of interest had become established by 1989, it also suggests that things had not always been like this, and hints at a degree of openness even if things had seemingly reached a point of stability.

As a programmer and producer, commissioner of works and employer of artists and technicians for one-time events, the ACARTE will be singled out as one of the agents of the structural change that the «world of theatre» was undergoing in this period: the emergence of the freelance artist as well as of the «project-based» model (Vasques 1998; Serôdio 2013; Borges 2007). Although the action of the ACARTE placed a strong emphasis on the performing arts (and, among these, on contemporary dance in particular, with three seasons per year, not counting the «Encontros ACARTE»), it would also host Fanfare Bands in the open air amphitheatre (where bands from all over the country performed); organise «Lunchtime Concerts» (where young musicians made their debut) and «World Music» evenings (a concept that disseminates widely precisely at this time); arrange complementary activities around the CAM exhibitions; and put together the iconic «Jazz em Agosto» [Jazz in August] festival, which is still going on today. Besides having a Children's Art Centre with regular activities extended also throughout the country, it organised conferences, courses, workshops, a regular «Jornal Falado de Actualidade Literária» [Spoken Literary News] (from 1988), regular animated film courses and showcases; produce shows and events; co-organise international events such as the Performance/Theatre/Dance programme of the Exhibition-Dialogue on Contemporary Art organised by the Council of Europe in 1985; or, in what was perhaps its biggest initiative, co-programme, with the Springdance Festival (Netherlands) and Inteatro Polveriggi (Italy), the Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro Dança da Europa [New European Dance Theatre], from 1987 onwards.

PART III

# Architectures of Culture



## 6.

### ARCHITECTURES OF CULTURE

In *Arquitecturas da Cultura* (2009) Nuno Grande addresses the genesis and architecture of four cultural venues built at four distinct moments in the country's history – the Head Office of the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (1969), the Centro de Arte Moderna José Azeredo Perdigão (1983), the Centro Cultural de Belém (1992) and the Fundação de Serralves (1999). Tracing the history of each of these buildings and unearthing their underlying architectural principles, the author problematises the various ways in which the term «culture» is perceived and put into practice – an exercise in cultural history. Thus, in and through the troubled narrative of the construction of these facilities, he claims, one could «read» the history of cultural policies in Portugal, both when they took place outside – or alongside and besides – the sphere of the state, as was the case of the FCG, during the Estado Novo, and when they were erected as monuments to epitomise a regime, as in the case of the CCB during «Cavaquismo». According to the author, in contemporary Portugal, the creation of these great edifices would fulfil the late project of cultural modernisation, though it did so out of step with the times, «in historical periods that paradoxically demanded an accelerated approximation to postmodern models of acculturation» – leading to an overlay between modernity and postmodernity. Thus, borrowing the notion of «short circuit» put forward by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1994), Grande claims that these facilities would function in Portuguese society as the consummation of «the promises of modernity in a short circuit with the emerging promises of postmodernity» (*ibid.*, 21). Through a brief incursion into notions of culture, art, and cultural policies in the 20th century, I will survey some of these promises and place them in their proper contexts so as to better understand what is at stake in the ACARTE project.

Grounded on David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Harvey 1990), Grande traces this historical trajectory back to the «Glorious Thirty», the

period between the end of the 1940s and the mid-1970s, the era in which war-torn European metropolises were rebuilt and a cosmopolitan urban existence resumed. This was supposed to be a period of political and social optimism, founded on the transformation of the methods and forms of industrial production and on broadening habits of consumption, work and leisure among increasingly urban populations. Drawing methodological lessons from the war experience – «tactical planning, mass production and rapid distribution of goods across the territory», among others – postwar Europe would try to revive its shaken (and long-lasting) project of modernity by creating state regulatory mechanisms and, within them, policies for managing regions, cities and institutions (*ibid.*, 30). The goal was, simultaneously, to fend off totalitarian inclinations such as those that had led to the war, and, in a Europe about to be split in half by an «iron curtain», to curb the possibility of Marxist-inspired social uprisings.

The model for the reconstruction of Europe (an articulation between the welfare state and philanthropic capitalism) through the Marshall Plan, already in the context of the Cold War, was inspired by the American New Deal launched by Roosevelt in the wake of the 1929 Great Depression in the US and was labelled «consensus liberalism» (Nehring 2004). From 1948 to 1951, the Marshall Plan invested US\$14 billion across 16 European countries, with France, Italy, Belgium, the United Kingdom and West Germany receiving the highest financial aid. Despite the differences between governments, a common social-democratic political culture was developed, combining «welfare statism, Fordist-Keynesian economic management and control over wage relations» (*ibid.*). In the divided Cold War world, this new European political culture would have its cultural corollary in the socio-cultural notion of «Western culture», classified as «American» or «Capitalist» in opposition to its «Soviet» or «Communist» counterpart.

Recent studies on the history of the Cold War, however, suggest the need to understand this process in a less dichotomous way, employing the notion of «westernisation» as a counterpoint and correlate to the notion of «Americanisation», thus underling Europe's non-passive role in this process and the latter's continuity with deeply rooted notions such as «Europe», «Culture», «Christianity» or «Civilization». Focusing less on the historiographies of the two superpowers (US and USSR) and framing the Cold War as a world order whose impact on other countries still needs to be studied in detail and in a more decentralised way, westernisation can be seen as the process by which, between



the 1940s (the end of World War II) and the beginning of the 1970s (the Oil Crisis), «a transatlantic community of values, including political, social and economic orders» emerged and spread widely (Nehring 2004, 176). Acknowledging the US state interest in establishing and maintaining the ideological and cultural foundations of the aforementioned «transatlantic community of values» that supposedly defined Western democracies, the author also underlines the active role played by European countries in this process, explaining how the latter was the object of celebrations, rejections and appropriations with contradictory and untried meanings, subject to constant negotiations. Among these contested notions one could include the widespread belief in the «Americanisation» of European countries as well as the shaping of a European self-image as «passive» in this process, which downplays the importance not only of the social challenges of the immediate postwar period but also of the interests of the European elites themselves in this «westernisation», presented as if it were something external – i.e., as «Americanisation».

This process of «westernisation» was far from untroubled. It would be jolted and crossed by various kinds of tensions that need to be addressed in their multiple dimensions: relations between the elites and the masses, low and high culture, national cultures and internationalisation, etc. One would also need to understand its variations over time, rather than as something fixed and clear-cut. The Marshall Plan did not simply aid devastated European countries but also fostered the development of a specific socio-cultural model, a form of «consensual liberalism» based on a «lifestyle» whose main leitmotifs were the concepts of market freedom, freedom of initiative and individual expression, in parallel with consumption and the defence of private property (with a certain degree of state intervention to ensure the pursuit of these goals). At this juncture, policies related to culture and to the dissemination of a positive image of the «rebuilt and democratised» West gained an increased importance; and in the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, citizens' active participation in cultural life is now deemed something integral to human dignity.

The experience of the New Deal, a blend of interventionism by the US state and by the main financial and philanthropic institutions such as the Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations (which served as inspiration for the Gulbenkian) as a response to the 1929 economic crisis, would also impact Europe. In 1935, Franklin Roosevelt's government created the Works Progress Administration, which developed a programme that called artists into the process of equal-

ification of the territory. But it is only with the rise of fascism in Europe, and as a response to notions of «degenerate art», that culture will become an explicit ideological weapon, in the context of World War II. To support this kind of art was equated to fighting fascist obscurantism and «contributing to the victory of *life* (artistic creation) against *death* (Nazi barbarism)» – even though relations between the US (and its industrialists and patrons of the arts) and Nazi Germany between the mid-1930s and the end of World War II are much more complex (Grande 2009, 31). It is against this background, in 1940, that millionaire economist and collector Nelson Rockefeller, founder of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, is asked by Roosevelt to join the government, first in the Office for Inter-American Affairs in Latin America, later in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Europe, having been elected as Vice President of the US in 1947.

## Modern art and peace in Europe

Invoking the thesis presented by Serge Guilbaut in *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art*, Grande claims that, by being founded on the relation between state paternalism and elite philanthropism, 1950s American cultural policy mixed the «anti-Germanic (and later anti-Soviet) diplomacy of government agencies with the interests of the large capitalist corporations», flying the flag of a «defence of the artistic avant-gardes and the creator's individual freedom» (Guilbaut *apud* Grande 2009, 31-32). Thus, modern Western culture would not only survive the great crisis that was World War II, but, to borrow Guilbaut's metaphor, it would be reborn (with a vengeance) elsewhere, that is to say, in the USA. This pivotal shift was a result of the massive immigration of artists and scientists from Europe to the USA, a shift that is offset by the continuous growth of the «North American industrial-military complex» which Dwight D. Eisenhower alludes to in his farewell address to the nation in 1961 (Eisenhower 1961). The works of the artistic avant-gardes that were already known and appreciated in New York by a minority of gallery owners and collectors then became a symbol of freedom and democracy, a process that is bolstered by the arrival in the US of a large number of artists, scientists and critical thinkers fleeing Europe. Cosmopolitan and internationalist Modern Art was supposed to embody the free-

dom experienced in democracy, especially the freedom of expression, and Abstract Expressionism, a pictorial current chosen as a symbol and token, the unequivocal fruit of this individual freedom, was widely supported by American postwar cultural policies, and was widely disseminated internationally. It is through the acquisition of avant-garde works (many of them plundered from the art collections of European Jews and sold on the cheap to American collectors and museums), the construction of new spaces to exhibit them and the organisation of temporary exhibitions of these works that the habit of knowing and keeping up with modern art is formed and spreads in the USA. Their dissemination as part of the new consumer habits of the emerging urban middle classes (in magazines, cinema, advertising...) would have a significant impact, which places the media success of Modern Art, alongside the Hollywood dream factory, at the centre of the «westernisation» process. In this context, Modern Art museums effectively brought about a shift in the architectural and institutional paradigm, becoming exceptional «calling cards» for American diplomacy and the values of «consensual liberalism».

The postwar European reconstruction brought about major changes in architectural and urban paradigms, changes that touch on its philosophical foundations and on the way in which states came to understand the management of the city and its infrastructures. Thus, modernism, which was already some 30 years old at the time, but whose presence in the mainstream was merely sporadic, emerges as a symbol of democratic aspirations. And, in a wayward and troubled process, always accompanied by fierce debates within the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM), the so-called «International Style» developed and would soon be associated with democratic values. It is against the background of these debates that the need to create «useful monuments» was voiced, in other words, collective facilities, woven into the life of the city and the region, that would help to lay out new centres and axes in line with the precepts of the so-called «New Monumentality». In a similar way to what had taken place in the US during the New Deal, where major public works created «monuments» that carried new meanings and social uses, the postwar European reconstruction strengthened the nexus between «monument» and «democracy»: monuments no longer perceived in isolation, as representations of a particular power, or serving a merely decorative function, but rather as part and parcel of a wider system. Throughout the 1950s debates on «modern monumentality» would define discussions around the creation of new civic centres for European communities

where «the creation of a self-referential monumentality would also be associated with the outlines of a new civility» (*ibid.*, 42). As André Malraux phrased it at the time, these were «cathedrals» where democratic culture was celebrated.

If, on the one hand, the museum was the «exact space-time where the historical consciousness of individuals and societies would unfold» and, at the same time, the sensible manifestation of that consciousness; on the other hand, by establishing itself more and more as a laboratory of modern artistic creation, it took part in a progressive process of scientification «from within the laws that governed the visual» (Grande 2009, 43). This experimental or laboratory logic of the museum implies the presence of the work of living artists and, at its limit, the indefinite growth of collections to include works still to come, as well as the transformation of the space itself. It was Le Corbusier who, even prior to World War II, created what he described as the first modernist museological «machine», one in which a horizontal trajectory following the logic of the positivist sequential chronology, is occasionally interrupted by elements such as ramps and staircases. Le Corbusier would insert this museum typology into public green areas, a distinctive mark of his work (Grande 2009, 46). However, it was MoMA – the first museum entirely devoted to Modern Art in the West to be built in the «International Style», a movement that Le Corbusier would help to define – that would play the key role in popularising the notion of the museum as a laboratory. This image is explicitly evoked in the text that accompanied the *Art in Our Time* programme, an exhibition-manifesto that opened in 1939. This laboratorial framework would also generate specific exhibitionary principles – from the famous «white cube» (as it would be later called), to the isolation of the art works in windowless rooms with artificial lighting, completely decontextualized and removed from daily life, as was the public that came to contemplate them. Yet while the contemplation of the works took place in a laboratory setting, access to the Museum, on the other hand, a space located in the heart of urban life, was made easier and more commonplace by the unassuming presence of a glass façade and a lobby, with no staircases or porticos to cross. Modern city life took place, among other things, through the presence of the museum and the contact between the urban dwellers and this space.

By dividing the Museum into departments, a structure close to some North American business organisation models, its first director, the historian and art critic Alfred H. Barr, would lay the foundations for an innovative programme, focused on the acquisition and dissemination of emerging creative works in Europe

and the US in fields such as Architecture, Industrial Design, Cinema, as well as in the various modern art expressions beyond the Visual Arts. And at the inauguration of MoMA, Roosevelt would state that the conditions for the exercise of art and democracy are the same, classifying the museum as a «citadel of civilization» (*ibid*, 50). Three years later, in the midst of war, the museum's Board of Trustees would call its collection a symbol of freedom of expression, qualifying it as «modern», «progressive», «challenging», «international», «leading to understanding and tolerance among nations»: in their own words, all things that «Hitler hates» (Baet *et al.* 1998).

From 1945 onwards, this new type of spatiality, the fruit of European experiments in earlier decades, would find in postwar US (teeming with exiled artists and scientists) the perfect conditions for its actualisation, and would become an «archetype» in the «architecture of culture» – the «MoMA model», «modern», «monumental», «stripped-down» and «ideally democratic» (Grande 2009, 50) – to then be «exported» as a symbol, and reconfigured. It is in the genealogy of these appropriations and re-appropriations of the idea of the Museum of Modern Art that the FCG's CAM should be inscribed, even though it appears in a later period.

## Cultural policies

Meanwhile, in postwar Europe, cultural policies are also being cemented. The ways in which the word «culture» is understood, as well as the important role it comes to play in governing populations, takes on a specific shape in each European country, but they share «consensual liberalism» as a common ground. Humanist in nature, imbued with a belief in «civilisation» and engaged in a reinterpretation of their rationalist and enlightened matrices, postwar public policies would follow a general trend towards the paternalistic action of the state (alongside private philanthropism), in a renewed «territorial/spatial» exercise of power which provides the background to new cultural policies.

In the United Kingdom, with the restructuring of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), headed by economist John Maynard Keynes from 1942 onwards, culture will be invited to the table of major state incentives. Keynes proposes changing the motto of the institution

from «art for the people» to «the best for the most», emphasising the active role of the arts in the process of state «modernisation» and stressing an idea of «quality» that had been previously overlooked. Thus, the amateurish practice of art encouraged in the 1930s by guilds, unions and associations (and which, from a romantic point of view, would be deemed generically «good» or removed from such evaluative considerations), would, in a period of strong market and consumer expansion such as the 1940s, be made into a matter of state and a form of national representation, subject to «quality standards». This change of motto runs parallel to a change in the understanding not only of what art is and who can engage in it, but also of its role in society and the scope of its intervention. Keynes's cultural policy is thus guided by the same interventionist desire that characterises Keynesianism as an economic theory.

In 1946, Clement Atlee's Labour government restructures CEMA under the name Arts Council of Great Britain, acquiring works for a public collection of modern art to allow access to «the best» by «the greater number». This collection, growing as part of an effort to keep abreast of avant-garde developments on both sides of the Atlantic and with wide national and international circulation, stimulated public museums, galleries and independent institutions, making modern art more accessible, explaining it and making it known, in short, making its presence a part of the modern way of life.<sup>45</sup> And the greatest validation of young English creators became the acquisition of their work by the Arts Council Collection, now the touchstone of artistic value. This, on the one hand, alerted political power to the need to support contemporary art, and, on the other hand, nurtured the contestation of «official art» that underpinned the discourse of 1960s counterculture (*ibid.*, 34).

In France, the great postwar social reforms can be traced back to the «spirit» of the coalition of left-wing parties that governed the country between 1936 and 1938 (the *Front Populaire*), a «spirit» that would live on in collective memory as a «re-interpretation» of the ideals of the French revolution – *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* – on the basis of the popularisation of art education. Thus, in 1947 the Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne was inaugurated with great pomp and circum-

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45 Of these institutions, one can single out the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA), founded in London in 1947 by the anarchist, poet and critic Herbert Read (also author of the book *Education Through Art* and a member of the aforementioned Independent Group). Herbert Read's theories on the social importance of art and Education Through Art will have a major impact on the work of Madalena Perdigão as director of the ACARTE.

stance and perceived as a way to continue a project that sprung from the 1937 Paris Universal Exhibition, which the Nazi occupation had interrupted. In this same period, a *Popular Education* programme was launched, of which are the *Centres Dramatiques Nationaux* [National Dramatic Centres], strategically spread across various French regions, are exemplary: it was a matter of creating networks for the dissemination of reading, cinema and dramaturgy, which could thus be decentralised. Another example of this state-sponsored process of decentralisation was the creation, by Jean Avilar, of the Avignon Festival, in 1947. And while until 1959 the management of the French state's cultural affairs is under the tutelage of the Ministry of Education, and remains grounded on the *Associations d'Education Populaire*, regional institutions for the promotion of youth development or educational structures with an associative and amateur nature, structured around programmes of «cultural didacticism» and understood as inseparable from education (*ibid.*, 35), in 1959 President Charles De Gaulle creates the Ministry of Cultural Affairs (*Ministère des Affaires Culturelles*), inviting the writer and intellectual André Malraux to head it.

The creation of this Ministry and the appointment of Malraux proved a decisive turning point in the way the state perceived cultural affairs. The new policy of cultural democratisation – i.e. of promoting widespread access to culture – dispensed with any notion of mediation or pedagogy: it was not a question of cultural education but of a *mise en présence* (a putting-into-presence) of art, artworks and artists. Indeed, Malraux «invented» a public cultural policy in so far as, from then on, the state viewed «cultural affairs» as fundamental vehicles for the modernisation of society, seeing them as an affair of the state, with its own administrative apparatus and resources. Culture now reflected the economic and social project of Gaullism, leading citizens to experience the *grandeur* of France's civilisational past directly, fostering a consciousness and practice of citizenship as an instrument to unify the nation. This means culture played a political role, cementing the secular and modern nature of the state and replacing – through practices, places, symbolic influence, apparatuses – the powers previously represented, namely, by religion. Didacticism and amateurism give way to an effort to «make the major works of humanity accessible, above all of France» (Urfalino *apud* Grande 2009, 35). It is in this context that Malraux erects multi-purpose cultural venues, the *Maisons de la Culture*, a national network of, in his own words, «modern cathedrals» where anyone could come into contact with the national heritage and the «glory and spirit of humanity». In his view, it was essential

to pull Culture «out of Museums, Universities and Academies» into new spaces purposely built for the discovery of «a love of art», a role that he proposed to develop without running the risk of popularising it, since it remained a sacred sphere, of masterpieces framed within a panoramic and chronological approach to the History of Art. In short, it was a question of generalising artistic culture, bringing the public into contact with the artworks (*idem*, 36).

Under the serene surface of the «Glorious Thirty» and its unprecedented economic growth, there lurked an effort to build an *American way of life* – which was also, in fact, a *European Way of Life*. An appeased, conformist society based on a form of organised consumption that would ensure the permanent growth of the economy, while at the same time pushing the so-called «Third World» into destitution, often squandering the planet's natural resources. Combining a challenge to the political order with existential demands, 1960s counter-cultures advocated a reinvention of the social and the personal that implied a «critique of daily life»; the invocation of a «right to the city»; a more playful view of existence;<sup>46</sup> and a call for breaking down the class barriers that many cultural institutions had fostered rather than helped dissolve. In 1966, Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel published *L'Amour de l'art: les musées d'art et leur public* [*The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public*], exposing the limitations of a separation between educational and cultural policies, as was the case under André Malraux, who championed the passive fruition of art (*ibid.* 170).

In France, the events of May 1968 would lead to the resignation of De Gaulle and the end of the «Malraux decade» in cultural policies, as well as to the recognition of the limits of the massification of cultural consumption in the context of the democratisation process. This issue finds an echo in a manifesto published by the directors of the *Maisons de la Culture* which addressed the existence of a «human multitude without the capacity to access those spaces or even to decode the events programmed in them» (*ibid.*). The cultural policies of the following decade, the most emblematic of which are those of Jacques Duhamel (1971-1973), will focus on «animation» and the search for participatory and festive ways of taking art to the streets, with institutions encouraged to break down the boundaries between «erudite» and «popular», «formal» and «spontaneous», «predictable» and «unexpected», in order to reproduce the recent collective imaginary and its sites, namely «the street». Duhamel would build around an essen-

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46 To borrow the titles from two works by Henri Lefebvre published in this period (*ibid.*, 160).



tially didactic notion of culture, absent in previous governments, by carrying out a decentralising programme to be combined with the municipalist efforts of the President of the Republic, Georges Pompidou. Keeping the cultural equipment inherited from previous governments, he would add the *Centres d'Animation Culturelle*, «small churches» that would complement the already existing «large cathedrals of culture», with a regular programme, art education open sessions and «cultural awareness activities for adults, using new audiovisual tools, supported by the forceful dissemination of the different media» (*ibid.*, 173).

In 1977, the Georges Pompidou centre for cultural animation (*Centre Pompidou*) made its appearance in Paris, and its inauguration stirred up great controversy. Described by the architects Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers as a «living information centre» and built on the open Beaubourg square, the building was meant to represent «a kind of cross between *Times Square* and the *British Museum*» (*ibid.*, 201). Never had a cultural facility become so popular in Europe, with an average attendance of 25,000 per day. The institution, whose project incorporated the cultural debates of the previous decade, would become one of the symbols of «official culture», embodying some of the contradictions described by Jean Baudrillard in 1981 as *The Beaubourg Effect*: an emptying of the very notion of culture, replaced by mediatisation and touristic spectacularisation, which rendered any actual programmed content irrelevant. Designed as an «anti-monument», the Pompidou Centre would become a spectacular symbol of power and its paradoxes: thought of as an experimental creative space, it housed a collection ordered in chronological sequence; at odds with an elitist programme, it was a site for mass consumption. The publication of *The Beaubourg Effect* would signal the end of the mega-structuralist enthusiasm, as if by virtue of a belief in the abolition of the boundaries between high and low culture and their «levelling on a single plane, grounded on the myths of «didacticism» and cultural «animation» – swiftly capitalised on by the communication and entertainment industries – counter-culture [had] finally generated the replacement of an «elite culture» by an uncritical participatory cultural consumption; that is, by a «mass culture» whose perversities it knew how to analyse but seldom redirect» (Grande 2009, 205). This analysis, it is worth highlighting, bears into account the historical moment of its production: the pessimism of the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the end of the technological and financial enthusiasm brought about by the oil crises and the strengthening of a neo-liberal and conservative culture. Against this background, structures conceived of in a period that was perceived as starkly op-

posed to the present one could only appear as old-fashioned, even antiquated. In France, as in the United Kingdom, this «nihilistic pessimism» of the 1980s, a sign of a kind of «fatigue» toward counter-cultural rhetoric or its incorporation by both state and market institutions, shifted, problematically and not without widespread contestation, to a controversial defence of economic liberalism, grounded on the rhetoric of individual liberties. These, often equated with the freedom of consumption embodied in «lifestyles» or urban subcultures, soon become conflated with a cultural conservatism founded on a mass-scale reinvention of traditions and historical identity, somewhere in-between nostalgia and the post-modern spectacle.

It is in the light of these debates that the FCG's CAM, strongly influenced by the Pompidou Centre (and whose very construction bears the imprint of these discussions), commissioned in 1979 and inaugurated in 1983, should be perceived. It is also important to grasp the specific relation between the Portugal of the time and ideas of modernity, as well as, more particularly, with modern art.

## 7.

### THE CULTURAL MATRIX OF ESTADO NOVO

Although the New State (Estado Novo) did not establish itself as a Welfare State like the countries addressed above, it did engage in similar kinds of paternalistic efforts, put into practice by means of a sophisticated bureaucratic machine that «regulated» the nation's social, economic, and political goals. It is within this framework, and taking into account the cultural matrix of Salazarism – anti-communist, anti-liberal, anti-individualist, founded on the glorification of the nation's imperial past and on the unquestionable certitudes of God, Fatherland, and Family – that the «Politics of the Spirit» – the term that encapsulated the regime's cultural project and policy, which started in the 1930s and would extend for at least two decades – should be grasped. One should also understand it as a convergence of the influence and inclinations of the figures of Salazar, Duarte Pacheco and Antonio Ferro, who dictated the cultural policy in the early years of the regime. One should therefore attend to their projects for the promotion of the arts, alongside educational, architectural and urbanistic programmes, all of which would lead to the creation of new cultural facilities and events (Grande 2009, 70).

Salazar, in the manner of an «austere and rigorous father», became, in the 1930s, «the main instrument of nationalist rhetoric», exalted in «modern» self-celebratory processes such as exhibitions and films, while new infrastructure and state facilities colonised the national territory (*ibid.*, 70). As in Mussolini's Italy, or in the emerging Francoist Spain and Nazi Germany, and even though the Salazarist matrix defined the country's vocation as rural, management of the territory was nonetheless designed to display the power of both the state and its leader. During the 1930s there were systematic architectural interventions commissioned by the state. Among these, those in which a more urban vocation is more conspicuous are the ones carried out as part of the programmes of public works, architectural monumentalisation and heritage rehabilitation headed by Duarte Pacheco in his time in government (1932-36 and 1938-43) and in the Presidency of the Lisbon Municipality (1938-43).

Commissioned architecture would thus serve to attest to the symbolic importance of the New State, although the image it sought to create was that of a «village-country», with the garden-city model of tree-lined avenues and villas as its urban variant, a model best suited to the taste of the emerging bourgeoisie that was the regime cornerstone (Duarte Pacheco *apud* João dos Santos *et al.* 1966, 70).

But it was António Ferro, a journalist for the newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, who would be invited by Salazar in 1933 to head the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional [SPN; Secretariat of National Propaganda], responsible for the cultural promotion of the New State and entrusted with the task of «promoting the convergence between an anachronistic country and some of the new winds of modernist culture» (*idem*). José-Augusto França outlines the limits of this modernism, both on the aesthetic level (contained, balanced, «placating an anger that should never lead to a derangement of form», in Salazar's words), and in terms of its relation to the state support it received (given that «the state could not act as a patron», also in the words of the President of the Council). Thus, along the same lines as Duarte Pacheco's actions in the field of architecture, throughout the 1930s António Ferro would try to bring the country «up to date» with Modern Art, «simulating» a modern cosmopolitanism (within the framework, of course, of an «indispensable and strained balance»). The activity of the SPN included the creation of subsidies, state competitions and prizes, such as the «Amadeu de Souza Cardoso» prize (while never considering collecting or displaying Souza Cardoso's body of work); it promoted popular art – bringing tourism together with the construction of a nation imagined through a nation-building ethnography, through initiatives such as the creation of the Marchas de Lisbon (Lisbon Popular Marches, where neighbourhoods compete for the title of the best pageant) or the Competition for «the most Portuguese Village in Portugal» – as well as «erudite art», through initiatives such as the Modern Art Salons (Salões de Arte Moderna) at the Palácio Foz.

As the 1940s drew nearer, the regime's architecture evolved towards a kind of rhetorical monumentalism, characterised by stylised figuration and themes linked with the glorification of the country's imperial power, of which the Exposição do Mundo Português (Portuguese World Exhibition) was the most emblematic example. During this period, between the Spanish Civil War and World War II, the New State would insist on a protectionist policy, renouncing its participation in internationalist cultural initiatives associated with the spread of Communism in Europe. The most accomplished example of this belief in the self-sufficiency of an imperial and colonial present grounded on a mythical past was, undoubtedly, the

Portuguese World Exhibition.<sup>47</sup> This project, in which many intellectuals are involved, placing themselves at the service of the «restoration avant-garde», brings to a definitive end the «cycle of stylistic experimentation» that marked, albeit timidly, the previous years, and «definitively settles the vocabulary imposed on public works» (*idem*, 74). On the other hand, by relying essentially on ephemeral events, the «politics of the spirit» would have little structural impact in terms of the long-lasting cultural and cosmopolitan modernisation of Portuguese society.

Once the war was over, Portugal was, on the one hand, a country that did not take part in the public diplomatic negotiations and one that, because of Salazar's distrust of North-American civilisation, rejected the first Marshall Plan (1947-48), only accepting the second (1949-50); on the other hand, the strategic position of the Lajes Air Base in the Azores was of great interest to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), created in 1948, and which Portugal would join one year later. In 1949-50, Portugal would also join the founders of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OECE), the embryo of the future European Economic Community, with the purpose of accepting the second Marshall Plan, and in 1955 the country would become a member of the UN, following a veto in 1946. Despite all the public conflicts and diplomatic unease as a result, mainly, of Portuguese colonialism and, later, the Colonial War – rather than the regime's authoritarianism – one could hardly say that the New State was at the margins of the European political process. On the contrary, its survival for three decades after the end of the Second World War can only be understood in the light of its integration into the international Cold War context, in which it was clearly a part of the anti-communist bloc – which, despite the consensual liberalism on which it was grounded, tolerated dictatorial regimes in its midst.

Internally, the end of the war and of the 1920s and 1930s dictatorships brought about a wave of hope and, with it, a politicisation of the cultural sphere. In 1946, the MUD (Movimento de Unidade Democrática – Movement for Democratic Unity), an opposition movement founded in the immediate aftermath of World War II where a number of intellectuals and opponents of the regime gathered, organised the Exposições Gerais de Artes Plásticas [General Exhibition of Visual Arts] in the Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes [the School of Fine Arts] – «a *salon* for the political opposition» in the words of Rui Mário Gonçalves (Rui Mário Gonçalves *apud* Grande 2009, 76). In 1944 the SPN

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47 On this, see João Canijo's 2010 film, *Lusitanian Illusion* (*Fantasia Lusitana*).

changed its name to Secretariado Nacional de Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo (SNI, for short – National Secretariat of Information, Popular Culture and Tourism), and began to employ a rhetoric based on the notion of the «ludic» (i.e., the entertaining, the recreational) for «the people», while also controlling what was exhibited, made and published through previous censorship. After 1945 a large-scale propaganda initiative was launched through leaflets and posters that praised state initiatives, such as the creation of the FNAT (Federação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho – National Federation for Joy at Work), the expansion of primary education, the creation of science research centres, and of Portuguese orchestras and dance groups which, according to the leaflets, were of great benefit to artists, some of whom had now become «enemies of the state» (*ibid.*). With the defeat of fascism, Ferro's position, that is to say, art at the service of the glorification of the regime (an instrumentalisation, one should note, increasingly focused on the massification and cult of «the popular», lacking the support of intellectual and artistic circles, among whom the idea of freedom of expression becomes widely consensual) would soon make him an inconvenient figure for the regime. As a result, in 1950 Ferro is removed from the SNI.

At a time when cultural policies in the rest of Europe are strengthened, they seem to be fading away in Portugal, buried under censorship and now massified populist practices. In this same context, territorial planning is tailored to accommodate the emerging tourist industry, using the populist rhetoric of massification as the «justification» for its existence. From 1950 to 1974, everyone seemed to agree that «the government's cultural policy was bad», a consensus that apparently pushed aside «the need to think about what a proper cultural policy should be» (Gonçalves *apud* Grande 2009, 77). The government, whose international representation was now guaranteed through its membership of NATO, the UN and the OEEC, wanted to invest, above all, in the creation of an *image* of the country within its borders, which dispensed with what had been the only genuine attempt to devise a public cultural policy in Portugal during the New State – the now extinct «politics of the spirit». There were nonetheless some gestures in the same general direction – though following a different path and diverted by the outbreak of the Colonial War in 1961 –, a few of which bore fruit, such as the promotion of Fado, alongside other strands of popular music, namely what would be branded *nacional-cançonetismo* (national-crooning, loosely translated).

## The 1960s and the openings of April

As already mentioned, one might say that, from the point of view of the country's culture and customs, a series of «April» (i.e., mid-1970s) *openings* and themes had been enunciated as early as the 1960s, anticipating the revolution, a period in which a number of «urgencies» were converted into demands, materialised in practices and at times institutions. The path to the revolution was thus prepared by a growing cultural and social opposition that was consolidated, namely, by the student movements that opposed both the timeworn, obscurantist and elitist education and the colonial war – and were severely punished for it. With the collapse of the dictatorial regime, in which a military coup by the MFA (Movimento das Forças Armadas; Armed Forces Movement) on 25 April 1974 quickly spread to a civil revolution when thousands of people took the streets to claim rights and liberties that had been denied them for so long, there came a moment of «reappropriation of discourses, an opening to discussion» – the condensed time of the PREC (Trindade 2004). Yet the MFA, by not completely dismantling the state apparatus and keeping in place «its essential hierarchical structures» – which were merely stripped of its more distinct «fascist features: the single party, the military police, the plenary court, political prisoners and censorship» – would create the conditions «for a fratricidal dispute over its control». Thus, throughout the PREC two conceptions of state-building, one socialist and reformist in nature, the other revolutionary, clashed in what Boaventura de Sousa Santos called a «duality of impotencies» (Santos *apud* Grande 2009, 210). They confronted each other until the military coup of 25 November 1975, staged by the «moderate» (some would say, counter-revolutionary) wing of the MFA, and the legislative elections of April 1976 would give birth to «the embryo of a Welfare State with a semi-presidentialist and multi-party system, based on a single parliamentary chamber, whose political action articulated the continuation and democratisation of many institutions, state bodies and enterprises that pre-existed the Revolution».

The 25 November would bring about a «return to a supposed normality» in a country where normality had been – for too long, much too long – dictated by a repressive regime. Thus, when in 1977 Ana Hatherly made her series *Descolagens*, what was at stake was precisely the speed with which this change takes place, materialised in her work by the idea of «tearing away» as an opening up of possibility at a particular juncture in the country's history. This moment, though, could only be conceived or perceived, in retrospect, as an «excess» (Trindade 2004), as poited out

earlier. An economic crisis followed in the trail of the 25 November, pushing the country into a negotiation with the IMF for financial support in 1978 and once again in 1983, in the aftermath of a radical transformation of the country – the end of the revenues from the colonies; an increase in public spending on social housing, pension funds, the national health service, social action, among other things – combined with currency devaluation and inflation caused by the 1973 oil crisis.

In 1977, Portugal applied for membership of the European Community (EC) – reshaping once and for all its geo-strategic position, which shifts from a colonial and Atlantic «vocation» to a continental and European inclination. This meant turning its back on the sea, as it were, and «embracing» a new Empire (Europe), to use an image popularised by Eduardo Lourenço (2000). This desire for an integration into an international macro-economic structure was, in the second half of the 1970s, fuelled by the new liberal tendencies of the AD (Aliança Democrática; a coalition between the PSD, the CDS and the monarchists) which, by winning the 1979 mid-term elections and the 1980 legislative elections, would help to distance the country from the memory and rhetoric of the revolutionary years and, from their point of view, to undo many of the «excesses» of that period.

## Between the people and the avant-garde

During the PREC years, on the one hand, culture served propaganda purposes, the blend of the political and the cultural within the state institutions themselves; on the other hand, the general euphoric atmosphere and the end to censorship led artists to take part in the ongoing social transformation. For João Teixeira Lopes there are (at least) two main trends in the culture of the time: a «popular or populist inclination that repudiated elitism and valued the cultural and artistic experience as a form of work and collective endeavour», and another one with «avant-garde aspirations, throwing itself into a frenzy of reaching out to the people through the public performance art or the *happening*, sometimes with unintended results» (Lopes *apud* Grande 2009, 211).<sup>48</sup>

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48 As to this trend, one must give the period that precedes the revolution its due: it was prodigal in *happenings* and performances, as exhaustively documented, among others by Verónica Metello (2007) and Cláudia Madeira (2007).



An example of the former would be the work of the Comissão Dinamizadora Central (CODICE; Central Dynamisation Commission) of the 5th Division of the MFA, whose mission was to *animate* the people, that is to say, mobilise them, through culture, on the path to Socialism. Located from October 1974 to August 1975 at Palácio Foz (the symbolic headquarters of the SNI and SEIT, former propaganda Departments of the Estado Novo), CODICE, in articulation with the Direcção Geral da Cultura Popular e Espectáculos [Directorate General for Popular Culture and Shows] (under the Ministry of Social Communication), outlined and guided the institutional information of the II, IV and V Provisional Governments, controlling, as Marcelo Caetano had done at the end of the dictatorship, the main media of the massification of cultural consumption – newspapers, radio, public television. Split between decentralisation operations, such as the Campanhas de Dinamização Cultural e Acção Cívica [Campaigns for Cultural Dynamisation and Civic Action] and successive changes in their course of action dictated by the constant changes in political power, it would be dismantled by military resolution in the summer of 1975, but not without having created the embryo for a process of cultural decentralisation – «craved at the time by the Directorate General for Popular Culture and Shows – and which sowed the seeds for the creation of local cultural centres, on a municipal scale, with either formal or spontaneous management» and promoting debates around the concept of «cultural animation», often modelled on French cultural policy (*ibid.*, 212).

From North to South, a number of artists took part in free events taking place in schools, barracks, squares and factories, though a fair number of other artists and intellectuals (closer to the Socialists) launched, in 1974, a document against what they called the resurgence of a «larval neo-Zhdanovism», a movement of contestation that extended to the relation between artists and cultural institutions and public spaces (Grande 2009, 212). The Movimento Democrático dos Artistas Plásticos (MDAP; Democratic Movement of Visual Artists) formed at the time by a group of 50 artists linked to the SNBA, alongside other institutions also active before and after the revolution, such as the Escola de Belas Artes, Cooperativa Árvore, Círculo de Artes Plásticas de Coimbra (CAPC), the Associação Internacional de Críticos de Arte (AICA; International Association of Art Critics) and the FCG, joined to create the first Comissão Nacional Consultiva de Artes Plásticas [National Advisory Commission on Visual Arts], within the Ministry of Social Communication, an organism that would counter the dirigisme of the 5th Division of the MFA. Collective events – such as the simultaneous painting of a large

mural at the Belém gallery in Lisbon, by the MDAP, or the «burial» of the Soares dos Reis National Museum, in Porto, to protest against the «tedium» of the museological policies of the old regime (which planted the seeds for a Contemporary Art Centre), by artists and intellectuals close to the *Árvore* cooperative – these events, while perhaps circumstantial and bound to specific contexts, reflect the way in which participatory notions of the democratisation of culture were widely shared at the time. This entailed the creation of places beyond the realm of the «Fine Arts», «new spaces for interdisciplinary experimentation, for the encounter between contemporary forms of expression and popular traditions, for education through art». This issue was rarely addressed because the country had no structured art education or a Modern Art museum or centre (*ibid.*, 213-214). As a response to the election of the first constituent government, a new manifesto appeared in 1976 in which the concept of Fine Arts was repudiated in the name of a broadening of artistic expressions and mediums, perceived as a gesture towards a fuller democratisation of society:<sup>49</sup>

We propose to put an end to artists' isolation from each other and to their divorce from the social fabric, [...] Thus we wish [...] to demystify the false notion that privileges the so-called «Fine Arts» over other «minor» activities or «trades» [...] In the Visual Arts we include painting, sculpture, the «videotape», engraving, design, photography, crafts, scenography, tapestry, ceramics, pedagogical activities... This definition goes beyond the scope of the so-called «Plastic Arts» and is dictated by the need for artists to participate in a programme of democratisation of culture...

With the extinction of the Ministry of Social Communication, SEC would come under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister or under other Ministries in articulation with Education and Science policies, which would imply the creation of a technocratic apparatus, pushing cultural institutions and artists away from decision-making processes, «thus putting an end to a participatory logic that had run through the whole revolutionary period» and consigning culture and «the cultural» to a supposed autonomy that had its own ideological framework (*ibid.*

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49 Addressed to the Direção-Geral da Acção Cultural [Directorate General of Cultural Action], chaired by Eduardo Prado Coelho, within the State Secretariat of Culture (SEC). This manifesto had more than 60 subscribers, including Ernesto de Sousa, Fernando Pernes or Helena Almeida (Couceiro *apud* Grande 2009, 214).

2009, 214). But it would be under the governments of the Aliança Democrática coalition that the goals of these organisations, where phrases such as «access to culture», «cultural animation», or «support for associativism», «defence of collective creativity» or the «effort to break the barrier between elite culture, mass culture and popular culture» will be replaced by a call for an effort of «modernisation» and for the necessary «standardisation» of state organisations in line with the European model and by a rhetoric around the reinforcement of Portuguese cultural «traditions and roots». A period thus begun in which the efforts of the Secretariat of State for Culture would focus on stressing, through the available media channels, the value of the Portuguese cultural heritage in view of the prospect of European integration, and the government's programmes explicitly outlined «goals closely linked to national identity, aimed at a cultural consensus which, based on freedom and plurality, would allow for a clearer identification of a Portuguese cultural 'image' and 'personality'» (*ibid.*, 215).

It is also between 1976 and 1983 that a number of new democratic practices become consolidated in both public and private institutions. There was much to see, to know and to show, both from authors and works previously censored and in the process of strengthening the connection with foreign institutions so as to make Portuguese creators known «abroad» or bring the works of foreign creators into the country. This period, extending into the 1980s, will also bring about a series of openings and exposures to the «new»: new habits, new practices, new consumptions, fresh experiences. «Portuguese contemporary art» itself (mainly from the end of the 1960s) would then be shown both abroad and across the country, in spaces such as the remodelled Galeria de Arte Moderna in Belém (Lisbon), the Bienal de Artes de Vila Nova de Cerveira, the FCG, the SNBA or the recently created Centro de Arte Contemporânea do Porto.



CAM Façade | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive, s.n.

## 8.

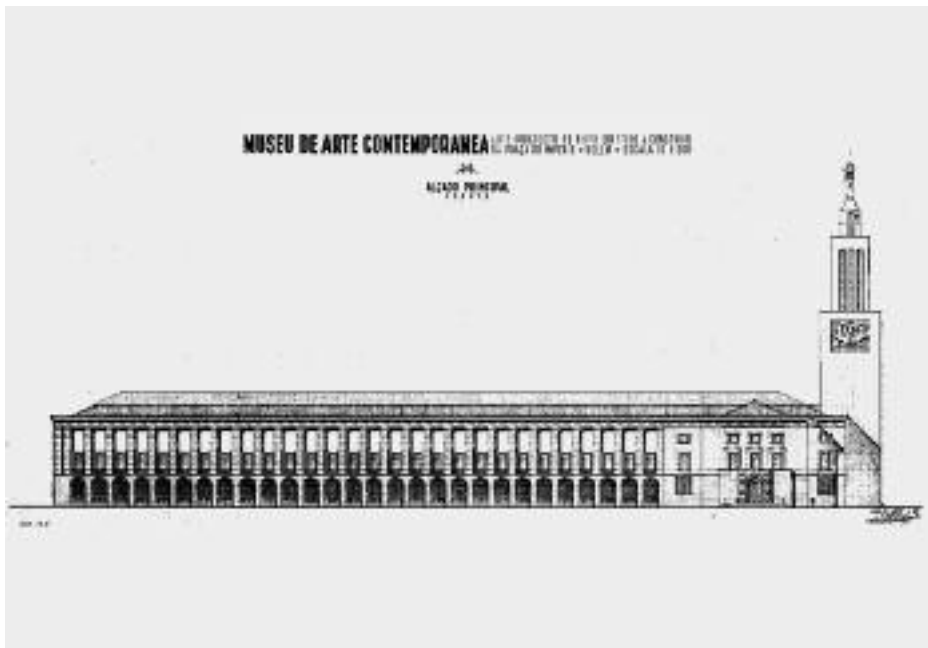
# THE PROBLEMATICS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN PORTUGAL

Twice Lisbon came close to housing a major cultural centre, similar to those built throughout postwar Western Europe. Both times these constructions, respectively in the Praça do Império and in the Parque Eduardo VII, were postponed, and the project fell through. Even so, the architectural debates that took place around their constructions are an adequate reflection of the strains placed by the ideological matrix of Salazarism on the management of the territory and of the cultural sphere in the wake of World War II.

During Salazarism, the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (MNAA) and the Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea (MNAC), in line with the discourse of the regime, reinforced the dichotomy between Old and Contemporary Art (*Antiga-Contemporânea*), identifying the former with the heritage of the Nation's great past and the latter with the new regime's artistic production, both of which, however, served to exalt its mission by housing its collections in buildings «worthy of the politics of the spirit initiated in other cultural spheres and bound to the notion of public work» (Grande 2009, 89-90). Throughout the 1940s there are two projects for the construction of a new Museum of Contemporary Art,<sup>50</sup> mirroring and echoing, each in its own way, the debates around modern art and culture elsewhere in the Western world. The first was born out of Duarte Pacheco's plans for the Praça do Império, once the Portuguese World Exhibition came to an end. It was to be located in the eastern front of the Square, opposite the planned Museu das Descobertas e Conquistas [Museum of Discoveries and Conquests], to be located in what was, during the exhibition, the «Portuguese around the World» pavilion). Duarte Pacheco wanted to commission Cotinelli Telmo to design the two buildings, but this ultimately fell to Cristino da Silva, the architect of the pavilions at the Portuguese World Exhibition.

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50 A museum located in the former S. Francisco Convent, in the Chiado neighbourhood, Lisbon.



Cristino da Silva, Museum of Contemporary Art, to be built at Praça do Império, Belém, Lisbon, 1943 (apud Grande 2009, 92-93). Luís Cristino da Silva collection | FCG – Biblioteca de Arte e Arquivos.

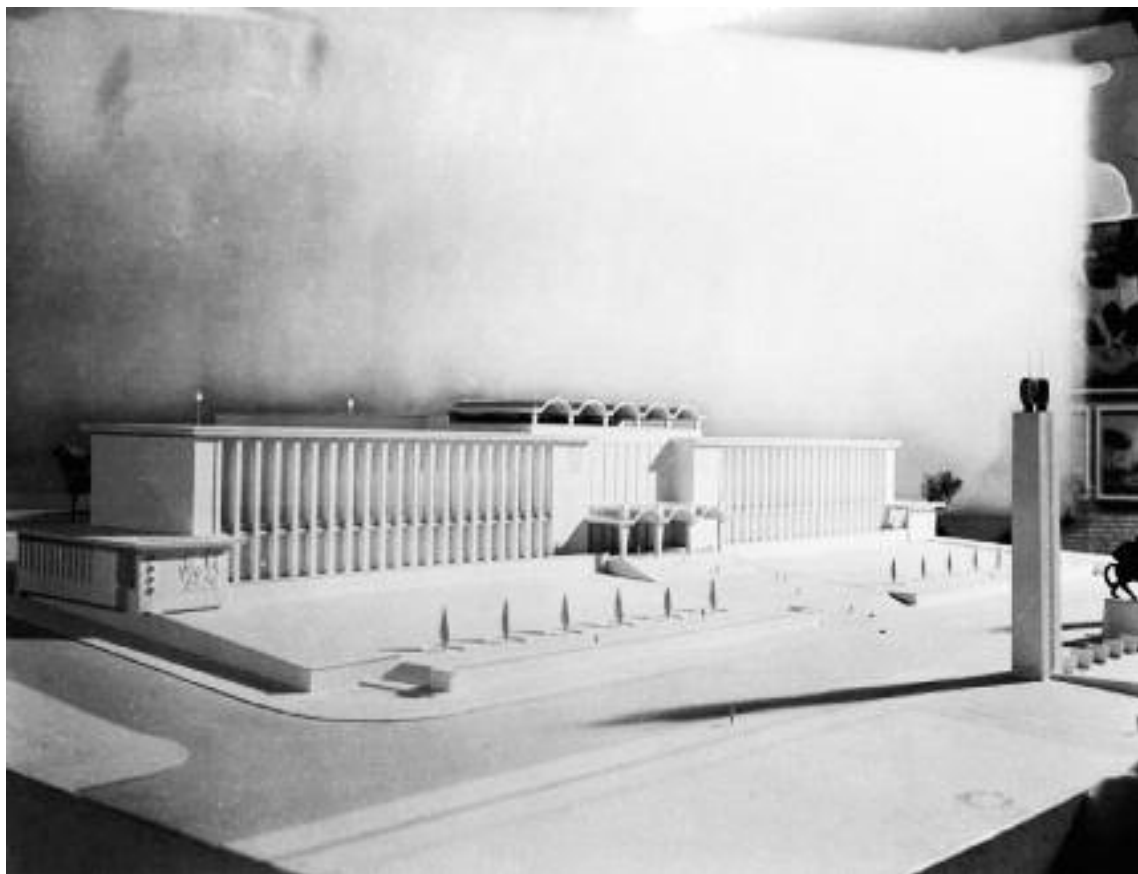
The Museum's programme was grounded on a report written by a committee that included Cotinelli Telmo, Leal de Faria and Adriano Lopes (then director of the MNAC) and which displays a wide knowledge of American literature on the modern museum. This report, written before 1940 (and possibly influenced by Cotinelli Telmo's visit to the Netherlands in 1935), recommended the construction of a «festive, attractive» rather than a «solemn» or «cumbersome» museum, with a glass exterior wall and removable interior partitions that would make the space more flexible (*ibid.*, 91). It also suggested the building should mirror its era by putting its modern construction processes on display. This project never got off the ground.<sup>51</sup> And its «programme» was the polar opposite of the one that Cristino da Silva would develop, inspired, it would seem, by the colonial rhetoric of the Portuguese World Exhibition. The preference for the latter, at the expense of something in a more cosmopolitan and modern vein can be explained by António Ferro's dismissal and Duarte Pacheco's death. A few years later, in 1959, Salazar appointed the portrait painter Eduardo Malta as director of the MNAC, which led this space to «disappear» from the artistic world for decades to come, given the extremely reactionary inclination of the ideas it embodied.

The second of these projects was launched after World War II and was directly tied to Keil do Amaral, a young municipal architect who, after a trip to the US in 1945, became a committed champion of the construction of a Cultural Centre in the city of Lisbon. Keil do Amaral visited some 40 museums and auditoriums on the west coast of the US and his report on that trip shows an immense enthusiasm for these facilities which, more than mere «repositories of treasures» are «true centres of culture», including a variety of spaces such as rooms with removable sections, auditoriums, art libraries, educational departments as well as restaurants and living areas (*ibid.*, 95). With this model in mind and imbued with a modern concern for having not an isolated edifice, but rather a «modern monument», well integrated into its surroundings, the architect surveyed potential sites in Lisbon where it could be built and narrowed his choice down to three: on the bank of the Tejo river;<sup>52</sup> in the José Maria Eugénio Park, in Palhavã

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51 Ironically, in the 1990s the construction of the Centro Cultural de Belém will bring «similar contradictions» to the surface (*ibid.*, 92).

52 In what is nowadays the location of MAAT – Museu de Arte, Arquitectura e Tecnologia.



Keil do Amaral, draft for Palácio da Cidade de Lisbon, 1953 (*apud* Grande 2009, 95-97).  
Arquivo Municipal de Lisbon, António Seródio collection. PT/AMLSB/ANS000016.

(also called Santa Gertrudes Park, where the FCG Head Office building is now located); and the Eduardo VII Park, his favourite location, for which he completed four preliminary designs between 1947 and 1953.

Conceived as a «House of Culture» or «Municipal Centre of Culture» rather than merely a «Municipal Museum», this project would never see the light of day, and only in 1969 would Lisbon have a building with these traits, although this time by private initiative: the Gulbenkian Head Office and Museum complex, in which Keil do Amaral was also involved. And only in the 1980s would the facilities of MNAA and MNAC be renovated, remaining in their locations at the time – Palácio dos Condes de Alvor (Janelas Verdes), and Convento de S. Francisco (Chiado), respectively (*ibid.*, 96).



Gulbenkian, *scenario of modernity*:  
«being» a place before «having» a place

As Luís Trindade (n.d.) points out in «Was Gulbenkian a Ministry of Culture?»<sup>53</sup> the FCG began its work in the mid-1950s, at a time when Portuguese society was undergoing radical changes, with the number of literate people outnumbering the illiterate for the first time in its history, alongside an increase in migration to the cities and rapidly swelling middle classes. RTP (the state television) begins to broadcast in 1957, and during the 1958 elections (in which General Humberto Delgado stood against the regime's official candidate), an extraordinary number of people voiced their desire to end the dictatorship. The country that was there for all to see was no longer the «rural and conformist» Portugal that Salazar had addressed in the 1930s. It was in this period, when, as Trindade puts it, the «greatest enemy» of the New State was the postwar «process of cultural massification», and when Salazar «more than educating or transforming the Portuguese» wanted merely «to soften the impact» of the representations and the values that came along with this process, that the FCG appears – «a private foundation yet of public utility, international yet based in Lisbon and governed by Portuguese law». It would have an enormous impact and came to occupy a unique symbolic place.

The concept of «scenario» proposed by Diana Taylor, taking as its model the prints and graphic representations of the encounters between Europeans and the Amerindians in the Renaissance, but also the routes taken by museum visitors – where an encounter between the visitor and the work is «staged» – allows for a better understanding of this symbolic place (Taylor 2003, 53-79). To be distinguished from the «set» in a theatrical context, the *scenario* (a kind of projective and imaginative «script», in the sense of a speculative scenario) applies to any situation of cultural transfer, referring not only to the frame, or «backdrop», but also encompassing the narrative that underlies it and the kind of relations between the parts that it presupposes. Scenarios, she tells us, are portable, infinitely repeatable, and they seem to assign places and functions to each of the parts in question – transporting us to an exotic «there» and folding the «not ours» into

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53 By courtesy of the author.

what is «ours», translating the communication systems of the Other into communication systems we claim to understand. The scenario helps to construct not only the object seen but also the subject that sees it, producing a «we» and a «they» as well as the relations that take place within that framework: the expectations invested into what is seen, the sense of disappointment, the need, in the face of the supposed muteness of objects, for clarification by specialists, the fervour with which objects are received.

Seen in this light, one could say that from the start the FCG, as an institutional space, staged a contact with modernity, that is to say, with the modernity allowed in a country where it was discursively omitted. Even before it was associated with the space that would become its «trademark image» (Tostões 2006a), the Head Office at Av. de Berna, in Lisbon, inaugurated only in 1969, it immediately summons a «scenario» of modernity that is actualised in individual encounters: the small-village resident that gains access to books through the itinerant library network; the artist or scientist that receives a grant; the 1960s Lisbon resident that has a chance to come into contact with an artistic expression that was not easily accessible in the country; the underprivileged population that receives support... – all of which explains the impact that the very mention of the name Gulbenkian had in decades to come, and still has today. It would function, then, as a *scenario of modernity*, activating a set of expectations, places and roles, as a result both of the context of its emergence in Portuguese society in the 1950s and of its very particular features.

There is in the personal history of Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian something which, real though it was, is of the nature of the fable: a foreign millionaire, from Armenia (an «exotic» country with which Portugal barely had any ties), linked to the big oil business, falls in love with Portugal, where he took refuge, and decides to house his own Foundation there. Eduardo Lourenço, seeing the FCG «drop from the sky», as he puts it, goes so far as to call the meeting between Azeredo Perdigão and Calouste Gulbenkian and the subsequent creation of the FCG as a «real life fairy tale», while the meeting between Azeredo Perdigão and Madalena Biscaia (later Perdigão) was, he says, a «romance within the romance» (Lourenço *apud* Teixeira 2014, 26). The action of the Foundation, especially in its first years, was symbolically defined by this fable: the seemingly almost random nature of Gulbenkian's choice to settle in Portugal, which

increases his symbolic capital by making his presence seem like an offering;<sup>54</sup> a philanthropic spirit associated with the tradition of private patrons of the arts and the figure of Calouste Gulbenkian in particular; the cosmopolitan spirit he embodied, alongside his attraction to progress (in a country where Salazar declared himself proud not to travel abroad and to stand *against* progress); and, above all, the enormous resources that allowed him an autonomy that hardly any other institution in the country could enjoy; and, finally, the very fact that in Portugal there was no capacity or resources (schools, teachers, courses) to match those the Foundation had at its disposal, which meant it could send people abroad and hire foreign specialists – neglecting, to an extent, the human resources that were already in place.

The «void he fills is almost absolute» and «his means are in themselves a factor of structural break», something that «in the proudly-alone country of Salazarism could not fail to produce subversive effects» (Trindade, s.d.).<sup>55</sup> Because if, as Nuno Grande says, the Foundation's cultural action drew close to André Malraux's thought and to some postwar European cultural policies, and has often been equated with a «welfare state» within the New State, this action, by the very fact that it was not carried out by the state (which, being synonymous with a nation-wide «we», was responsible for the common good, but also, as we have seen, keen to manage or «contain» modernity), replays the moment of encounter between the «we» and the «modern» and «foreign» «Other» (Trindade s.d.). It would be worth surveying, field by field, the various encounters that took place, and *who* encountered *what*, so as to confirm whether, as Luís Trindade suggests, echoing Daniel Melo (2005), there is a disparity between the way urban elites are treated, on the one hand, and the paternalism with which illiterate people are addressed. Trindade refers in particular to the distinction between the subversive action of the Serviço de Bibliotecas Itinerantes (Itinerant Library Department), the most popular and perhaps the «most political» of the Foundation's initiatives – if one takes into account the key role played by illiteracy in maintaining the Salazarist order –

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54 On the potential country locations for the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, see Grande (2009, 99-109).

55 In order to get a true sense of these effects, it would be necessary not only to carry out a field-by-field assessment of the spheres supported by the Foundation, but also to take into account the discursive «site» from which this support came and the kind of relations such a support entailed, as well as how each of these fields developed afterward.

and the conservative nature of its catalogue. Many more similar examples could be cited. In his view, this «double standard in the treatment of its addressees» outlined «the limits of its ability (and willingness) to subvert», which the author sees as akin to the way in which, later, «the political powers that created the Ministries of Culture» framed its «function».

However, as António Sampaio da Nóvoa and Jorge Ramos do Ó point out, the complex process that led to the constitution of a «Portuguese, perpetual, Lisbon-based» foundation, with a majority of Portuguese administrators, would have left «a *mark* that would prove decisive for its identity and its concrete *modus operandi*». To safeguard the national interest, Azeredo Perdigão's main argument would be the tax exemption granted by Portuguese law. In doing so, he was placing a public responsibility and a duty of accountability on the Foundation (Nóvoa and Ó 2006, 15-16). Comparing its action with some of its international counterparts, the authors claim that, while it is true that foundations always occupied «a grey zone between the public and the private», one might see in the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation a clear public service predisposition. This was evident both in its priorities and its form of intervention, often determined by means of *surveys*, conferring with specialists and consultants; and in the image it projected to the outside world, marked by a concern, since the early stages, to explain its activity to the Portuguese through press releases (both distinctive traits of the ACARTE). One of the most relevant aspects of its history, then, was «the bond of trust it forged and maintained with Portuguese society» (*idem*).<sup>56</sup> It would be «through this articulation between the laying down of rules, public recognition and the use of specialised knowledge, that the Gulbenkian's distinctive 'style'» would be created, a style

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56 On this issue, see also Novoa and Ó (2006, 49): «From the beginning, the aim was to carry out surveys that would make it possible to tailor the foundation's activity to social needs. In order for the Gulbenkian's action to result in 'the greatest benefit for the community', Azeredo Perdigão recommended, in his very first report as president, that 'a vast survey be carried out among state and private entities', more qualified to offer their view on what were, 'within each sector of education, the tasks and efforts which, with the general interest in mind', might 'warrant and justify our attention and our support'. This concern would soon lead the FCG to call on experts, first on an individual basis, to offer their technical opinions on certain matters, and later on a collective basis, as members of advisory boards or think tanks. These kinds of networks, of course, are part of the common procedures of many foundations and non-governmental organisations.»

which the «effort to accompany people, namely its grantees, and even to integrate them into the Foundation's activities, would help to solidify as a steady *sphere of influence*» (*ibid.*).

## The Gulbenkian Head Office and Museum

The relational space which the FCG occupied for so long would find the «materialisation of its image» of modernity in the construction of the Head Office building (Tostões 2006a). The construction of this building took almost ten years and many of the architectural discussions of the time came into the process (Grande 2009). The old Santa Gertrudes Park, a spacious and strategic area in the heart of Lisbon, was chosen as an ideal spot to harmoniously combine art and nature, Calouste Gulbenkian's key interests. The Santa Gertrudes Park was an enormous park created by the capitalist Eugénio de Almeida in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, which housed, in the late 1950s (when the Foundation acquired the land), an amusement park, the Feira Popular, and once a Zoo. In short, it was already a place of public accommodation which Lisboners had free access to. And it was a site where in a few years (and the Foundation was aware of this) one of the main road junctions of the city – Praça de Espanha – would be situated. In this site, an unparalleled construction was built from scratch, a focal point and driving force – a cultural centre with an internationalist and cosmopolitan public vocation, similar to some of its European and North American counterparts.

With its sober, discreet and functional yet monumental style, something altogether different from the monumentality of nationalist glorification characteristic of the New State; in the attention given to every detail of its construction; in the choice of materials; in the simple and unpretentious lines; in the way it winds through the park, where a person should be able to experience the «the calm within the storm» (Tostões 2007, 65) – the new head office, built «at a time when 'modern' is no longer a style but a symbol of culture and progress», would operate perfectly as a public space, «opening a 'window' – virtually the only one – that connected Salazarist Portugal and international culture» (*ibid.*). The inaugura-



Head Office Building of Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian around the time of its opening, 1969.  
Estúdio Horácio Novais Collection | FCG – Biblioteca de Arte e arquivos.

tion of the Gulbenkian Complex in 1969, in the midst of the so-called «Marcelist Spring», thus confirms not only the power of the Foundation but also the institutionalisation of a new «space-time»: the official and permitted existence of a territory of modernity in the country, in accordance with the wishes of the population and the promises of «Marcelismo».

The image of the Foundation would be forever bound to architecture: the buildings and the garden/the architecture and the landscape. And what already operated discursively as a «scenario» found its correlate in an image: a «cathedral» where, from now on, progress and modernity in Portugal would be reachable. It is in this same complex that, in 1983, the first museum of modern art of the country was inaugurated, within a Centre of Modern Art for which the Foundation decided to create a «Serviço de Animação, Criação Artística e Educação pela Arte» [Department of Animation, Artistic Creation and Education

Through Art] – the ACARTE. The CAM building would include two distinct bodies: a Museum of Modern Art, formed by three interconnected galleries; and a cultural animation space under the oversight of the ACARTE, with a Multi-purpose Room, a temporary exhibition room, studios for artistic activities, extending also to the atriums, the cafeteria and the Open Air Amphitheatre. It also included the Children's Art Centre, located near the south-east entrance to the garden.

### «The CAM has finally come»

The CAM fulfilled a decades-old desire, not only to have a place to exhibit the works of art the Foundation had acquired in the meantime, but also to open up a space where contemporary artistic creation could be presented, developed and even stimulated. The first drafts of this project date from 1967, but the decrease in revenue from 1970 onwards would postpone it for more than a decade (Grande 2014, 20).

In 1975 José de Azeredo Perdigão «would not only stress this need but would also contribute to the debate around «cultural animation» that raged in French counter-culture during the 1960s and then spread to Portuguese post-revolutionary rhetoric». He invokes the image of the solemn cathedrals of culture, suggesting that the time had come to create, alongside them, «smaller, more humane churches, a dream at the human scale, in short, centres of cultural animation» (Azeredo Perdigão *apud* Grande 2014, 21). In 1979, a few years before its 25th anniversary, the Foundation «decided to complete the programme for the construction of the cultural complex located in the Calouste Gulbenkian Park in Lisbon» by building the «Modern Art Centre, geared towards the exhibition of works of modern art and cultural and educational promotion in the various fields of art» (*ibid.*, 237).

In 1981, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the Foundation, the date set for the inauguration of the centre (which in fact would take a further two years to be built) a major exhibition entitled «Antevisão do Centro de Arte Moderna» [Preview of the Modern Art Centre] displayed the plans and projects for Modern Art at the Museum, as well as its collection (the most relevant corpus of



Demonstration against the construction of the CAM (Centro de Arte Moderna)  
– Gulbenkian Archive. Photography by Júlio Almeida.

20th century Portuguese art, still in formation).<sup>57</sup> Azeredo Perdigão would then restate his intention to articulate the regular activity of the museum with live «performances», «installations» and «happenings», thus stressing the identity of the new space as a *cultural centre*, housing not only a museum but also a «Documentation and Research Department», «studios for artists in residence» and an «Education Through Art Pavillion», following the blueprint of similar projects implemented elsewhere since the 1970s. Thus, as Nuno Grande stresses, ten years after the «cathedral» had been inaugurated, Azeredo Perdigão built a «new church» around it. The Centre would distance itself from the MoMA model and, instead, draw close to a «hybrid counter-model» that besides a multi-purpose exhibition space included a «hangar» (referred to as the «museum») and a cultural animation centre with an auditorium for the performing arts (*ibid.*). Sir Leslie Martin, one of expert architects that had been previously consulted, was invited to design it.

However, the decision to build in the southern part of the park would spark a major controversy, echoed in the press and in multiple demonstrations headed by the landscape architect Gonçalo Ribeiro Telles, one of the designers of the original Gulbenkian Park project. For Ribeiro Telles, this construction, which involved closing off the park, would interrupt the «historic ecological corridor of

57 On the formation of the collection for the museum's inauguration, see Silva 2014.



Santa Gertrudes» at a time when «the major real estate investments were (re) focusing on historical areas of the city such as Restelo, Martim Moniz or Amoreiras». At stake was «the municipal management's complicity with 'concentrationist', 'megalomaniac' urban operations that were indifferent to the 'rural' historical contours of the city's remaining green spaces and corridors» (Grande 2009, 245). Rui Mário Gonçalves would comment on this polemic, arguing that «the inability or unwillingness to create museums of modern art [was] revealing of Portuguese society's immobilism.» As he saw it, «a museum of modern art plays an important role, not only in the aesthetic literacy of the public, but also in terms of generating an attitude that favours a conscious intervention to transform human societies» (Gonçalves *apud* Grande 2014, 23).

In a democratic context, less than a decade after the 25 of April and a handful of years before joining the EEC, the construction of this building finally reflected a broad notion of culture, no longer simply in its «erudite» form but one that extended to the streets, and expanded institutionally to contemporary forms of expression, pop culture, avant-garde art (along a lineage that stretched from the earliest modernisms to the present day), the arts formerly classified as «minor» and certain ethnographic and transcultural practices, all of which in articulation with «cultural animation». Planned on a less monumental scale than the Head Office building; using less noble materials (aluminum, as opposed to bronze) in its construction; with open, multi-purpose and relational spaces (such as the central atrium, the exhibition hall or the multi-purpose room); the construction of the CAM reflected the debates around culture «at the human scale» that marked the construction of post-68 cultural equipment: a centre, not a museum.

The architecture of the CAM was close to the mega-structuralist imaginary of the 1970s (indeed, it was the first cultural «mega-structure» in the country), which was a «staggering» solution for those who defended solutions closer to «the modernist cultural programmes of laminar development and introspective atmosphere» (*idem*). The building was not meant to «isolate itself or spread itself out into the Gulbenkian Park», but, instead, to «integrate it or artificially extend it», taking the form of a inhabitable hill that merged technology and landscape, as is evident on the exterior of the building, where the stepped roof, akin to a hill, prolongs the slope that culminates in the lake (*ibid.*). Inside, «the intentional exposure of the mechanical systems, in the lift columns and the technical walkways for the air conditioning and artificial lighting systems», alongside the conspicuous presence of the crossbeams that created an uninterrupted transversal span, also con-



Interior CAM | FCG Gulbenkian Archive, s.n.

jured this imaginary, more specifically the hangar-like halls of the Georges Pompidou Centre, at a time when «this tendency was dying out in European architectural culture and practice» (*ibid.*, 25).

When it opened in 1983, the hangar-hall, destined to house the so-called «museum», would display a long-term exhibition of the collection of modern Portuguese art; English, American and Armenian art was on display in the upper gallery and the remaining collection on the lower floor, an arrangement that would later be modified when the regular temporary exhibitions was inaugurated (*ibid.*). The basement housed the reserve collection, the preparation and restoration areas and documentation and video production rooms. As for the space that would later house the ACARTE (with an area of 3800 m<sup>2</sup>), it included, besides a cafeteria/restaurant, the temporary exhibitions gallery and the multipurpose auditorium, with a 112-seat retractable stand, around which there were artist and animation studios for in-residence creation. The centre also used the 1000-plus-seat open air amphitheatre, which has since been modified and integrated into the new complex.



Centro Artístico Infantil [Children's Art Centre] | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive, s.n.  
Multipurpose room | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive, Júlio Almeida.



Open air amphitheatre | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive, s.n.

This equipment was unprecedented in the country, from a spatial and technical point of view, housing a collection that was seen as representative of modern Portuguese art. To assemble this collection, from 1979 there was a significant number of new acquisitions (among them a collection of 516 works from art collector Jorge de Brito). About this process, one could read, at the time of its inauguration:

More than a revision of the visual arts of the last 70 years, the CAM displays the first survey of modern art in Portugal, or of the repeated attempts to affirm modernity.<sup>58</sup>

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58 Alexandre Pomar, *Expresso*, 13-8-1983.



Open air amphitheatre | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive, s.n.

The CAM has finally come, so perhaps future historians of these matters of Portuguese culture, and particularly of its art [...] will one day open a new chapter in their (and our) histories.<sup>59</sup>

The inauguration of this Modern Art Centre would take place, then, at the crossroads of «modern art» and «the repeated attempts to affirm modernity» in the country, or of «Portuguese culture» and its art. About a year later, the ACARTE Department was created. Finally. In 1983, it had finally come.

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59 José-Augusto França, *Colóquio Artes*, March 1983.



PART IV

Madalena Perdigão  
and the Animation, Artistic Creation  
and Education Through Art  
Department (ACARTE)





## 9.

### MADALENA BISCAIA DE AZEREDO PERDIGÃO

Born in Figueira da Foz in 1923, the eldest of the three daughters of the Republican Severo da Silva Biscaia and Lídia Bagão da Silva Biscaia, she is said to have inherited a love of the theatre from her father, linked to theatrical groups in Figueira da Foz, and, from her mother, an interest in the piano, which she began studying at the age of 7 (Teixeira 2014, 9).<sup>60</sup> Having entered the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Coimbra, she graduated in Mathematics in 1944, with distinction, and was invited to be an Assistant Professor at the Faculty, which she declined, preferring instead to teach at secondary school level, which she did for a short spell until she decided to devote herself entirely to the piano. She then attends the Instituto de Música de Coimbra, where she studied under the composer Lopes-Graça, among others, and in 1948 concludes the Degree in Piano (Curso Superior de Piano) at the Conservatório Nacional de Lisbon and performs in concerts with the Orquestra Sinfónica da Emissora Nacional, led by the conductor Pedro de Freitas Branco (Teixeira 2014, 9).

From her student years in Coimbra in the 1940s, her regular participation in the cultural (mainly musical) life of the city stands out. A member of the university theatre group (Teatro dos Estudantes da Universidade de Coimbra; TEUC), she was also President of the Círculo de Cultura Musical [Musical Culture Circle] in Coimbra, where she organised an Opera concert, something the city hadn't seen in 50 years, taught informal courses on the history of music and created the radio program «A música e os seus sortilégios» [Music and its incantations], on the Emissora Nacional (the public broadcasting service). Among many other things,

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60 This chapter draws heavily on Élia Teixeira's detailed study of Madalena Perdigão, in a dialogue with other literature. On this topic, see, in particular, «Arte e Educação: o percurso de Madalena Perdigão e a sua relevância no panorama cultural Português» (Teixeira 2014), and also Listopad (2013), Leça (1990), Perdigão (2009) and Branco (1989).

she was also a member of various «democratic» women's associations.<sup>61</sup> In an interview, the child psychiatrist Arquimedes da Silva Santos described how he came to meet Madalena Perdigão in Coimbra (Vieira 2014c).

I've known her since 1940-something – in Coimbra. [...] We got together then, friends and people interested in these cultural things and in Music and Theatre... [...] There were several groups from Coimbra that, in turn, had common connections. There was the Coimbra Neo-Realist group, which included Joaquim Namorado, João Cochofel, Carlos de Oliveira, Feijó, myself... and we bought the magazine *Vértice* together, the five of us... [...] And then, in 1945, we put together the first issues at João Cochofel's house, who was the person who held all of these things together...

*And is Madalena tied to that group?*

She is and she isn't, because this group was a political group, and kind of... I won't say anymore, as I don't want to go down that road here. João Farinha was part of it. And he was a close friend of João Cochofel, frequented his house... That's where we met João Farinha, who married Madalena. [...] That's the other group. There were Neo-Realists who came from the Arts and the like; and there was a group from the Science Faculty, which included António Júdice, [...] who was a mathematician, a great mathematician... there was João Farinha, Denis Jacinto.... [...]

Of this period in Coimbra, one should underline the way in which a certain cultural worldview intersected with, was connected to and translated (more or less openly) an existential stance that involved a cosmopolitan and universalist appreciation of culture and the arts – at times with a clear political slant. In a country where the end of World War II had not led to the fall of the regime and where Salazar was striving to rule over a nation approvingly described as «backward», to insist on the universalist teaching and practice of the arts often amounted to a gesture of «world making». In this context, João Farinha, one of the first grantees of

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61 She was President of the Art School Pro-Arte and the representative in Coimbra of associations based in Lisbon or Porto, such as the Orpheon Portuense, the Sociedade de Concertos de Lisbon and Juventude Musical Portuguesa and was part of the Comissão de Propaganda e Organização de Coimbra (Coimbra Propaganda and Organization Commission) of the Conselho Nacional das Mulheres Portuguesas (National Council of Portuguese Women). After graduating, she married João Farinha, PhD in Mathematics and Professor at the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Coimbra.

Madalena Perdigão and Azeredo Perdigão |  
FCG — Gulbenkian Archive,  
Júlio Almeida.



the recently founded FCG, leaves for Paris with his wife, Madalena Farinha, who was the recipient of a grant from the Instituto de Alta Cultura, continues her piano studies at the Sorbonne, under Marcel Ciampi. But João Farinha's sudden death, in September 1957, forces her to return to Portugal.

Now a widow, she comes to Lisbon with her father to thank the FCG for the opportunity afforded to her husband. Azeredo Perdigão then, in his own words, advised her to «use work as a means of overcoming pain», offering her a place in the newly-created FCG, where everything music-related was «yet to be done». She accepts the invitation and the next year she moves to the capital where she would work closely with the President of the FCG, supervising all the activities in the field of music, for which no guidelines or overarching idea had been established yet. A nerve issue on one of her fingers had meanwhile forced her to abandon a potential professional career as a pianist. Three years later, in November 1960, she marries Azeredo Perdigão, thus creating what would turn out to be, in the words of Eduardo Lourenço, the already mentioned «a romance within the romance» in the «fairy tale» that was Azeredo Perdigão's encounter with Calouste Gulbenkian and the creation of the FCG in Portugal (Lourenço *apud* Teixeira 2014, 25). The fable-like aura that surrounds the Foundation's founding narrative seems to extend, then, to the very creation of its Departments.

In a newly created foundation, whose goals, as set by Azeredo Perdigão in 1956 in the Foundation Statutes, are charitable, artistic, educational and scientific, Madalena Perdigão would eventually find a place of enunciation and action from which to pursue her activity in the cultural field. From 1958 on, she directs the recently created FCG Music Department where, identifying «lacunae in the Portuguese musical environment», she would end up creating the Gulbenkian Orchestra (in 1962), the Gulbenkian Choir (in 1964) and the Gulbenkian Ballet (in 1965; Grupo Gulbenkian de Bailado, later Ballet Gulbenkian). The Music Department would also organise the Gulbenkian Music Festival, which would take place 13 times.

As *scenarios of modernity*, the FCG and the Music Department headed by Madalena Perdigão would play an active role in shaping the, more or less explicitly politicized, «pop people» and their cosmopolitan views throughout the «Long Sixties» in Portugal, at a time when the general scarcity of the war years gave way to a degree of material abundance, allowing for the creation of «lifestyles in which comfort and leisure, but also subjectivity and enjoyment, played a key role» (Bebiano 2010, 444). This was one of the factors that contributed to the developmentalist tendencies that would define the years of Marcelo Caetano, especially in terms of educational reforms (the «Veiga Simão Reform») – notwithstanding the repressive violence against students that marked the end of the «Marcelist Spring», as the regime insisted on an increasingly bloody Colonial War.

The Music Department would grant subsidies to music schools and award annual grants; it would give out scholarships; organise activities for professionals and teachers such as Music Education and Pedagogy Courses or Music Performance Development Courses and free entry initiatives for the general public such as Introductory Courses to the History of European Music or Introduction to Contemporary Music, as well as beginner courses for children (Vilar *apud* Teixeira 2015, 30-31). One should also mention the collaboration between this Department and the FCG's CIP – Centro de Investigação Pedagógica [Pedagogical Research Centre], created in 1962, one year after the foundation of the Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência – IGC [Gulbenkian Institute of Science]. In 1965 Archimedes da Silva Santos joined the Department, with the mission to do research into the psycho-pedagogy of Education Through Art and the potential ways of putting it into practice. At the same time, the Music Department, interested in exploring the pedagogical procedures of musical education understood as a major part of a wider discussion on the ways in which education and learning

take place, would rehearse new methods of musical pedagogy, namely those of Edgar Willems, Chapuis and Carl Orff.<sup>62</sup>

## Education Through Art and Art Education

Let us return to the interview with Arquimedes da Silva Santos, a key figure in the field of Education Through Art in Portugal.

*And so, João Farinha dies and Dr. Madalena...*

Yes, but one thing leaves no room for doubt: she knew perfectly well who I was [when she started working with me at the FCG and later when she called me to take part in the reform of the Conservatory]. I was always on the sidelines, I only joined the Polytechnic Institute and the Conservatory after that conference. She spoke to Veiga Simão, who knew what I was doing, and they asked me to continue...

*And many of the people who were then at the Gulbenkian....*

They were left-wing. Almost all, though not all, of them, were left-wing, but even those there who weren't were not very close to the regime.

[...] So I am in my Department [the CIP- Pedagogical Research Centre], which had nothing to do with the Music Department [...] So, how do we end up meeting? We meet because in the year I entered, or the following one, a kind of cultural or educational section was created at the CIP, identical to the one that existed in Coimbra. Thus, a course was also created at the Foundation, directed by Professor Delfim Santos [...] and I, alongside other professors, including Professor Breda Simões, the Di-

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62 On the introduction of these methods José Sasportes wrote in the *Diário Popular* in 1965: «The Gulbenkian Foundation has been promoting preparatory courses for primary teachers. There have been courses that follow the didactic approach advocated by Edgar Willems and Carl Orff, who disagree on many points, but both agree that before learning any musical technique it is imperative to develop the child's sensory perception as much as possible» (Sasportes *apud* Teixeira 2014, 30). Orff instruments are classroom instruments, designed and adapted so that all children have access to music. All these instruments, with the exception of the fipple flute, are simple, cheap and portable percussion instruments. The Willems Method is one of the world's most important methods in music education. Its methodology proposes an active and creative musical education, running parallel with the stages of the child's psychological development.

rector of the Psycho-pedagogy section of the CIP (there was another section, directed by Dr. Rui Grácio) joined.

*What was the course called?*

It was, it was a trainer course... I believe the goal was to offer pedagogical formation. To whom? To the teachers who came from the Music Department run by Madalena Perdigão, and who were the first in Portugal to introduce the Department of that Swiss music teacher...

*Orff?*

No. Edgar Willems. But the Orff method was introduced in Portugal through Madalena's Music Department and through the great composer Maria de Lurdes Martins, who specialised precisely in the Orff method. And this course at the Pedagogical Research Centre was created chiefly with the goal of training teachers who had learned these new methods of musical initiation.

[...]

*And what is the path between this experience and the reform of the National Conservatory in the 1970s?*

[...] These questions related to education and art come from the early 1940s, perhaps 1943, from a teacher, philosopher (and I think poet as well) Herbert Read. Read published a book, which much later came to be translated into Portuguese (but by the time I came across the Portuguese translation, I had read it over and over in Spanish) and this made some Portuguese, I among them, aware of the importance of art in the education of children. We knew a lot about education... but should we impose our understanding on the child's education, often not knowing anything about the child, what their needs are, etc.? It so happens that the Associação Portuguesa de Educação Artística (Portuguese Association for Art Education) was created in Portugal, in 1957, if I remember correctly, and was presided by Alice Gomes, a teacher [...]. And there were other teachers there, including João de Freitas Branco, and many others. These, in turn, organised a Congress, which was published around 1965, 1966, precisely focused on Art Education in Portugal, with a preface by Delfim Santos and the collaboration of João dos Santos, Rui Grácio...

*With the collaboration of the Gulbenkian?*

No. This is before that. Afterwards, there is a Congress at the Gulbenkian, in 1971, which I will go into next. [...]

Education Through Art, an international movement that originated in the homonymous book by Herbert Read in 1943, advocates that art should be at the basis of education, a way of fostering the integral and harmonious development of the personality. Maria Emília Brederode Santos clarifies the terminology, explaining that Education Through Art is an ongoing, lifelong process, from kindergarten to higher education, one that takes into account the student's emotional and affective development, and aims «not at the training of artists (although it may do so), nor at the training of new audiences (although it may also have that effect), nor at the facilitation of other forms of learning deemed more academic (although it certainly does that too)» (Santos 2013). The author identifies two key periods in its dissemination in Portugal: the 1950-60s, the «sowing» stage, as she calls it,<sup>63</sup> and the 1970-1980s, the moment it became the object of «institutional commitment», with the actions of the FCG in the 1960s functioning «as a kind of bridge» between the two phases, through the Pedagogical Research Centre and the Music Department. In 1971, on the 21 and 22 April, a conference on art education would take place at the FCG, after which Madalena Perdigão, at the invitation of Veiga Simão, would end up heading a Steering Committee for the Reform of the National Conservatory (CORCN; Comissão Orientadora para a Reforma do Conservatório Nacional), whose curricula had not been updated since the 1930s.<sup>64</sup>

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63 Echoing Arquimedes Silva Santos, she says: «Let us highlight the year 1956 [...]: it was in 1956 that Manuel Maria Calvet de Magalhães was appointed director of the Francisco de Arruda Technical Elementary School. It was also in 1956 that the Helen Keller Children's Centre was founded, dedicated to the integrated education of blind and partially sighted children, where [...] an active pedagogical nucleus would develop and become the embryo of the Modern School Movement in Portugal [...]. It was also in 1956 that the Portuguese Association for Education Through Art was founded, presided by teacher Alice Gomes, with child psychiatrists such as João dos Santos and Arquimedes da Silva Santos, painters such as Almada Negreiros and Nikias Skapinakis, musicologists such as João de Freitas Branco, and... Calvet de Magalhães [...]. Nikias Skapinakis tells us of the existence of 'two groups in Lisbon' that integrated the 'movement that gathered around the concepts of free drawing and painting': the first was formed by the teacher Cecília Menano (Ave-Maria school and private studio), by the psychiatrist Dr. João dos Santos and also by the Brazilian teacher Augusto Rodrigues. The second group gathered around Calvet de Magalhães' collaboration with Prof. Alice Gomes (French Lyceum). [...] In 1957, Nikias Skapinakis, in order to assess and denounce the outworn scenario in school education, organised a cycle of conferences, under the theme 'Aesthetic education and school education' [...]. This congress gave rise to the book *Educação Estética e Ensino Escolar*, published in 1966 by Europa-América, with a preface by Delfim Santos» (Santos 2013).

64 According to Stoer (1983, 793), the «Veiga Simão Reform» became popular when the minister that gave it its name exposed the guidelines of his reform on television, presenting to the country the relevant documents of his proposal, the School System Project and General Guidelines for Higher Education (Projecto do Sistema Escolar e Linhas Gerais do Ensino Superior) in 1971. In April 1973 it would

In the framework of the CORCN (initially conceived to operate for three years on a trial pedagogical basis, before being implemented), which includes figures such as Constança Capdeville, Luzia Maria Martins, Mário Barradas, João de Freitas Branco or José Sasportes (Vasconcelos 2011), the curricular years were increased, repertoires brought up to date and new courses introduced. According to António Pinto Ribeiro (*apud* Teixeira 2015, 42) the collaboration between the National Conservatory and the FCG would reach its peak at this point, with the granting of subsidies and allocation of equipment. New schools were also created, such as the Escola Superior de Cinema (Film School) and the Escola Superior de Educação pela Arte (College of Education Through Art), which, in a way, was an exception to the trial system under which CORCN was supposed to function, understandable given the accumulated experience of over more than a decade of educational projects of the FCG. Élia Teixeira summarises the broad guidelines for the Commission's action (Teixeira 2014, 43-44):

- (e) To restructure theatre training by making substantial changes to the curricula. This was done with the help of the theatre director Peter Brook and some of his close professional colleagues.
  
- b) To create a true Dance School, autonomous from the Theatre School, of which it had only been a section until then.
  
- c) To create a Film School that would combine the transmission of technical knowledge with a more artistic component.
  
- d) To establish the general guidelines for a reform in the Music School curriculum, whose study programmes dated back to 1930 and were rather outdated (Perdigão 1989c, 24).
  
- e) And, finally, the creation of a Escola Piloto de Formação de Professores de Educação pela Arte (Model School for the Training of Teachers of Education Through

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become law. It included the following innovations: «creation of state pre-school education; extension of the period of compulsory education to 8 years; extinction of special secondary education and creation of polytechnic institutes and other specialised higher education schools; generalisation of the Bachelor's degree», among others (Stoer *apud* Teixeira 2014, 47-49). Opinions were divided: for some, its aim was «to break the unity of the opposition», while for others it would be a factor for the democratisation of Portuguese society and social development (Stoer *apud* Teixeira).



Art (from 1974 onwards called under the name ESEA – Escola Superior de Educação pela Arte), integrated into the National Conservatory, and which ended up operating for about 10 years.

This was an interdisciplinary project that involved the inclusion of non-artistic subjects at preparatory level, and a commitment to the quality of teaching, for which new teachers would be recruited. At stake was something like the creation of a «Higher Institute of Arts» including the five restructured schools – Theatre, Cinema, Music, Dance and Education Through Art – which would be preceded by two secondary schools which relied on the others for the teaching of common disciplines. Combining art education and general education, the Conservatório Nacional would operate as a preparatory school and, from the age of 14, the secondary level courses would be structured with a vocational orientation, as a preparation for entrance into the various Higher Institutes of Arts. The task of training teachers of Education Through Art and of Artistic Teaching at secondary level, as suggested by Arquimedes da Silva Santos (Vieira 2014c), was another part of the process.

By bringing together pedagogues and artists from different fields into a single common project, the ESEA, which ran from 1971 to 1984, was one of the pinnacles of experimentation in this field, although it always operated in very precarious and unstable conditions. According to Brederode Santos, who was responsible for assessing the project when it was drawing to a close, this school, created during the period of major transformations that was the Veiga Simão Reform, in which decades of pedagogical experimentation came together, the project never «managed to be integrated into the Portuguese educational system and, in practice, nobody knew where to include it» (Santos 2013).<sup>65</sup> Perceived by some as lacking in pedagogical and artistic quality, and by others as a pioneering experience, the bureaucratic difficulties involved in recognising the degree awarded by the institution – or, rather, the difficulty in fitting it within the framework of the educational system that was then being created, where there seemed to be no place for an holistic approach one not geared towards immediate results, as was the case of Education Through Art – seem to have played a key

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65 According to Brederode Santos, who was commissioned by Madalena Perdigão to evaluate the Escola Superior de Educação pela Arte, this was the first evaluation of a higher education institution in Portugal – and fairly early, even at international level. (Teixeira 2014, 51). On this evaluation process, see the book that resulted from it (Santos 1994).

role in dictating its closure. According to Arquimedes da Silva Santos – for whom CORCN’s pilot experiment aimed to foster a nation-wide project of Education Through Art, from pre-school to higher education, or at least to bring the country closer to this goal – the ESEA, «promote[d] a Pedagogy centred on the child, on sensitivity and affection» and, short-lived though it was, nevertheless had some «influence on the Portuguese educational system» (*ibid.*, 51). And although the Reform Project was completed in 1974, three years after the pilot experiment had begun, when the 25 of April revolution broke out the Steering Committee for the Reform of the Conservatory collectively resigned.<sup>66</sup>

## FCG and Education: articulations between the Pedagogical Research Centre (CIP) and the Music Department

In the study by Jorge Ramos do Ó and António da Nóvoa on the educational work of the FCG, it is suggested that the initial programme in this field had been outlined «from a map of the goals and needs as outlined by the authoritarian state», namely on the basis of studies by Minister Carneiro Pacheco, in 1936 (Nóvoa and Ó 2006, 20). Underlining the emphasis placed by Azeredo Perdigão and Ferrer Correia on «educating» rather than «instructing», the authors refer to Perdigão’s analysis of the legislative initiatives of the Estado Novo, in which he notes that «the government considered that it was not enough to instruct, it was also necessary to educate» – a conviction that for him had for long acquired the status of «a true postulate».

And indeed, in the 1930s youth organisations such as the Junta Nacional or the Instituto de Alta Cultura, but also the Mocidade Portuguesa, which covered the entire youth spectrum, or the Obra das Mães pela Educação Nacional, which would essentially place pre-school education in the hands of women, had been created. It was then, within the Salazarist legislative framework of the mid 1930s, that Azeredo Perdigão would foresee the «planning of an educational work» which, if carried out «in depth and with the indispensable adaptations»,

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66 According to José Sasportes: «Across every school, the school boards were dismissed, the Conservatory being the exception. But all of us [in the Reform Committee] decided to resign» (José Sasportes *apud* Teixeira 2014, 51).

would bring about «a broad transformation of our mentality and a substantial rise in our cultural level» (*ibid.*, 21-22). This did not prevent the FCG from «explicitly claiming for itself, from the early years of its existence, a position of great autonomy and independence», not satisfied with being, «as some would have wished, a mere instrument for the distribution of subsidies controlled from above» (*ibid.*).

Aware that it would be impossible to launch programmes that did not at least obtain the consent of government officials, especially if these were carried out through the Ministry of Education and its schools, the FCG would work in articulation with private institutions, especially on experimental subjects such as the arts, whose teaching was not encouraged in public schools. Focusing on *being* rather than *knowing*, and therefore devoting great attention to extracurricular activities (theatre, reading, newspapers and magazines, and the visual arts), the FCG's intervention programme in the field of education, according to these authors, was structured around three main axes: «(i) scholarships; (ii) support for extracurricular activities; and (iii) the establishment and maintenance of a network of itinerant and fixed libraries».

This would not, however, deter it from undertaking experimental initiatives, «some with proven results, others not so much», namely the creation of the CIP (Perdigão *apud* Teixeira 2014, 22). The creation of this centre should be understood in the light of the fact that Research Centres were given little room to develop within universities – which would lead the FCG to launch a programme to support scientific research capable of contributing to the modernisation of society, producing knowledge that could bring about institutional decisions, particularly in the field of the Social Sciences. The fruit of an idea that begins to germinate in 1960, with the Science sector's autonomisation from the Educational sector, what was at stake was a debate on «the role of Universities and the Foundation as host bodies for Research Centres» (*ibid.*, 72), a debate that is still very much alive in Portuguese society, and which at the time would result in the creation of the Centre for Biological Studies (1962) and the creation of the CIP (1963) with Delfim Santos as Director and Manuel Breda Simões as Deputy Director. This would be divided in two Departments: the Serviço de Psicopedagogia, Psicologia e Orientação Vocacional [Department of Psycho-pedagogy, Psychology and Vocational Guidance] and the Serviço de Pedagogia, Didáctica e Educação Permanente [Department of Pedagogy, Didactics and Permanent Education]. In their general assessment of the 16 years of activity of this centre,

Jorge Ramos do Ó and António Nóvoa claim that its unsettled existence limited its scope, at first due to a lack of means and later due to an overlap with the expansion of pedagogy within the universities.

There is a history of Education Through Art in Portugal, one made up of multiple encounters, debates, readings, conferences and publications but, above all, one that emerges from concrete pedagogical experiences and subsequent reflection on them: this history would converge in the ACARTE and permeate its actions, although its most tangible expression is the Children's Art Centre (Centro de Arte Infantil) which, while having its own pavilion, would reach well beyond its walls. This history can be traced back to the gradual formation of the «*pop* people», a process that quickly accelerated during «Marcelismo» with the «Veiga Simão» reform which, for the first time since 1926, seemed to attribute a «surprising» importance to the education of the masses. Until then, the latter were largely illiterate, and the Catholic Church held considerable sway in the educational field (Stoer 1983, 794), in a country where the «production and distribution of symbolic goods was deemed able to replace economic ones», the education system playing a key role in the social resolution of tensions and crises that were increasingly hard to ignore (*ibid.*). Emphasising the importance of mass education and the democratisation of learning – even if this learning was aimed at training workers for the emerging tertiary classes – had an impact, as would be expected, on the forms of democratic popular struggle.

The experiments across a variety of fields that would eventually culminate in this moment, namely Education Through Art, not only bore emancipatory potential but also, at times, a radicalism that is difficult to grasp from today's point of view. In Education Through Art, what was at stake was not the creation of artists or the «animation» of free time (which today we would ascribe to After-school centres and workshops, Extracurricular activities and Educational Departments), but rather the development of children's imagination and sensory, interpretive and critical capacities, with no direct link to a rationale of employability or symbolic capital. Neither is it geared towards projecting potential future gains, within the logic of entrepreneurship, where each accessory activity is perceived as a potential valuable ingredient for a subsequent project or for a successful start-up. In short, it was not a question of turning will, desire or enthusiasm into capital, subsuming it under its potential profitability, nor of understanding the arts as a complement or accessory to an education focused on employability. Instead, it was a matter of an integrated and integral concept that

included the manifold expressions and languages as elements able to produce knowledge, to create a world.

«Which Gulbenkian do we have, which Gulbenkian do we want?»

At the height of the revolutionary period, the FCG is at the centre of a polemic that reached a peak, in terms of its public resonance, in the thematic dossier «Que Gulbenkian temos, que Gulbenkian queremos?»<sup>67</sup> [Which Gulbenkian do we have, which Gulbenkian do we want?], which ran over three issues of the *Artes Letras e Ciências* supplement of the weekly newspaper *Expresso*, edited by Helena Vaz da Silva.<sup>68</sup> In a controversy in which Mário Vieira de Carvalho played a key role, pointing the finger at the autocratic direction of Azeredo Perdigão and its complicity with the regime (the fascist administrators who were part of the board of directors of this state within Salazar's state), as well as at what was classified as its 'colossal structural flaw', that is to say, the dual nature of a foundation which granted subsidies at the same time as it presided over its own initiatives» (Pomar 2015), the intersection between the two generating a narrow elite and spheres of influence. According to Alexandre Pomar's take on this polemic, there was an expectation that, in tandem with the newly formed state, there would be a greater redistribution of funds, with «nationalization as a more or less explicit goal» (*ibid.*).

But more than going into the details of the controversy, I would like to focus on the title of the thematic dossier. Not only does FCG appear as something one has – or rather, *we* have («Which Gulbenkian do we have»), but also as something

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67 Mário Vieira de Carvalho, Jorge Peixinho, Joel Serrão, José-Augusto França, José Blanco, António Ferrer Correia and Vítor Sá Machado (the last two administrators of the FCG at the time), and José de Azeredo Perdigão and Madalena Perdigão themselves, offered their testimony in these pages («Que Gulbenkian temos, que Gulbenkian queremos?» in the weekly *Expresso*, 8 March 1975). It should be noted that, according to Vargas, over the previous decades, with the exception of a few pieces published by Augusto M. Seabra in *Expresso* and *Público* newspapers, «any kind of debate or dispute about the guidelines of the Gulbenkian Music Department has almost vanished from the newspapers», with virtually no studies or reviews focusing on their action (Vargas 2011, 408-409). The exception being the extinction of the Gulbenkian Ballet in 2005.

68 *Expresso*, Suplemento Artes, Letras e Ciências, March 1975.

that could be changed by collective will and action («Which Gulbenkian do we want?»). The use of the first-person plural to speak of its activity may appear in today's eyes as disconcerting – unless one understands the founding actions of the FCG as subject to being addressed under the category of *the common*. In other words, in 1974 the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation was already seen as *everyone's* (i.e., ours), which is not far from what Jorge Ramos do Ó and António Nóvoa would claim in 2006 when they said that «the Foundation changed the country. Yet, at the same time, the country changed the Foundation. [...] None of us can imagine Portugal without *its* Foundation» (Nóvoa and Ó 2007).

– How can we forge a vocabulary to address the specific ways in which something becomes constitutively *common*?

– And what are the ways to ensure its transmission as such?

The discussion (and even the construction of a lexicon) that would allow us to think of the «common» and, in particular, of the «common» within the cultural field, is still underway. A gaze into the past filtered through a conceptual lens that is neither that of «the public» nor that of «the private», but rather of the common, may perhaps contribute to this discussion. In this sense, an analysis of the «cultural trajectory» through which the Gulbenkian as a *scenario of modernity* becomes *our* Gulbenkian might prove illuminating.

Anticipating a sit-down strike followed by the creation of a workers' council in November 1974, «which aimed to work critically with the Administration in all its tasks, particularly in the programming of the Foundation» (Dionísio 1993, 188), Madalena Perdigão will tender her resignation on 30 September 1974 after having been accused of: 1) elitism and centralism in the programming, said to be addressed to a small Lisbon circle; 2) «cultural imperialism» vis-à-vis the other existing institutions (unable to compete with the means and resources of the Foundation both in terms of their own resident groups and in the organisation of concerts); 3) favouring foreign productions at the expense of national ones; 4) paying higher fees to non-Portuguese musicians; and, finally, 5) having become a corporation, no longer in the service of the public – accusations she would contest by claiming: a) the Department's important role in cultural decentralisation – the Gulbenkian Ballet or the Orchestra having regularly performed in different venues and cities around the country; b) the support to music conservatories; c) the many music initiation courses set up throughout the country; d) the policy of access to

shows at reduced prices implemented by the Department; and e) the weight of the Avenida de Berna building in the overall activities of the FCG.

Eduarda Dionísio describes this episode by examining a leaflet distributed at the time by the FCG workers to the population (Dionísio 1994), noting that the activities show a shift from the usual programming choices, mentioning, along with the regular awarding of scholarships and subsidies, the allocation of 465.000 escudos in subsidies to 21 music bands as well as to the Federação Nacional de Colectividades de Cultura e Recreio [National Federation of Cultural and Recreational Associations]; concerts and ballet performances at the Robbialac, Lever, Lisnave and other large factories; the implementation of a plan for musical decentralisation in fifty or so different places, where the FCG sought to attract the interest of local educational establishments, cultural and recreational societies, military barracks; and the distribution of 2.454 thousand escudos among a number of institutions (including various neighbourhood committees, Cooperative Árvore, the Portuguese Modern School Movement) for «development initiatives, mainly through the cinema, adult literacy programmes and books» (*ibid.*, 191).

In these troubled times of change, what was at stake was securing, as a matter of urgency, rights «already conquered by other democracies», such as wage justice, housing, schooling, public health, and, on the other hand, «of establishing, in the new society that had emerged from the Revolution, the rights that had been the mainstay of 1960s counter-cultural discourse – such as the unconditional right to free speech, to the generalised and decentralised enjoyment of culture and leisure, to sexual freedom, or to equal gender opportunities (which in Portugal would intersect with the right to divorce, only then recognised)» (Grande 2009, 207). Thus, different «generations of civil rights, whose incubation had historically occurred in circumstances that one might call conflicting – the first [generation] through the actions of the European welfare states; the second, through the voice of nonconformist civil movements, so often in opposition to these paternalistic policies» seemed to converge here, in a kind of «short circuit» (Santos 1994).

From some of the «shifts from the usual choices» that Eduarda Dionísio discerns in the Foundation's report, the support given to Music Bands or to the Federação Nacional de Colectividades de Cultura e Recreio, organisations that would later enjoy a regular presence in the ACARTE's programme (between 1984 and 1989), seems to indicate that the programming of this Department had taken in some of the criticisms levelled at the Foundation's Music Department in the context of the 1974 controversy.

In 1978, as a result of her work within the CORCN, Madalena Perdigão was invited by the Minister of Education, Sottomayor Cardia, to head the Ministry of Education's Office for Art Education, a position she occupied until 1984. She created a Commission to lay out a National Plan for Art Education (Plano Nacional de Educação Artística – PNEA), where, according to Arquimedes da Silva Santos, the concepts of Education Through Art and Education for Art were officially used for the first time in the country. Perdigão, who thought it essential to integrate art education in the general education system, identifies three different approaches within the concept of art education: «education through art»/«art in education»/and «education for art». The first is tied to the development of one's personality through artistic expression; the second, to the use of art as a pedagogical tool, geared towards developing an artistic culture; the third, to the training of artists, with artistic production as its ultimate goal (Teixeira 2014, 62). The aim was to foster an inclusive Education Through Art, from kindergarten to higher education, and to recognise artistic teaching as a higher specialisation, thus allowing for a fairer and more informed choice for those who might want to follow the Art Teaching path. The point, then, was to nurture men and women, before nurturing artists as such, stimulating their imaginations, sensibility and critical sense, instead of merely transmitting knowledge and techniques to be learned by rote. Special attention was to be paid to the figure of educational agents, art educators in particular, and all teachers were to receive psycho-pedagogical training as part of their preparation for the job. The relationship with local communities was also a central concern of the project, which invested in its regional vocation: teaching should be tied to the socio-cultural specificities of each local community.<sup>69</sup>

As Arquimedes da Silva Santos revealed, the group that drew up this plan was aware of how difficult it would be for a project of this kind to be accepted and put into practice in a country where, with the exception of a handful of private establishments, artistic expressions were virtually non-existent. Indeed, the PNEA was never approved and Madalena Perdigão left the Ministry of Education in 1984 without any of her projects ever being implemented. However, some «seeds of ideas» in the Plan seem to have survived and were later integrated into other edu-

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69 The PNEA was initially be based on three major guidelines: 1) recognition of university status for higher (post-secondary) art education; 2) application of the principle of regionalisation to the final year of secondary education and to tertiary education, namely non-university education; and 3) Inclusion of Education Through Art in the Portuguese education system (Perdigão *apud* Teixeira 2015, 63).



cational projects. In 1986, the Framework Law for the Education System («Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo»; Law No. 46/86 of 14 October 1986) was approved, and some of its sections coincided with certain goals laid out in the PNEA. A decree law on art education was also announced for the following year, though it would only be passed more than a decade later, in 1990, with no mention of the earlier work by the PNEA group, or of the movement sparked by the CORCN, which would insist that art education practices in the country were still insufficient, especially when compared with the rest of the EEC.

### «What we believe»

In 1984, Madalena Perdigão – who, in 1983, at the invitation of the then Minister of Culture and Scientific Coordination, Francisco Lucas Pires, had returned to programming, to organise the I Festival Internacional de Música de Lisbon [1<sup>st</sup> Lisbon International Music Festival] – would leave the Ministry of Education to return to the FCG, where the CAM had been inaugurated one year earlier. She would then preside over what was to be her last project, the ACARTE, of which she was, as mentioned earlier, the founder and first director. The creation of this Department was the final stage of a long journey where art, expression and a holistic approach to education and training are intertwined, as the ground, as it were, on which a better, fairer and more peaceful society could be built. In this regard, one should attend to the second point of the ACARTE programme, under the heading «Em que acreditamos» [What we believe], within the framework of the ideals of Education Through Art championed by Herbert Read and later defended, among others, by Arquimedes da Silva Santos and Madalena Perdigão:

#### WHAT WE BELIEVE

That Art is essential to Life.

That Art is an imperative form of Education.

That it is the source of individual and social progress.

That it is a factor in bringing people together and bringing about Peace.

That everyone should have access to Art in its multiple forms.

We are still in 1984 here. And art appears as something essential to life itself, inalienable from education, and a «source of progress», an engine of peace among people and peoples. In this statement of principles, one can also discern notions of the role of art that originate from distinct historical periods: 1. Art as Education – which can be traced back to notions that come, if not from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century/early 20<sup>th</sup> century, at least from the 1930s (which Azeredo Perdigão comes in contact with in the early stages of the FCG, in the 1950s); 2. Art as a factor in bringing people together and breeding Peace – which recalls the European postwar rebuilding efforts (in which the Foundation's own action and the building of its Head Office can be included) but which resonates, in the Portuguese case, with the more recent experience of the colonial war; 3. Democratisation of access to art in its multiple forms, which included the art made in the 1960s but also the broadening of the very concept of art, a framework within which one might include both the Foundation's initial impetus, its subsequent construction and, above all, the opening of the CAM.

In the creation of the ACARTE, rationales with multiple origins, and from different periods, converge: the desire for a museum of modern art that can be traced back to at least the postwar period; the debates around the creation of cultural centres on a human scale, typical of the 1960s; and experiments in Education Through Art, also in the 1960s, and their subsequent implementation in Portugal in the 1970s. It should come as no surprise, then, that such a mixture of temporalities comes to the fore in the institution's statement of principles – as well as in its programming. And other temporalities would later converge on it, continuing to overlap distinct periods and rationales, finally coming together in the explosive blend that was the ACARTE in the 1980s.

But for an understanding of the ACARTE as a place one needs to situate it both within the architectural framework of the Avenida de Berna complex, i.e. in the CAM building, and within the *scenario of modernity* that is the Gulbenkian, an institution that is at times thought of as *ours* (as part of a *commons*); yet one also needs to inscribe its space, as a physical place and as a set of practices, within the *exhibitionary complex* to which it belongs: the network of places and practices that emerged in 1980s Lisbon. Thus, there is a clear link between FCG's private action and official state purposes, one worth investigating further. In this context and as far as Education Through Art is concerned, it would be necessary to attend, for example, to the complexity of the movement that goes from experiments in Education Through Art (which emerge within the private sphere of the FCG, in articu-

lation with private schools), to the state action of the CORCN and even in the failed PNEA (which aimed to extend this experimentation from the private to the public sphere), all culminating in Madalena Perdigão's last project, the ACARTE (again in the private sphere). It would be necessary to ask what is at stake in these shifts and passages, which pedagogical experiments take place in each of these private and public spaces, who they are aimed for, as well as the political meanings they carry, and how the public/private relation changes them – or not.

In this sense, it would also be a question of further examining the action of those who in Part I of this book I suggested we call *indoor public spaces*, seeking to understand their action as constituting a *commons* and perceiving it as closely interconnected with the aforementioned creation of a «*pop* people». In other words, it would be important to think through not only the experiments that could take place in each of these *indoor public spaces*, and the specificities of their «indoor» nature (which doors are we talking about?), but also of their addressees (the «*pop* people») and what their reception signifies, while being aware of their complexity, at times riven with contradictions. In this whole process, the aforementioned *logic of the abundance of things* comes into play and is heightened with the country's entry into the European Economic Community, in the 1980s, in parallel with discourses on the modernisation of the country.

From 1984 to 1989, operating through what we have called a *curatorship of lack*, the ACARTE Department materialised and hosted in its programming this entanglement of temporalities and its various kinetics, among which the push to modernise society but also aspirations bred by earlier periods, namely within the utopian experiments of the «Long Sixties». This process – and perhaps all the more so because its programming focused on what takes place «beyond the museum galleries», that is to say, on the performative, the relational and the discursive (that which is not embodied in a work *qua* object) – proved to be particularly appropriate as an expression of the contradictions of the project of modernity, i.e. of the «brutality of the mission» – to recall the phrase from Almada Negreiros' 1917 manifesto. This mission, it was said, could only be achieved through a «self-learning» and a self-commitment to «Modern European Civilization», so as to «transform» the Portuguese into Europeans. Somewhere between the «museum», the «school», the «island» and the «festival», there are complex reasons why the ACARTE's unswerving action throughout these years seems to evade linear analyses or fixed organising categories.

## 10.

### AN ARCHIVE FOR THE ACARTE (1984-1989)

As part of the research work from which this book emerged, I gave a year-by-year account of the activity of the ACARTE Department under Madalena Perdigão, the basis of which was the display of selected material on each event along a digital timeline designed for that purpose. The «Timeline Digital ACARTE 1984-1989» is available (with restricted access) in the FCG Library (Biblioteca de Arte), in Lisbon. Organized chronologically, it provides access to programme notes, photographs and a selection of press clippings from the ACARTE Department, and also allows for a search by genre, artist, date and keyword. It includes brief commentaries on each initiative and a critical assessment of their impact.<sup>70</sup>

The creation of this digital repository must be understood, first of all, as a result of the dissemination of recording and copy equipment such as scanners or audio recorders as well as free-access software, but also, more crucially, in the light of projects such as the avant-garde archive *ubuweb.com* or the experimental poetry website *PO.EX*, whose impact on artistic production should be underlined. This Digital Timeline shares with the internet a logic of abundance, inasmuch as putting something online is to grant it existence and exposure. Implied in the gesture of making something accessible is the notion that distribution has a generative potential akin to that of the creative act. Thus, in a context such as that of the first decade of twenty-first century in which – with the exception of the Forum Dança's Documentation Centre and a handful of libraries – little or nothing of the recent history of the performing arts in the country could be accessed in an organised fashion, to make the ACARTE artworks, programmes, photographs

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70 The website was programmed by Isabel Brison and designed by Ana Teresa Ascensão. For the work of digitising the materials and developing the web version to be loaded into the interface, I worked closely with Emília Rosa, the Department's Former Production Director whose project of high-resolution digitisation was followed.

and videos available seemed pivotal. It was, one might say, a radical gesture, a tool for a *commons-to-come*. As a tool of – or for – the common, this timeline was thought in line with a series of minor archives (Deleuze 2003) that should be linked with ongoing experiments in performative forms of transmission, in which one might include experimental museums and their assemblages of heterogeneous elements – as described by Noémie Solomon (2012). This would involve both tracing key lines of force and performative influences, rendering them intelligible, and allowing for potential new artistic uses, giving artists the opportunity to examine and explore in detail the possibilities contained in earlier artworks, as well as the existential and political forms of experimentation they carry (Lepecki 2010). It was also a matter of not letting dramaturgical and choreographic affinities and affiliations fade away, thus continuing the transmission of repertoires and the fleshing out of influences that is so pivotal in this field. The gesture of creating an archive was thus, simply put, a direct result of its non-existence. It was as if, as in the posters that Ana Hatherly collected from the streets of Lisbon in 1977, the action of the ACARTE from 1984 to 1989, in the wake of its extinction (2003), alongside that of the Gulbenkian Ballet (2005) and the Fine Arts Department (2010), and later of the Ministry of Culture itself (2011), had also been the result of a *décolage*: a way of removing it from their present, giving it an existence as only a series of reverberations. It was as if at the time this research was taking place there was a closing of many of the «openings of April» we discussed above, marking the end of a cycle. In 2009, when this research project was developed, the ACARTE was an *absent presence* – i.e. it was present *as* absent. The project meant not so much writing the history of the ACARTE but rather an attempt to open its research up to future studies, presenting it in a context – 1980s Portugal, to be more precise, an under-studied decade.

The choice of a linear chronology, in turn, was tied to a need to bring to light, along a temporal axis, the profusion and plurality of experiences condensed in such a short span, allowing a glimpse into its rhythms and inflections, helping to examine a period when the high profile of certain events (such as the ACARTE Encounters) often overshadowed its other facets and the extremely diverse nature of the initiatives.<sup>71</sup> Just as important in choosing this arrangement was the fact

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71 It became clear in the interviews that many people confuse the ACARTE Department with the ACARTE Encounters, an issue worthy of examination in a study focused on the memory of the Department, i.e., how it is remembered. In this sense, it is important to point out that this narrative does not include a series of episodes and comments gathered in the 30 interviews carried out. This material

that it allows one to place *side by side* – as it was then, at least temporally – events as disparate as the series of Fanfare Bands in the Amphitheatre and the ACARTE Encounters – New Theatre Dance of Europe, programmed by the same Department. When these initiatives and events are presented in this way, the productive and generative character of the ACARTE comes to the fore, giving us a sense of how events generate other events and initiatives follow from other initiatives, shattering the available narratives into multiple partial episodes with various protagonists, along a structure that is not necessarily linear.<sup>72</sup>

Wanting to avoid repeating a narrative similar to the one the timeline makes available, here I offer, instead, a chronological summary, followed by a brief inventory of some of the recurrent elements uncovered by an analysis of the archive.

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has been gathered, it guided the research process and is reflected in its writing, but the treatment and organisation necessary to proceed with its systematisation and analysis would direct the research towards the *memory* of the department's actions. This, although it does not run counter to the aims of this research, falls outside of its core concerns. As already mentioned, ideally the treatment, discussion, systematisation and disclosure of these oral testimonies would complement the digital timeline ACARTE 1984-1989 when it would be made available to the public.

- 72 Methodological notes: this digital tool was built through a systematisation of selected documents from the archives of 1) programme notes and brochures of the ACARTE activities; 2) press clippings and 3) photographs of shows and public activities. Since I only had sporadic access to the Department's production files (which were not systematised), a detailed analysis of the Department's organisation chart and internal dynamics, or an examination (crucial, but beyond the scope of this study) of its internal procedures (budgets, production sheets, contracts, letters, etc.) was left out, with a few exceptions. Having consulted the non-catalogued archives, some initiatives are necessarily better documented than others. After consultation of the archives, not catalogued at the time, it became clear that some initiatives are better documented than others, as is the case, it seems, of the ACARTE Encounters, whose press reviews, especially from the second and third editions, is almost entirely compiled and organised in a separate brochure, which means it is overrepresented in the archives. However, since the scope of this work is to interpret the activity of the department *as a whole*, the less documented initiatives are likewise mentioned, and the lack of information on them registered. What is presented here is then, on the basis of the data available at the time of the research, a complete narrative with noted insufficiencies, rather than a partial but thorough analysis. Whenever there are non-referenced quotations, as in the case of some press excerpts, we will refer to the programme notes, written by Madalena Perdigão, generally offered in full on the timeline. Whenever such omissions occur, the text signals the lack of data, whether it refers to events and initiatives that are mentioned but whose programme notes, photographs and reviews were not found, or to dates, as is the case with press clippings. Most of the authors of the photographs are also not credited, which means the whole collection is credited, simply, as «courtesy Gulbenkian Archives». Some of these lacunae are obstacles to a more detailed study, namely the lack of files on «Jazz in August» from its third edition onwards, or the scant information on animated cinema.

## THE ACARTE from 1984 to 1990

1984

Three weeks after the press conference that announced the opening of the Department, the ACARTE got underway. It was the 1 June 1984, Children's Day, and there were performances by the Circo Mariano Franco and by the Colectividade Cultural e Recreativa de Santa Catarina, a structure that was involved in social work and that was the foundation for the Chapitô circus school and its social-cultural project. This was followed by the sixth Encontro Nacional de Teatro e Infância [National Meeting on Theatre and Childhood], in which we find echoes of the debates on theatre and education that took place after the 25 April, with groups such as Teatro Amador de Intervenção, or O Bando. Parallel to the work of the Children's Art Centre [CAI] – which was part of the ACARTE but had its own pavilion and was directed, with a degree of autonomy, by Natália Pais<sup>73</sup> – the first years of the ACARTE are marked by the episodic presence (usually around the Christmas holidays) of activities for children and youth, such as puppet shows, children or animated films programmed by Vasco Granja.

Still in 1984, there was the Fête de la Musique, or Music Day, a major international initiative created in 1982 by Jack Lang (and still ongoing) – in Lisbon, at the time, under the name «Festa Europeia da Música». As part of this celebration, the ACARTE, in line with one of its priorities (the organisation of international initiatives), hosted the Grupo de Música Contemporânea de Lisbon, led by Jorge Peixinho, in its multipurpose room, and in the open air amphitheatre, concerts by Coral Audite Nova, Escola de Aprendizizes da Sociedade Filarmónica Olivaleense and Banda de Corda e Batuque.

However, as mentioned above, the flagship initiative was undoubtedly the Almada project, which included an exhibition organised by the CAM and a Conference organised by the ACARTE, the multimedia projection of Ernesto Sousa's *Almada, Nome de Guerra*, and three shows: Almada's plays *Deseja-se Mulher*, di-

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73 The existence of a space for children in the foundation was not, however, new. Previously, activities for children took place in «some sheds in the park» and, prior to that, in the Departments that existed in the foundation before the inauguration of its head office, as Natália Pais tells us in an interview held on 11-7-11. She added some details to the history of the collaboration between the Music Department and the Centro de Investigação Pedagógica [Pedagogical Research Centre], but data on this matter remain patchy. On the CAI activities, see below, in the present chapter.

rected by Fernanda Lapa and *Antes de Começar*, directed by Lourdes Castro and Manuel Zimbro; and a multidisciplinary montage of fragments from Almada's work, Castro Guedes' *Almada Dia Claro – espectáculo de música, teatro e dança*, in the museum's galleries. Both Fernanda Lapa and Lourdes Castro took part in performances or productions that Fernando Amado staged at *Casa da Comédia*:<sup>74</sup> intentionally or not, the ACARTE thus aligns itself with the modern, experimental impetus of Fernando Amado's project at Casa da Comédia. In the words of Madalena Perdigão:

Almada, then.

And why Almada's theatre?

Because Almada's theatre bears the yeast of novelty, the mark of modernity is imprinted on it.

And because it is theatre. Because theatre is trying to tread its own path in the modern world and because it falls upon us to help it find itself.

And the activity of the Department continued, starting a series of initiatives that would last over the years, such as *Jazz em Agosto*, in its first year organised in partnership with the jazz club Hot Club de Portugal and featuring exclusively young Portuguese musicians such as Quinteto de Maria João or Quarteto de António Pinho Vargas. There was also the «Bandas de Música» initiative (in the Amphitheatre), through which Madalena Perdigão continued and refashioned the support that the Music Department had offered to fanfare bands since the 1950s.<sup>75</sup> The ACARTE also hosted an animated film course, an idea that emerged, it seems, «from the drawing board» of the architect in charge of the

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74 The newspaper *Comércio do Porto* (16-6-1984) reports that the production *Deseja-se Mulher* «was written in 1928 but only performed on stage in 1963 in a production by Fernando Amado. Fernanda Lapa made her debut as an actress in it, playing the role of 'Vampa'. It was also with this play that she made her debut as a theatre director, staging it at the Casa da Comédia in 1972. In 1956, at the Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, Fernando Amado was also responsible for directing Lourdes Castro in the role of the main character in *Antes de Começar*, a production directed by Manuel Zimbro in 1984, with Lourdes Castro in the same role. It was, therefore, a 'rerun'».

75 On this subject, one reads in the press, in 1986: «Whoever follows the Portuguese popular movement cannot fail to recognise the major role played by the fanfare bands that, at the end of the last century, and even into the first decades of our century, were true schools of civic culture, gradually smothered by a policy of cultural constriction. The fanfare bands disappeared, the public lost its interest in them, because there no cultural policy in the field. It was with the arrival of the FCG that a movement of revival of many philharmonic bands in dire financial straits began. By way of courses for conductors or



CAM project, Sir Lesley Martin.<sup>76</sup> Or even dance forms distinct from those offered by the Ballet Gulbenkian and the Music Department, such as the show by the North American Molissa Fenley, which sold out every date, with long queues to secure tickets (Pinto Ribeiro 2006). Near the end of the year, at the suggestion of the Centro Nacional de Cultura, inaugurating the practice of hosting large-scale discursive forums (often alongside other FCG Departments and proposed by academics) the ACARTE hosts the conference «O futuro é já hoje?» [«Is the future today?»] with a series of distinguished lecturers, Edgar Morin among them. The title seems to suggest a certain exhaustion in the very idea of the future, a commonplace in the discourse that the 1980s produced about itself as a decade.<sup>77</sup>

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subsidies for instruments and uniforms, the bands returned to public concerts, processions, popular festivals, fighting with the ‘canned’ or rented music for their place in the pleasurable arena of entertainment, competition, socialisation. It is also within this laudable programme that the Department of Animation, Artistic Creation and Education Through Art promotes a series of open-air concerts in the magnificent Gulbenkian amphitheatre. [...] These feature worthy musical bands, both military and civilian, with individuals of great artistic value, who play an important and enriching role in Portuguese cultural life» (*Diário de Notícias*, 8-9-1986). Reflecting on this effort, near the end of her life, Madalena Perdigão underlined the social virtues of the fanfare bands, «given the sense of solidarity they generate among the performers», hoping that they could spread the taste for Music amongst population groups «that would otherwise be forced to listen only to recorded music» and recalled that some of them had their first contact with the Lisbon public in this context – «which, taken together, helps us to form an image of the real country that we are» (Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão, programme notes for the Fanfare Bands in the Amphitheatre 1989).

76 On this, Azeredo Perdigão wrote: «By creating the Department of Artistic Creation and Education Through Art – the ACARTE – the FCG aimed, among other objectives, to contribute to the development of forms of artistic activity scarcely established in Portugal at the time. Within the frame of this last objective (...) the Animation project of the Modern Art Centre can be thought of as having its origin in the architect who designed that building. During 1983, while that elegant structure was taking shape in Lisbon, the foundations of the first programme of creative activities were being laid in London, and they would then take place in the specially designed workshops of the new Centre», in «Retrato de Portugal», final presentation of the Introduction to Animated Cinema Course.

77 On this issue, see Vieira (2015, 76): «*O Futuro Era Agora [The Future Was Now]* is also the title of a book of testimonials coordinated by the anti-fascist militant Francisco Martins Rodrigues, published in 1994, ten years after this conference, and which focused on the events that took place ten years before, at the time of the 25 April 1974. [...] In 1994, going against the grain, Martins Rodrigues told stories about the 25 April that contradicted the official narrative of the establishment in the period led by Aníbal Cavaco Silva. And through those stories he claimed that the future, at the time, had been now: in 1974. Between the dystopian future predicted in 1948 and revisited in a conference at the Gulbenkian in 1984, and the lost future revealed in 1994, recalling 1974, the phrases ‘is the future today?’ and ‘the future was now’ [...] share the coincidence between present and future – as if history, after that moment, had come to an end. Or, to be more precise, as if, in the first case – in ‘is the future today?’ – it could have come to an end there, in that very moment – and before it lay an infinite plain where the

## The Children's Art Centre: from the ACARTE to the whole country

With a small pavilion near the southwest entrance of the park, and its own administrator, Natália Pais (also Deputy Director of the Education Department, which had a joint budget with CAI),<sup>78</sup> one should see this Centre as inseparable from the ACARTE project as a whole, as well as from the already mentioned experiments by the FCG in the field of Art Education. But the CAI was, first and foremost, a physical space. A building isolated from the rest of the foundation, tucked in a corner of the garden, a smaller and more informal space devoted exclusively to children. Through the large glass pane façade, one could guess the goings-on inside: there were toys, drawings, a playroom – or, more precisely, a toy library, the first in the country. In the entrance hall, there was a vestibule where children would leave their bags, coats and shoes, similar to those we find in preschools. Then, inside, there was an abundance of clothes – theatre props – that children could use, though adults also made use of them. The toy library was open the whole summer.

One should emphasise the plural role of the CAI. On the one hand, the centre offers on-site activities (both permanent and temporary) for children and schools, as an autonomous space, tailor-made for children; on the other hand, it takes on the ongoing task of providing training for teachers and technicians who worked all over the country, often in institutions that the centre visited or even supported, namely toy libraries. In this sense, the work of CAI, often materialised in the form of exhibitions with a guiding theme and various ramifications, ended up taking on a different character, one that proved fundamental in that period: itinerancy, or decentralisation, which meant the exhibition panels and some of

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present, heightened by the absence of a future, could only venture into each instant. In the second case – ‘the future was now’ – this presented itself as opportunity, perhaps one last chance, perhaps a lost chance (since, after all, the future had already been and gone), for the collective will to change the course of things, and for them to have gone some another way. [...] One of the perplexities that the 1980s seem to offer to those who peer the materials produced at the time is precisely the vertigo of the self-perception of a supposed arrival at this point; the confrontation with a temporality that, more than a narrative for organising time, presents itself as a feeling of self-perception of an immanent temporality. The one which the phrase ‘The End of History’, the title of the book written some years after 1989 by Francis Fukuyama, would organise as a thesis. How to approach an epoch that claims to have fulfilled history? [...] The arc traced by the dates 1948-1984 and 1974-1994 can perhaps help us to think about this movement.»

78 Interview with Natália Pais (11-7-11).

the activities organised around a given exhibition were taken around the country at the invitation of local authorities or educational institutions.<sup>79</sup>

1985

In January, the cycle *Um Século em Abismo: Poesia Portuguesa do Século XX* proposes an interdisciplinary approach to 20th century Portuguese poetry and inaugurates a regular collaboration with the recently reorganised Portuguese PEN Club (an international club gathering writers, essayists and poets) around the notion of literature as a vehicle for building peace among peoples.<sup>80</sup> Poet Ernesto de Melo e Castro organises the initiative. In his own words:

Among the various functions and/or meanings attributed to Poetry throughout the twentieth century, it may be appropriate to offer as synthesis the notion that it is a project that can never be completed. [...] Thus, in the various kinds of actions we will engage in here, we shall employ an assortment of means of communication through words – as a whole, they take the form of a multidisciplinary challenge that poetry places before us nowadays:

The book's print

The text read out loud by its author

Staged poetry, created by an actor

The theoretical inquiries of the critics

Contemporary music

Electro-acoustic paraphernalia

Cinema

Slideshows

Video

Chinese shadows

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79 In the year 1985 alone, over 12,000 children took part in, or used, the exhibitions, toy library, free workshops and shows and over 2,500 adults were involved in training and pedagogical actions, or family visits (FCG, 1985; FCG, 1986 *apud*).

80 As Ana Hatherly says on the club's website, «Officially, the history of the foundation of the Portuguese PEN Club is short, but its unofficial past is already long. The first attempts to create a PEN Centre in Portugal date back to before the Second World War. These efforts were periodically renewed, though without great success until the radical change in the political regime, which would only occur in 1974.»

These are the 10 media used in this manifold action to formulate, indirectly and perhaps elliptically (i.e., poetically), the questions that nowadays propel us speedily towards the 21st century. But what are these questions really about? What answers can we foresee? These are two interrogations that only each person, in their own intimate thoughts, can attempt to answer.

In February the Lunchtime Concerts («Concertos à Hora de Almoço») begin – an initiative that would last until at least 1989. Young musicians had the chance to perform in front of an audience, who in turn could attend concerts free of charge and enjoy music during their lunch break, with takeaway lunch packs catered by the CAM self-service. This meant that the traditional Portuguese home-cooked heavy lunch was replaced by a lighter Anglo-Saxon variety, eaten individually and silently in the Museum, to the tune of erudite music played by young and promising performers who had an opportunity to gain recognition. In the words of José Blanc Portugal:

The *lunch* that for millions of British and Americans substitutes our own midday meal, which was once heavy, and nowadays, for millions of Portuguese people, is but a memory, having been replaced in city life by a sandwich and a latte, can now, broadly speaking, be enjoyed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 1 to 2 pm, at the Centro de Arte Moderna in exchange for 200 escudos, on the occasion of its Lunchtime Concerts, which offer free music by promising young musicians. It delights the spirit, does not ruin the stomach, as civilized things are wont to do. The snack, of course, is not mandatory [...].<sup>81</sup>

But the most high-profile initiative that the ACARTE and the CAM are involved in in this year, contemporary with the signing of the EEC Treaty of Accession, is the first Exhibition-Dialogue on Contemporary Art in Europe, organised by the Council of Europe.<sup>82</sup> The ACARTE took part in the initiative between March and June, with an intense programme of Performance, Theatre and Music,

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81 José Blanc Portugal, *Diário de Notícias*, 7-7-1985.

82 About this exhibition see Silveira (2019). The First Exhibition-Dialogue on Contemporary Art in Europe took place in Lisbon, at the FCG complex, between 28 March and 16 June 1985. Together with the Council of Europe and eight museums based in EEC member states, this exhibition had three goals: to fashion an image of contemporary art in Europe; to investigate a potential European cultural identity; and to understand the role of modern and contemporary art museums in the construction of a common European cultural heritage.

the organisation of which fell on Madalena Perdigão, advised by Ole-Henrik Moe (Sonja Henie-Niels Onstad Foundation), and Jan Hoet (Hedendaagse Museum of Art). It would feature artists Jan Fabre, Marina Abramovic/Ulay,<sup>83</sup> Wolf Vostell, Maurizio Kagel, Jack Helen Brut, Fernando Aguiar, Carlos Gordilho, Lourdes Castro and Manuel Zimbro, among others, as well as the theatre company Teatro de La Claca, which set up a controversial tent near the Art Library.<sup>84</sup> But there were other controversial moments, from the famous «Lettuce War»<sup>85</sup> to Jack Helen Brut's explicit nudity and his light effects, the extremely long piece by Jan Fabre, which few will have watched in its entirety. About the latter, José Ribeiro da Fonte declared himself «intrigued, fascinated, astonished» by the preparation and the technical performance of those twenty-odd people, who left him «mesmerised!», while Augusto Seabra described it as «the most prodigious scenic show seen in Lisbon in recent years (...)». That this should happen in the context of an exhibition, that is something that leads us directly to the very concept of contem-

83 With *Night Sea Crossing*, a performance that involved sitting at a table for seven hours a day, motionless and in absolute silence, and which would inspire the performance *The Artist is Present*, which Abramovic would carry out in the retrospective of her work at MoMA in 2010.

84 At stake was the «ramshackled, poor and unsafe» air of the piece which was, literally, housed in the foundation's space, changing its dynamics, as reported by the newspaper *Tempo*, 21-6-1985.

85 The episode became known as «The lettuce war» and took place at ACARTE in 1985 during the presentation of Wolf Vostell's performance *The Garden of Delights*, as part of the Exhibition-Dialogue. José Blanc Portugal describes what happened in the newspaper *Tempo* (11-4-1985): «I enter. We enter. [...] [E]ach of us is given an orange cushion. The room is divided by half a dozen wooden tables, among which the small crowd (maybe a couple of hundred people?) and their orange cushions nestle. On the tables there is something like a kilo of lettuces and a few glass jars (keep these jars in mind; we'll come back to them) with olive oil or/and vinegar. [...] After about twenty minutes of waiting, the dance begins. The first lettuce is thrown, and it hits the one of the honourable spectators right in the head. [...] After five minutes, the orgy breaks out. There are lettuces flying, there is a barricade of tables and colleagues, and (attention!) some little glass jars (lo and behold, finally, the announced little jars make their appearance) scattering shards hither and thither. A real carnage. A pandemonium. But then the lights come on [...] and Vostell comes down the stairs looking rather unfriendly. First reactions: hey, Vostell, what a great performance, and if this was the premiere, just imagine the next shows, with people bringing bowling balls from home! But no! Vostell is fuming! He says we didn't understand a thing, that we should have stayed in our seats, nice and quiet, listening to the music, and that – God bless him – the lettuces were there to be eaten! To prove his point, he doesn't beat around the bush: he grabs one right away and has his meal in front of that swarm of maligned 'Latinos'. And there you go again. The *garden of delights* became a scandal. On the way out, we could hear half a dozen or so comments from the punters: 'It's a horror show. People repress their violent tempers and then when they get a chance...' I, for one, have no complaints. It was an excellent performance, as far as I'm concerned. And it was funny to see that Vostell's presence was not hailed like that of a god from foreign parts. And it was fun to take part in the proof that the 1980s need another kind of *events*, other than the rigidly planned show. [...] despite his irascible and patronising words, you could see that Vostell was laughing

porary art».86 The ACARTE's participation would also include the two round-table discussions *A Exposição- Diálogo em questão, balanço da Exposição-Diálogo: encontro com o público* and *As performances em questão*, all well attended by both participants and public. In the context of the latter, the ACARTE made a promise to continue its support for this kind of art, which would lead to the Quinzena Multimédia, towards the end of that year, and the Performance-Art cycle, in 1986.

This year the ACARTE would also host a series of non-European projects, such as *Kaze-No-Ko*, a children's show from Japan, or *Eclipse de Sol*, the graduation piece of an actors' course for young people from Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP) supported by the FCG and held at the theatre school IFICT<sup>87</sup> (Instituto de Formação, Investigação e Criação Teatral) – a pioneering initiative –,

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out of the corner of his eye, as you'd expect [...]» And, in the words of Jorge Lima Barreto: «What essentially distinguishes a *happening* from a performance is that the *happening* unleashes from the audience an active participation in the aesthetic event, while the performance unfolds a flow of operations that are exclusive to the performer or performers. The 'Garden of Delights' was a *happening* in the full sense of the term. [...] Here is the setting: the CAM, the multipurpose room with the benches removed: long linen-covered tables, cruets, pepper shakers, saltshakers and some fresh lettuce. Half-light. Noise-music simulating 'sensurround', aggressive, unsettling. Potential reactions from the audience: West Germany: Vostell in the role of high priest celebrating a 'green' ritual. Everyone would have a taste of some of the lettuce, seasoned by Vostell himself, until they would reach a collective state of ecstasy. If it were Biafra: thousands of hungry spectators would rush to the tables to devour all the lettuce, drink all the olive oil, taste all the salt. And Vostell would be revered as a charitable shaman. In Portugal, more specifically in Lisbon, 12 April 1985: the audience, in the dark, start a lettuce war, overturn the tables, throw the salt in the air, shatter the cruets on the floor. Vostell was snubbed by the audience and his speech was hard to swallow. That's just how it goes at a *happening*: the audience calls the shots. Civilized Germans? Cannibalistic Biafrans? Portuguese savages? – no, not at all! (...)» The photos confirm the descriptions. We see lettuce spread around the room, barricades of tables and cushions. What possible reading can we have today of what happened in the multipurpose room that day? How can one frame – politically, socially and aesthetically – a bunch of lettuces flying through the air, on a Saturday afternoon in 1985, in a newly opened museum in Lisbon? Tellingly, both critics try to extract this episode from the narrative of a supposed civilisational «backwardness» of the Portuguese people. If for Blanc Portugal «it was funny to see that Vostell's presence was not hailed like that of a God from foreign parts», for Lima Barreto this episode was nothing more than a confirmation of «how it goes at a *happening*: the audience calls the shots». And wasn't this what was at stake when «a whole bunch of people OPENED their consciousness in PORTUGAL», as Alberto Pimenta's poem describes it?

86 José Ribeiro da Fonte, *unidentified newspaper*, ACARTE archive. José Augusto Seabra, *Expresso*, 5-4-1985.

87 In the programme notes for the initiative one reads: «In the summer of 1982, in contacts with the government of the People's Republic of Angola, the possibility arose of the Gulbenkian Foundation strengthening the terms of its cooperation with that country, by granting scholarships for theatre studies. In the field of theatre, Angola is planning to set up a national theatre company that will express itself, essentially, in its official language, the Portuguese. It was later verified that Mozambique and Guinea, at least, also contemplated a similar project, in due course. [...] But difficulties also loomed, among which the fact that there was no theatrical school or course in Portugal that could deal with the

the «Jornadas de Artes e Letras dos PALOP» [Seminars on Arts and Letters from the PALOP]), which, ten years after decolonisation, took some steps towards a potential dialogue, one less marked by the war experience. This initiative included a conference, a bibliographical exhibition, a theatre play, an exhibition of African sculpture and a series of concerts of Angolan or Cape Verdean music which, according to the press at the time, had a large audience.<sup>88</sup> This same year, *Jazz em Agosto*, no longer organised by the Hot Club but programmed instead by Rui Neves,<sup>89</sup> would bring the Sun Ra Arkestra to the FCG Open Air Amphitheatre. There was such demand for tickets that an extra concert was added. The «purist» music critics repudiated the initiative, in a drawn-out polemic that would extend over several editions of the newspaper *Diário de Lisbon*.<sup>90</sup>

A Pasolini retrospective, 10 years after his murder, was programmed at the ACARTE between September and October 1985. That same year, Madalena Perdigão created a Theatre Advisory Council (Conselho Consultivo de Teatro) whose members were José de Oliveira Barata, Luís Francisco Rebello, Norberto Ávila and Carlos Wallenstein, since «there were countless [theatrical] projects presented to her in this field, both from Portugal and abroad», which meant that «the guidelines set by the Department (priority given to plays by national authors, classics and to multidisciplinary projects) proved insufficient for the selection between projects that inevitably had to be made».<sup>91</sup>

Still in 1985, perhaps as a result of the network way of operating of the institutions that took part in the Exhibition-Dialogue, Madalena Perdigão sent a series of letters to fellow institutions such as the Théâtre de La Bastille (Paris, FR),

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specific problems that such pupils, by their nature and culture, posed in pedagogical terms. It so happened, by mere chance, that this initiative intersected, at that time, with a project outlined and defined about a year before, the IFICT – Instituto de Formação, Investigação e Criação Teatral [Institute for Training, Research and Theatrical Creation] to which, considering its merits, the Foundation immediately gave its support. [...] At the very end of 1982, an Initiation to the Theatre Course was created for the aforementioned African grantees, within the scope of the IFICT and directed by Adolfo Gutkin.»

88 One of the newspapers reported this event as follows: «Several thousand people attended and took part in the party thrown by Tubarões. And we say ‘took part’ because at a certain point the rhythm [...] made a large part of the audience get up from their seats. A great dance followed» (*O Diário*, 15-7-1985).

89 Rui Neves became a member of the band Plexus, alongside Carlos Zingaro, and worked both at Rádio Clube Português and Rádio Renascença, where he was responsible for the weekly programme «Trajectórias», on contemporary music and folk music from around the world. He had worked with Madalena Perdigão at the Festival de Música de Lisbon in 1983. See the interview given by Rui Neves to *Visão* on 25 July 2013.

90 Cf. *Diário de Lisbon*, 4-8-1985 and 5-8-1985, among others.

91 In «Programa Retorno à Tragédia», 1986.

Springdance (Utrecht, NL) or Inteatro (Polveriggi, IT), among others, contacts mediated by Val Bourne, Director of the London Dance Umbrella Festival. The aim was to make the new space known and to express her interest in hosting shows by small dance companies. The initiative would prove a resounding success, turning the ACARTE into one of the main stages for the New Dance that was beginning to establish itself in Europe at the time.

In the last quarter of the year, at the suggestion of Yvette K. Centeno, there is the cycle «Imaginário da Cidade: Cidade Real, Cidade Imaginária» [Imagining the City: Real City, Imaginary City]: it includes a conference, poetry readings, an exhibition, and a Fado concert (previously considered too «popular» for the FCG) in the multipurpose room, full beyond capacity. The show *Teatro de Enormidades Apenas Críveis à Luz Eléctrica*, based on texts by Aquilino Ribeiro, was also presented, staged by Ricardo Pais/Núcleo de Acção Cultural Área Urbana de Viseu, with choreography by Olga Roriz. It was a great success both in terms of attendance and reception in the press. It would be presented again in 1987, as the Portuguese representative in the first ACARTE Encounters. Also in this quarter, the museum hosted the exhibition *Suave Fazer do Preto no Branco*, a dialogue between photographs by Jorge Molder and drawings by Jorge Martins that was accompanied by a conference organised by Eduardo Prado Coelho, whose talks were unconventionally scheduled from 11.15pm to midnight.

Near the end of the year, the «Quinzena Multimédia» [Multimedia Fortnight] was the first offspring of the heated debate that had taken place in the context of the Exhibition-Dialogue on performance.<sup>92</sup> The multi-purpose hall also hosted a concert in honour of Fernando Lopes-Graça, a French, Canadian and Yugoslav animated film season programmed by Vasco Granja and, in a collaboration between the CAM, the Cinemateca and the ACARTE, 1920s Portuguese culture is revisited with a cycle of Portuguese films of that decade and a round-table discussion on illustration.

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92 «The Exhibition-Dialogue on Contemporary Art (...) was an open door for performance's entrance into the Modern Art Centre. On this occasion, there were 11 performances, 13 theatre performances and 4 concerts more or less linked to the idea of performance, this ephemeral art (...) whose only common denominator is a negative one. It cannot be classified as theatre, concert or any other kind of organised spectacle. It always has an element that is in-between: musical theatre – theatrical music, exhibition-exhibitionism, pictorial action-action painting. In 'Quinzena Multimédia', organised on a much smaller scale, we opted for performances in which the technical and technological aspect is extensively developed (...). Within its own special field, the 'Quinzena Multimédia' will certainly contribute to confirm the importance of performance in the contemporary art scene. Lisbon, November 1985, Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão.»



PAGES 193 TO 196: Madalena Perdigão, letters soliciting the presentation of small dance groups in the Multipurpose room, 1985 | FCG – Gulbenkian Archive.

Departement de  
Création Artistique et  
D'Éducation par l'Art

M. Michel Uytterhoeven  
Klapstuk Festival  
STUC, Van Ekenstraat, 26  
3000 Leuven  
Belgique

Lisbonne, le 19 juillet 1985

Monsieur,

Je suis redevable de votre adresse à Madame Val Bourne, de Dance Umbrella, London, qui m'a dit que vous seriez la personne indiquée pour me faire des suggestions concernant des groupes ou petites compagnies de danse.

En effet, la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian est intéressée de présenter à Lisbonne des groupes ou petites compagnies de danse - en particulier pendant le mois de janvier 86 - et aimerait recevoir des propositions de votre part.

Les spectacles auront lieu au Centre d'Art Moderne, dans une salle bien équipée du point de vue technique et avec capacité pour deux cents spectateurs. La scène a 10 m de front par 10 m de profondeur.

Dans votre réponse, veuillez nous indiquer les dates disponibles des compagnies et leurs conditions de collaboration. Nous aimerions aussi recevoir documentation aussi complète que possible sur les compagnies proposées.

Je vous prie d'agréer l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments.

*M. Azevedo*  
- Maria Madalena de Azeredo Verdigo -  
Directrice

ACARTS/747/85  
NMAP/XX

19 JUL 85-001178

Departement de  
Création Artistique et  
D'éducation par l'Art

M. Hugo de Graeff  
Kaattheater Festival  
30 August Ortestraat  
1000 Bruxelles  
Belgique

Lisbonne, le 19 juillet 1985

Monsieur,

Je suis redevable de votre adresse à Madama Val Bourne, de Danca Umbrella, London, qui m'a dit que vous seriez la personne indiquée pour me faire des suggestions concernant des groupes ou petites compagnies de danse.

En effet, la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian est intéressée de présenter à Lisbonne des groupes ou petites compagnies de danse - en particulier pendant le mois de janvier 85 - et aimerait recevoir des propositions de votre part.

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Je vous prie d'agréer l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments.

*M. Asbjørn*  
- Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão -  
Directrice

ACARTE/746/85  
MNAP/MM

18 JUL 85-001176

Department of  
Artistic Creation and  
Art Education

M. Hugo de Greef  
Schaatsfe VZW  
Onze-Lieve-Vrouw Van  
Vaakstraat 81  
1000 Brussel  
BELGIUM

Lisbon, 20 August 1985

Dear Mr. de Greef,

I acknowledge receipt and thank you for your letter of the 7th instant and for the documents you sent about your dance-productions.

I think that the Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker Company would be very suitable to start our collaboration with. Therefore, I ask you to let me know the free dates and financial conditions for a week of shows in Lisbon.

In order that you may get acquainted with our work, I am sending you the programme of several performances, theatre shows and concerts we presented during the Dialogue-Exhibition about Contemporary Art which took place from March to June 1985 in a joint organization of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Council of Europe.

I also send you under separate cover the plans of our show room which is not exactly a theatre but is well equipped as light and sound conditions are concerned.

With kind regards, I am

Yours sincerely,  
*M. Azuleiro*

- Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão -

ACARTE/910/85  
MMAPJMN

21 ASO. 85-001377

Departement de  
11 Cr ation Artistique et  
D'Education par l'Art

Madame Denise Lusconi  
Theatre de la Bastille  
76 Rue de la Requette  
75011 PARIS  
FRANCE

Lisbonne, le 19 juillet 1985

Madame,

Je suis redevable de votre adresse   Madame Val Bourne,  
de Dance Umbrella, London, qui m'a dit que vous seriez la personne  
indiqu e pour me faire des suggestions concernant des groupes ou  
petites compagnies de dance.

En effet, la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian est int ress e  
de pr senter   Lisbonne des groupes ou petites compagnies de dance  
- en particulier pendant le mois de janvier 86 - et aimerait rece-  
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Les spectacles auront lieu au Centre d'Art Moderne, dans  
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aimerions aussi recevoir documentation aussi compl te que possible  
sur les compagnies propos es.

Je vous prie d'agr er l'expression de mes meilleurs senti-  
ments.

*M. Azevedo*  
- Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdig o  
Directrice

ACARTE/741/85  
MNAP/MM

18 JUL 85-001176

1986

1986 begins with the cycle «Dança no Centro de Arte Moderna» [Dance in the Modern Art Centre]: in January, Elsa Wolliaston, with live music and a workshop on non-folkloric African dance for professional ballet dancers; in February, as part of the cycle «O Fantástico na Arte Contemporânea» [The Fantastic in Contemporary Art], the Claude Brumachon company, and Susanne Linke, in March. The initiative aimed to «provide access to forms of dance other than those usually available» and is a direct result of the letters sent by Madalena Perdigão the year before. The same applies to the «Mostra de Dança Holandesa Contemporânea» [Showcase of Contemporary Dutch Dance], in December, which brought in large audiences, and about which Madalena Perdigão said, in the programme notes:<sup>93</sup>

One can only hope that the example of the Netherlands – a geographically-small country, as ours is – can bear fruit here, leading to the discovery of promising new figures in dance and a salutary diversification of choreographic styles within the historical and cultural common denominator that springs from their Portuguese roots.

Between these two initiatives, there are two other dance moments at the ACARTE, both in the Open Air Amphitheatre, in July, giving rise to what will later become an annual cycle, «Dança no Anfiteatro ao Ar Livre»: as part of the cycle «Regresso à Tragédia» [A Return to Tragedy], *As Troianas* [trojan Women] with choreography by Olga Roriz and music by Constança Capdeville, Vitorino and

93 In the programme notes for the «Mostra de Dança Holandesa» [Showcase of Contemporary Dutch Dance], one reads: «Over the last fifteen years, contemporary, non-academic dance has had a great development in Holland, giving rise to a considerable number of dance groups with starkly different conceptions and styles. [...] Continuing its policy of bringing to the Portuguese public more unusual and experimental forms of current dance, the ACARTE will present in Lisbon a series of Dutch dance shows, following closely the example of the Centre Georges Pompidou, which organised a similar cycle in September 1985, and of Reggio Emilia [...]. The Portuguese public, in fact, knows two illustrious choreographers of these Companies – Hans van Manen and Jiri Kylian – as some of their pieces are part of the repertoire of the Gulbenkian Ballet. Besides the performances, the Mostra de Dança Holandesa will include video sessions, an exhibition of photographs by Hans van Manen (also a renowned photographer) and two workshops for professional dancers, all contributing to a better knowledge of Dutch dance in Portugal and to the widening of our cultural horizons. One can only hope that the example of the Netherlands – a geographically-small country, as ours is – can bear fruit here, leading to the discovery of promising new figures in dance and a salutary diversification of choreographic styles within the historical and cultural common denominator that springs from their Portuguese roots. Maria Madalena De Azeredo Perdigão. October 1986.»

Janita Salomé, performed by the Companhia Nacional de Bailado do Teatro de S. Carlos (which also performed scenes from Skibine's *Romeo and Juliet*); and the recently created Companhia de Dança de Lisbon – an independent company founded by the young Rui Horta, recently returned from New York, duly credited in the renovation of the of the country's dance scene, a company where, among other techniques, jazz dance stood out – accompanied by the new Hot Club orchestra.<sup>94</sup>

A programme of 1980s music videos, selected and commented by Miguel Esteves Cardoso, was the ACARTE's contribution to the cycle «O Musical» [The Musical], organised by the Fine Arts Department. In an attempt to reflect on the relation between music and image and to showcase various generations of music videos framed as artworks, the multipurpose room included video works such as Edgar Pera's for the song «Dunas» by the Portuguese band GNR, or Queen's «I Want to Break Free» by David Malet, or Julien Temple's videos for David Bowie, among others. There was no entrance fee.

In February the ACARTE would host the cycle «O Fantástico na Arte Contemporânea» [The Fantastic in Contemporary Art], with a conference organised by Maria Alzira Seixo; the films *Silvestre* by João César Monteiro and *Trás os Montes* by António Reis and Margarida Cordeiro; a painting exhibition; an exhibition and screenings around the theme of animated cinema and «the Fantastic»; music by Constança Capdeville and the group Colecva and by the Grupo de Música Contemporânea de Lisbon, led by Jorge Peixinho; and dance, by Claude Bromachon, as part of the cycle «Dança no CAM». The initiative aimed to reflect on «the introduction of fantastic elements into an aesthetic system that does not originally accommodate them», fracturing the representation of the world «without shaking it substantially as a foundational aesthetic principle». In her work

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94 The programme notes for this initiative read: «By opening its doors to the Companhia de Dança de Lisbon, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation acknowledges the value of the role that a Company can play, with all the freshness and strength of its youth, in the development of the Portuguese ballet milieu, in joining efforts with the prestigious action which the Gulbenkian Ballet has been developing over the years. It also acknowledges the artistic level this Company has already reached and the competence with which it is guided. At the same time, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation pays tribute to the support that the Ministry of Culture and the Secretary of State (which subsidises the Companhia de Dança de Lisbon) have given over the years to the development of the ballet in Portugal, a support which has so often been underestimated or misunderstood. Finally, a word of appreciation to the new Jazz Orchestra of the Hot Clube de Portugal, whose participation will surely contribute greatly to the success of this series of shows. Maria Madalena De Azeredo Perdigão Lisbon, July 1986.»

within the scope of this initiative, Constança Capdeville stated she had decided to invest, from then onward, on «the formation of a group that would explore the vein of musical theatre, though not excluding the traditional repertoire, even if it was to be seen and presented from a different perspective» – which would later lead to a series of courses on «Musical Theatre and Today's Performer», also in the ACARTE, and to a new show in June of that year. In March 1986 it was jazz's turn, as the ACARTE hosted a course on playing in Big Bands («Interpretação de Big Bang») by José Eduardo and the Catalan group Taller de Musics, who would then take part in that year's edition of *Jazz em Agosto*. Still in the spring, the multipurpose hall would host a conference on contemporary theatre by Fernando Arrabal, a performance by the Teatro da Rainha (from Caldas da Rainha, as part of the mission to support decentralisation), a retrospective of films from the Annecy Animation Film Festival, organised by Vasco Granja in parallel with a Cartoon exhibition at the CAM; a concert by the Quarteto Opus Ensemble on International Museum Day, an exhibition of Isabel Barreno's drawings accompanied by a text read by Lia Gama and Ana Zanatti, screenings of the graduation films from students of the first Animated Film Course, a new edition of the Lunchtime Concerts series, and the multimedia show *Amag'arte* with Carlos Zíngaro, Paulo Brandão, Eduardo Sérgio, Ana Macara and Madalena Vitorino. Madalena Perdigão explained the latter thus:

When the Department of Animation, Artistic Creation and Education Through Art (ACARTE) began its activities, one of its main intents was to organise multi-media and inter-media shows. Another important direction for the Department was to host research initiatives, as long as they were grounded on the curricula and the previous work of those presenting the projects. The ACARTE also decided, from the very beginning, to take risks and make mistakes, as well as to allow others to take risks and make mistakes. All of this explains and justifies the presentation of AMAG'ARTE.

Reviews of this show in the press were generally negative.

From May to July, theatre was the centrepiece, in a major cycle entitled «Retorno à Tragédia» [A Return to Tragedy], under the direction of Jorge Listopad and Orlando Neves, and selected by the recently created Conselho Consultivo de Teatro [Theatre Advisory Council]. As Madalena Perdigão explains in the programme notes:



When Jorge Listopad first spoke to me about Retorno à Tragédia, I realised immediately that the project had been born under the sign of, and driven by, *Frei Luís de Sousa* [a theatre play by the Portuguese Romantic writer Almeida Garrett. An ambitious project, «Retorno» was tailored to bringing together within its scope a variety of disciplines, such as dance and music, it wanted to document itself through an exhibition and also aimed to reflect, in a conference, on themes related to Tragedy. But the crux of the project, its fulcrum, was *Frei Luís de Sousa*, the irresistible calling of its dramatic charge.

The cycle included the exhibition «Cem Anos de Tragédia em Portugal» [One Hundred Years of Tragedy in Portugal]; the theatre plays *Frei Luís de Sousa* (directed by: Jorge Listopad), *À Procura da Tragédia* (directed by Orlando Neves), *O Fim*, by António Patrício (directed by Jorge Listopad); *O Indesejado*, by Jorge de Sena (directed by Orlando Neves); the conferences «A Tragédia e a História de Portugal» [Tragedy and the History of Portugal] and «Formas Teatrais da Tragédia» [Theatrical Forms of Tragedy]; music by the Quarteto de Cordas Capela; and a ballet by the Companhia Nacional de Bailado do Teatro S. Carlos, *Romeo and Juliet* (choreographed by Georges Skibine) and *As Troianas* [Trojan Women] (choreographed by Olga Roriz). The project, considered by some to be «by far the most ambitious project brought to the stage this season»<sup>95</sup> received wide media coverage. But the theatre critic Maria Helena Dá Mesquita wished it could go even further: «We can only hope that, going forward, the Return to Tragedy will be followed by a Return to Comedy. Let the Gulbenkian's CAM continue to turn like a true time machine».<sup>96</sup>

And if July was marked by a dance performance in the open air amphitheatre, in August Jazz em Agosto would return, to continue the work of the previous year. As Rui Neves explains:

Since Jazz em Agosto 85, the current Jazz trends have been favoured, and some of its most significant voices presented there, a colossal task that does not exclude another, no less colossal one, that of showcasing some of the most important living figures in Jazz History, a history that is (only) just shy of a century.

95 Manuel Rio-Carvalho, *Jornal de Notícias*, s.d., ACARTE archive.

96 Maria Helena Dá Mesquita, *O Diário*, 8-6-1986.

In the autumn, a new animated film course begins, the Fanfare Bands return to the open air amphitheatre and there is the first edition of a cycle of «Nova Música Improvisada» [New Improvised Music], which sparked off a heated controversy in the press: the bone of contention was «what was missing» in musical terms and the order in which «what was missing» should be presented, as well as notions of «popular» and «erudite» culture, the jazz that «must» be heard and when it should be heard. In the programme notes, Madalena Perdigão insists on the emphasis placed by the ACARTE Department on live presence and explains the primacy given to the musical performance itself, as well as to improvisation and theory:

The musicians to be presented in this cycle, in which the act of giving a concert is also a «performance», have a high level of theoretical knowledge. The technical and expressive capacity of these musicians is permanently brought into relief, with the aim of creating new music through the fruitful paths afforded by improvisation. It will also underline the coexistence of genres that a practice such as improvisation allows: the musicians that take part in «Música Improvisada» come from a variety of musical backgrounds: from Avant-garde Jazz, most of them, but also from Classical Music, Contemporary Music, Electronic Music and, in more than a few cases, Avant-garde Rock Music.

The critic Rui Eduardo Paes explains the effects of this coexistence:

Something has started to stir among us around the topic of improvisation. The immediate echoes, however, were rather feeble. As to the cycle, a handful of people were distressed because it wasn't jazz, and as far as the collaboration between Paredes and Vitorino d'Almeida goes, it was even worse, because their album is neither erudite nor popular, it's something else altogether. Improvisation is blurring some of the neat and tidy concepts of a good many people.<sup>97</sup>

Still in the sphere of music, in 1986 the cycles on «world music» begin with «Viva Venezuela!» by singer Maria Rodrigues. The initiative was only possible with the support of the British organisation Arts Worldwide.

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97 Rui Eduardo Paes, *Diário de Lisbon*, 26-11-1986.

A conference organised by Helena Buescu celebrated the centenary of the poet Cesário Verde. In November, the cycle «Dança Holandesa Contemporânea» [Contemporary Dutch Dance] might be said to mark the beginning of the ample press coverage that this form of dance would receive in non-specialised press.

At the end of the year there was the first edition of the course «O Teatro Musical e o Intérprete Hoje» [The Musical Theatre and Today's Performer], organised and directed by Constança Capdeville, with the pedagogical support of the Colecviva group and, organised by Vasco Granja, the programme «Dezembro Infantil» [Children's December] with a puppet exhibition, a round table on puppetry, puppet shows and animated films.

With the «Performance-Arte» cycle, which in this edition only included Portuguese artists, the ACARTE continued its support for this art form. The pieces presented were: *V.I.T.R.I.O.L.*, by Rui Órfão; *Performance I* and *Performance II*, by Gerardo Burmester; *Erganómetro*, by Silvestre Pestana; *Ponto-acção*, by Fernando Aguiar; and *Umuurzl*, by Manoel Barbosa.

Madalena Perdigão contextualises it thus:

The fact that this cycle does not have a guiding idea, or a specific theme it needs to keep to, gives the artists who take part full freedom in their choice of media. However, the starting point was the visual arts, although the projects' trajectory then crossed over to other fields such as music, poetry, theatre, video, bodily expression. «Performance-Arte» offers a necessarily incomplete and limited display of the state of performance in Portugal. An endangered species, as many believe, a path to the total artwork, as others claim, the fact is that performance has come to define the scene of contemporary art. Its evolution points the way to multimedia forms, to dance-theatre, to the musical-theatre. To reflect on what is currently happening in the field of performance, to share in its making with the artists themselves, is an important event for all those who take an interest in the world of art.

1987

In 1987 the pace of the ACARTE's programming accelerates. On the one hand, as a result of the letters sent by Madalena Perdigão in 1985, there were now a number of initiatives, spread throughout the year, that presented new dance tendencies;

on the other hand, in September, the «Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro/Dança da Europa» [ACARTE Encounters – New Theatre Dance of Europe], an intensive period of programming in which the whole Gulbenkian Complex – the Grand Auditorium, the garden, the Museum bar, the multipurpose room, the Open Air Amphitheatre and the CAM bar – was used almost 24 hours a day for ten days. In parallel, a series of regular events continue: the Lunchtime Concerts, the European Music Day, animated film screenings, puppet shows, the «Musical Theatre and Today's Performer» courses by Constança Capdeville, the Fanfare Bands and «Jazz in August». Furthermore, some initiatives planned in previous years, such as «Dança no Anfiteatro ao Ar Livre» [Dance in the Outdoor Amphitheatre] in July (this year under the motto «two companies, two aesthetics»: the Companhia de Dança de Lisbon and the Companhia Nacional de Bailado do Teatro de S. Carlos, directed by Armando Jorge) and, in the last quarter of the year, the already usual dance cycle, now under the title «Aspectos da Dança Contemporânea» [Aspects of Contemporary Dance]. All of this still left room for episodic initiatives, such as the cycle «A Arquitectura e a Cidade – Propostas Recentes» [Architecture and the City – Some Recent Proposals], suggested by the Associação dos Arquitectos Portugueses [Association of Portuguese Architects] (later called «Ordem dos Arquitectos» [Order of Architects]) whose pertinence derives once again, according to Madalena Perdigão, from a perceived «lack».<sup>98</sup> The architect Nuno Teotónio Pereira, who organised the initiative, explains it thus:

There has been a growing public interest around topics that relate to architectural problems (...). A legitimate and natural interest, after all, since each and every one of us uses spaces shaped – or which should be shaped – by that discipline. However, this renewed attention has not been fully matched by reality. Either because of the absence of a regular architectural criticism in our country – which stubbornly persists – or because of the common frailties in the occasional attempts to fill that void: hermetic language, uncritical apriorism, a laudatory stance or purely descriptive memoirs.

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98 In the event programme notes Madalena Perdigão writes: «Alert, as it aims to be, to the inclinations – not to say the needs – of the Portuguese cultural environment, the ACARTE was keen to welcome the project the Association of Portuguese Architects presented to it.» The initiative included the participation of guest architects such as: Hestnes Ferreira, Gonçalo Sousa Byrne, Michel Toussaint Alves Pereira, António Nunes De Almeida, Manuel Armando Melo, Cândido Chuva Gomes, Carlos Almeida Marques, Manuel Graça Dias, Victor Mestre, Alcino Soutinho, Manuel Correia Fernandes, Eduardo Souto Moura, António Cardim, Carlos Machado and, as speakers: Salette Tavares, José Manuel Fernandes, Victor Consiglieri, Paulo Varela Gomes, Nuno Portas and Alexandre Alves Costa.

There were also occasional multidisciplinary proposals which the Department had the opportunity to welcome, such as the collaboration between the painter Pedro Calapez and the musician Nuno Vieira de Almeida or the experimental and high-tech *Touch Monkeys*, with two human players and 18 robot-musicians.

That same year the CAM launched a major initiative devoted to the painter Amadeo de Sousa Cardoso, which the ACARTE took part in with a conference and a series of other activities. The CAM and the ACARTE joined forces for an exhibition at the Madrid Museum of Contemporary Art (at the time still located in the Círculo de Bellas Artes, later in Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía).<sup>99</sup> They would also collaborate in organising the conference «A Fotografia como Arte/A Fotografia como Suporte» [Photography as Art/Photography as a Medium], restating the ACARTE's interest in this art form, which had been signalled two years earlier with the conference «O Preto e o Branco» [Black and White].

But 1987 begins with theatre, namely a cycle titled «Encontro com Lorca» [An Encounter with Lorca] – an author that made an impact on Madalena Perdigão, in the late 1940s, when she was a student in Coimbra, where she watched a performance of his play *The House of Bernardo Alba* before it was shut down by censorship. From this cycle, one should highlight Nuno Carinhas' debut as a theatre director, with Lorca's *The Love of Don Perlimplim with Belisa in the Garden* (Portuguese title: *O Amor de D. Perlimpim com Belisa no Seu Jardim*) and the show *Fe-de-ri-co* by Constança Capdeville and the Collecviva. In April *Hamlet* was brought to the stage for the first time in over 50 years, offering the ACARTE the chance to fill in some of the gaps in the country's offer of classical repertoire. The play was directed by Carlos Avilez, with Carlos Daniel as Hamlet, and was accompanied by a conference, cinema screenings, an exhibition and Early Music concerts. The critics would label this a «historical moment». But the major theatrical event of the year was the controversy surrounding the dichotomy of text-based theatre *vs* dance-theatre or visual theatre, especially during the Encontros ACARTE 87, which received wide press coverage and was a privileged stage for a new group of cultural experts and critics to come forth. What was at stake in this debate was a transformation in the aesthetics and the modes of production of the shows themselves, but also of the performers' training. These aesthetic changes could also be felt

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99 A comparative analysis between the action of the CAM and the Reina Sofia Art Centre in the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, crossing it with the cultural transformations that the two countries went through in the period is one of the potential developments of an analysis such as the one this work proposes.

in the field of dance, helping to blur the borders between genres: in February, one year after Portugal's official entry into the EEC, there is a Showcase of European Contemporary Dance (Mostra de Dança Portuguesa Contemporânea) in which the play *Rosas Danst Rosas*, by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, among others, is presented in Portugal for the first time.<sup>100</sup> In an emphatically Europeanist text in which European modernity is presented as an incomplete project and a path to follow, Madalena Perdigão explains the initiative, which combines the broadening of ballet's horizons with an effort towards a more in-depth knowledge of Portugal's European partners, in the hope of inspiring young choreographers and thus contribute to a reconfiguration of corporealities.

Integration into the Europe of the Communities should not be seen by us, the Portuguese, as a destination that we have already reached, but rather as a path which we will have to travel on for some time. Along the way, and in order to reach that destination more swiftly, it is necessary for us to get to know our European partners better and to make ourselves known to them. A first step in that direction will be a cultural exchange in the various fields of art and literature with the various European countries. This small Showcase of Contemporary European Dance [Mostra de Dança Europeia Contemporânea] – which will be followed, 11 to 19 of next September, by a bigger International Festival of Theatre and Dance [Festival Internacional de Teatro e Dança] – is an anchor point within a wider programme. The aim is to introduce the Portuguese public to three young European dance companies that will perform in their different styles and thus provide na illustration of the mosaic that makes up the [European] Communities. [...] May this Showcase achieve such aims and inspire young Portuguese choreographers and dancers to pursue their activities with a more intimate knowledge of what is happening in the European dance world.

In an attempt to account for what was at stake at the time in the field of contemporary dance, the critics spoke of an «anthropology of gesture as a method», of the creation of images that reflected the «theatricality of life», of «affording more value to emotion in itself» or of an attempt to «convey through the body the simplest responses of everyday life, or the most complex ones within the universe of

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100 It included: *Silted Vision*, *Skin Deep*, *Beneath the Bridge*, *Mindless Mater*, by the Images Dance Company, (choreography: Earl Lloyd Hepburn); *Rosas Danst Rosas* (choreography: Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker) and workshop/professional dancer training (by Nadine Ganase); and *Une Passion*, by Compagnie Karine Saporta (choreography: Karine Saporta).

the imagination».101 Coated in a language that was very much of its time, these discourses spoke in terms of «success» and the «risk of not succeeding», given that it is «through their ‘mishaps’ that [these young choreographers] learn, gain the maturity they display in their work or in a simple conversation».102 But it was Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker’s *Rosas*, a very long piece103 (it lasted the whole evening, which was unusual, if not unprecedented, in dance) that gave rise to some of the most incisive comments, at times addressing the tiniest details of the piece’s production. About this piece, Manuela de Azevedo, nowadays seen as one of the first Portuguese women journalists (at the time already over sixty years old) wrote the following:

From what I can deduce, [the *Rosas* group] organised itself with the explicit purpose of participating in a festival, after a series of research works and pieces had been presented in other events that nowadays cross over national borders.

It was this small company of four dancers and a handful of technicians and other staff that presented «Rosas danst Rosas» in the multipurpose hall of the Modern Art Centre (which is its obligation, given its mission within the Portuguese culture) with a show that «disrupts» the psychic serenity of the Portuguese, or rather, of Lisboners. A single production with the duration of one hundred and five minutes without a break [to] steady the nerves. A span of time that could be divided into several *contretemps*, from three quarters of an hour of introspection and total silence, a kind of «preparation» or «warming up» on the floor (which I regret having missed) and then, always following extremely simple and madly repetitive schemes, there followed other images of coordinated movements which, according to the dialectic announced in the programme and confirmed by the spectator’s eyes, reproduce elements of our everyday gestures.

[...] The gestures, however, have nothing in common with the grammar of dance. The bodies are perfectly athletic. I would say, though, that there is a degree of aggressiveness and anger in the gesture of pulling the hair back, in the baring of the shoulders, the turning of the heads. [...] The madly monotone music is grueling [...].

And she concludes:

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101 Jorge Listopad, *Diário de Notícias*, 24-2-87.

102 Ana Campos, *O Tempo*, 12-3-1987.

103 Maria de Assis, in an interview, says that this was possibly the first ever presentation of a night-long piece. Interview with Maria de Assis, 5-9-2009.

For those who cannot visit today's Europe, it is a good thing that they feel that same Europe coming to Portugal. It is known that many Europeans and Americans welcome these projects. In Lisbon, young people aged 18 to 60 also applaud them, while others stare at them, watching the trains of modernity pass them by. I applaud them above all because there is in such playful manifestations a new, renewing sap that will soon lead to the radiant station, the final destination of that passing train...<sup>104</sup>

In March, the ACARTE organises a thematic exhibition on the year-round cyclical festivities aimed at children, in collaboration with the Children's Art Centre (Centro de Arte Infantil). As Madalena Perdigão explains:

*As Festas. Passeio Pelo Calendário* [The Festivities. A Stroll Through the Calendar] is part of a sequence of thematic exhibitions for children held at the Centro Artístico Infantil [...]. The main goal of all these exhibitions is to develop children's creative capacities and imagination [...]. In the case of AS FESTAS, in addition to these objectives, the aim is to make adults and children (and not merely the latter) aware of the cultural importance of religious or profane – sometimes both – festivities that mark the calendar of the country and the life of all of us. In «As Festas», as is plain to see, there is an attention that one might call performative to the materiality of the event, attested by the texts in the catalogue and the close collaboration with the ethnologist Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, as well as the support by a series of Museums and City Councils throughout the country.

The Jazz em Agosto 87 programme, organised by Rui Neves, included concerts by the Art Ensemble of Chicago; World Saxophone Quartet; Mário Laginha Decateto; Trio Shish and Carlos Zíngaro and the Jan Garbarek Quartet, and Big Band workshops by Zé Eduardo, Jan Garbarek Quartet, as well as a seminar. Madalena Perdigão answered those who had criticised the idea of improvisation in the previous year's «Ciclo de Nova Música Improvisada» [New Improvised Music Cycle] in the following terms:

To improvise in music is similar to enjoying freedom in a democratic political regime. It is free within certain parameters (namely that of not harming the freedom

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104 Manuela de Azevedo, *Diário de Notícias*, 2-3-1987.



of others) and with the support of certain structures. Improvisation is now commonly used in Western classical music, both by composers and musicians, contrary to what happened in Romanticism. It has been a constant presence in Eastern and African music and in popular music from all continents. Jazz, whose history has not yet spanned a century, has always called for improvisation. One could say that improvisation is one of its main features, along with the incorporation of primitive sources or a living tradition. Jazz music is also unique in another aspect, which is the fact that it calls for the creative participation of the public. (...) And if, as Manuel de Falla said, music is not made to be understood, but to be felt, we can only hope that this will be the case with the spectators of «Jazz em Agosto» 87. We can only hope that they will feel this Jazz music even if they may not understand it.

In September the Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro/Dança da Europa [ACARTE Encounters – New Theatre Dance of Europe] began, undoubtedly one of the ACARTE Department's most important initiatives. It was so significant that nowadays, when one thinks of the ACARTE, one often thinks of the ACARTE *Encounters*: confusion between the two is common, which is perhaps unsurprising since this annual festival lasted until 2001, continuing in various directions and even taking on different formats, closely intertwined with the history of the ACARTE Department, even with that of the Foundation as a whole, at least from the democratic period onwards.

Still in the autumn, at a time when Portuguese society was urbanising very rapidly, the ACARTE, at Madalena Perdigão's invitation, hosted a conference on Portuguese Popular Literature and Theory of Oral/Traditional/Popular Literature. There were also non-European initiatives, such as a cycle of Chinese Puppetry, the «delicious movement» of Japanese New York based dancers and choreographers, Eiko and Koma, or the presence of the Brazilian poet Murilo Mendes. Finally, in 1987 the traditional children's activities in December included the presentation of animated films with French/Belgian cartoon characters such as Tintin, Asterix and the Smurfs. The year ended with the «Arte e Tecnologia» [Art and Technology] cycle, which included three days of debate but also parallel activities such as a «space music» show, an exhibition of holograms and another one of fractals, and a «demonstration of the interaction between a computer and art».

## Ideas of Europe for ideas of theatre: the creation of the ACARTE Encounters

What is the relation between the creation of the «Encontros ACARTE – Novo Teatro/Dança da Europa», in 1987 (EA87), and Portugal's entry into the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1986? *New European Theatre*: but «new» compared to what? Are there different ideas of theatre for different ideas of Europe at different times? What aesthetic, philosophical but also economic and existential models are in play? What «imagined communities» do they address, who is their ideal subject?

The ACARTE Encounters were created in 1987 and were co-directed by programmers from three European institutions, which was unusual at the time: Madalena Perdigão, of the ACARTE Department of the FCG; George Brugmans, of the Springdance Festival (Utrecht), and Roberto Cimetta, of the Inteatro de Polveriggi (Italy). Reading through the programme notes and the ACARTE Department's general archive over this period brings out quite clearly the link between the initiative and Portugal's entry into the EEC:

Roberto Cimetta and George Brugmans asked themselves what was happening in terms of new theatre, since festivals have been taking place across all countries over the past ten years and yet this kind of initiative was unheard of in our country.<sup>105</sup> «The idea, we were told, came from them, when Portugal entered the EEC.» [...] «We thought it would be good for everyone to exchange information and we decided to organise a meeting. We presented the project to the Gulbenkian and they were very receptive.»<sup>106</sup>

According to Brugmans, at the time very little was known about Portugal, and even less about the field of Performing Arts in the country. The idea for the ACARTE Encounters emerged, then, from a conversation between Brugmans and Cimetta on a train trip on the way to a meeting of the newly created IETM [Informal European Theatre Meeting] in Edinburgh:

The first time I heard of the ACARTE was in 86 or 85. Nobody knew anything about Portugal, it wasn't even in the European Union, it was on the other side of

105 *Diário de Notícias*, 6-9-87.

106 *O Século*, 10-9-87.

Spain... for those working in the Performing Arts Portugal hardly existed at all. And then the ACARTE, that is, Madalena Perdigão, sent us a letter, many of us received it... [...] that was a time, the early 80s, when a series of small avant-garde theatre festivals began to get to know each other and to work together. [...] And then I received this letter saying that Portugal would soon become a member of the European Union and that they were keen to know what was going on.

[...] A few weeks later I was on the train from London to Edinburgh with Roberto Cimetta, the director of the Inteatro festival in Italy [...] and I told him: listen Roberto, you are in southern Europe and you know a lot about theatre and a little bit about dance... I am in the north and I know a bit more about dance... Why don't we reach out to them and propose a festival, they might welcome it. And Roberto thought that was a good idea.

[...] And – this is very important – it all started from the need to get information... which then interconnected with a platform that had just started in Europe... Something that eventually resulted in the Informal European Theatre Meeting [IETM] but which [...] started more or less as a kind of guerrilla group of young festivals willing to say: hey, we exist too. We are doing something new, so let's all get together and share information.<sup>107</sup>

The IETM [Informal European Theatre Meeting] is a network of young European festivals, unconventional at the time, which began in the early 1980s. Its first members include George Brugmans of Springdance, Roberto Cimetta of Inteatro, the LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre), the Kaaitheatre in Brussels and, most importantly, Ritsaert Ten Cate of the Mickery Theater in Amsterdam, nowadays considered one of the gateways for the American avant-garde in Europe, alongside the Nancy theatre festival. As authors such as Mike Pearson (Pearson 2011) and Christopher McCullough (McCullough 1994) point out, it was through the Mickery, a space founded by Ritsaert ten Cate on a farmhouse on the outskirts of Amsterdam in 1965, that some of the elements that would radically change European theatrical conventions spread throughout Europe, elements such as the total use of the space or the absence of areas designed specifically for audiences and performers. The Mickery is even credited with creating the first theatrical *black box* in Europe. Ritsaert Ten Cate should be understood within the framework of Amsterdam's 1960s internationalism: a committed avant-gardist

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107 Interview with George Brugmans, Amsterdam, 3-6- 2011.

and internationalist (an internationalism more focused on relation between individuals than between nations, one should add), he was one of the founders of the IETM. The Mickery theatre would regularly host American, English and Asian avant-garde artists and troupes such as the Performance Group (directed by Richard Schechner/Elizabeth LeCompte), the Woster Group (by Elizabeth LeCompte), Stuart Sherman, Mabou Mines (directed by Lee Breuer, JoAnne Akalaitis), the Squat Theatre, the Elephant Theatre (directed by Peter Halaz, Hungary), the Need-company (directed by Jan Lawers), Ping Chong/ Fiji Company, Jan Fabre, among others. Closely connected with Ellen Stuart (of New York's La Mama Theatre).

In 1985, the date of the Edinburgh meeting to which Brugmans and Cimetta were heading to when they had the idea of proposing the first ACARTE Encounters, the IETM had already had four plenary meetings and was rapidly growing. Looming ahead, there was the prospect of a common Europe, with the signing of the Single European Act in 1986, a treaty that «provides the basis for a vast six-year programme aimed at sorting out the problems with the free-flow of trade across EU borders and thus creates the 'Single Market'». Thus, after the first enlargement in 1973 (Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom), a second enlargement in 1981 (Greece), the entry of Portugal and Spain into the EEC in 1986 coincided with the Single European Act coming into force and with the launch of a series of policies aimed at fostering not only economic but also cultural and symbolic cooperation within a territory now perceived not as national but as «European», and the same applied to its inhabitants. The ACARTE Encounters, with their three-fold leadership, their supranational financing, their commitment to international collaborations and co-productions and the kind of aesthetics they proposed and the cosmopolitan public they drew in, already betrays an idea of Europe that follows from the Union Act, a Europe where culture had finally made it into the centre of the agenda.

As Nicolas Ridout, Joe Keleher (Ridout and Keleher 2006) but also Maria Delgado and Dan Rabellato (Delgado and Rabellato 2010) point out, animated by the modernist belief in the «inestimable value of culture as a means for communities to perceive and re-imagine themselves, thus healing traumatic elements», the creation of the Edinburgh and Avignon festivals in 1947<sup>108</sup> is directly tied to

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108 «Pina Bausch, Bob Wilson, Tadeusz Kantor, When can we see them first-hand?», Carlos Porto (*Diário de Lisbon*, 25-9-87) asks, going as far as to suggest the creation of another festival, to run parallel to the ACARTE Encounters, where a series of shows (which he perceived as essential) could be presented.

the need for European reconstruction and its inscription in a new world order marked by the tense balance of the Cold War. European theatre festivals, bringing a community together around a shared set of values, would then reinforce a minimal understanding of what it means to be European, helping populations previously at war to see themselves as partners in a new project whose political and economic equivalent would be the Treaty of Rome and the stabilisation of Franco-German relations, united in a larger bloc, the West. These are also the years of the creation of the Teatro Stabili (in Italy), and the Théâtre des Nations and the Théâtre National Populaire – in other words, of theatre understood as a public service for a local community within a nation-state; of auteur theatre companies rooted in their local communities, but which would often circulate throughout Europe as representatives of their home countries (such as the case with the companies headed by Brecht, Stein, Weiss, Planchon...). The May 68 events would unsettle these institutions, giving rise to the «fringe» and counter-culture phenomena – in which we might include festivals such as Nancy or Rouen, or institutions such as the previously mentioned Mickery theatre. The willingness to rebuild European culture in eminently national terms runs parallel, broadly speaking, to state investment in infrastructure and cultural equipment. In this regard, Christopher McCulough points out that in Germany, between 1948 and 1972, more than 200 theatres were restored, rebuilt or built from scratch. A similar process was taking place in France through the national plan to revitalise theatres, launched by André Malraux in 1959, and through the creation of the Centres Dramatiques Nationaux, from 1946. In the mid-1980s, in the wake of the new French dance boom, there came the turn of the Centres Chorégraphiques Nationaux.

Thus, if an idea of a (postwar) Europe made up of partner nations is broadly equivalent to an idea of great directors and theatrical venues well anchored in their territories, an idea of Europe (post-1968) made up of people who relate to each other by way of personal and aesthetic affinities corresponds, in turn, to a series of marginal (or «fringe») experiments (of which the Mickery theatre is a prime example). It is these marginal experiments which, in the early 1980s, come together in the Informal European Theatre Meeting. And while the IETM began as a small network of non-conformist festivals, it would soon grow exponentially, helping to move the «alternative» scene and the avant-garde into the mainstream, assisted by the political will to build a «cultural Europe». In 1987, when the ACARTE Encounters were created, the IETM is still a small network of small festivals and institutions, but in Portugal it found a small institution, the

ACARTE, housed in a large one – the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – that brought with it a great potential for experimentation within this field. However, its programming line diverts from that of Avignon or Edinburgh. It embodies a different idea of theatre, geared towards a different idea of Europe – one that in Portugal, as a result of the 48 years of dictatorship that kept the country away from postwar European developments, takes on very unique contours. The perception of what the theatre is, what Europe is, and of what «the contemporary» is or can be (to go back to the terms used by Nicolas Ridout and Joe Keleher in *Contemporary European Theatre*) has changed from the postwar period to this day, and this shift was reflected in the ways of doing and imagining both the artworks themselves and their recipients.

1988

In just four years, there was an enormous leap in terms of the ACARTE's own production, programming capacity and public recognition. By 1988, the ACARTE's activities are not only well established, with an autonomous identity and its own specific communities (as was the case with *Jazz em Agosto*, the Fanfare Bands or the Lunchtime concerts, already going for four years at the time, but also – and surprisingly – with very recent initiatives, such as the ACARTE Encounters, created one year earlier). In short: the department seemed to be perceived as «being part» of the Portuguese and Lisbon cultural life. But while the Department's activity continued to be marked by its formative vocation, alongside the accompaniment and discussion of international trends (the press talked extensively of the «didactic» role played by Madalena Perdigão, the Gulbenkian and the ACARTE: contemporary dance or animated film being emblematic of this), one might also say that it seemed to devote more effort and funds to hosting its own productions, some of which with large teams, both national, international and co-produced, as was the case with some of the performances at the ACARTE Encounters which had their world premiere at this year's festival.

Thus, continuing with its regular events, while launching new periodical ones – such as the well-attended bimonthly «Jornais Falados de Actualidade Literária» [Spoken Literary News], organised by the PEN CLUB (where authors were interviewed live by the organisers, and there were discussion about books published in

the previous months) – the pace of the programming grew exponentially, especially if one takes into account that, in parallel with the Department’s public activity, there were a series of shows in rehearsal or in production. In this period, one also begins to feel the results of ongoing initiatives such as Constança Capdeville’s Musical Theatre courses (O Teatro Musical e o Intérprete Hoje), or the Lunchtime Concerts, which promoted newly emerged music performers and groups, such as the Miso Ensemble.

Several isolated initiatives were consolidated into cycles with a name of their own, such as «Vozes do Mundo» [Voices of the World], which in February hosted some of the biggest names in World Music – Nusrath Fateh Ali Khan (Pakistan), Ali Farka Touré and Jali Musa Jawara (Mali) or Light Blues (Great Britain) – or animated film screenings, which now operated as a regular workshop under the guidance of José Pedro Carvalheiro and Luís Correia, which gives rise to a series of courses that put into use both the equipment acquired by the institution and the now fairly extensive experience of the various generations of participants. Among other occasional initiatives, there was the launch of the book collecting the conference papers from the «Quinzena de Artes e Letras dos PALOP», cementing the ACARTE’s own editions. The Santo Aleixo Puppets, part of a process of rediscovery of the national folk heritage, returned to the Multipurpose Room. The exhibition of the Santo Aleixo Puppets in the ACARTE was a further sign of the value the Department had placed upon this art form from the beginning, having already presented puppet shows of Chinese, English, French and Czechoslovakian origin, as well as from Portuguese companies such as Marionetas de Lisbon (which had their first public presentation in the ACARTE) and Marionetas de São Lourenço. At a time when the Santo Aleixo puppets were being rediscovered with a view to their preservation as part of the Portuguese cultural heritage (in a joint action of the Centro Cultural de Évora, the FCG Fine Arts Department and the SEC – the Secretariat of Culture) to bring them to the ACARTE was an important contribution to this ongoing process.

There was also the II IADE Fashion Course Final Show, the ceremony for the Lopes-Graça Award for Young Composers («Concurso Nacional de Composição para Jovens Compositores»), a course on Computers in Music Education (Computadores na Educação Musical) in a partnership with the University of Minho and Projecto Minerva, the XI Meeting of Amateur Choirs from the Lisbon Area («Encontro de Coros Amadores da Área de Lisbon») or the performance of Carlo Gozzi’s *The Green Bird* (Portuguese title: *O Pássaro Verde*) by the company Os

Comediantes, from Porto e of *Erros Meus, Má Fortuna, Amor Ardente*, a play by Natália Correia directed by Carlos Avilez.

But it is the various initiatives in the field of dance and the ACARTE Encounters – New European/ Dance that will raise more debate in the press. José Sasportes, who organised, in April this year, the colloquium «Perspectivas da Dança nos Finais do Século XX»<sup>109</sup> [Perspectives on Dance at the End of the 20th Century], made a rather startling assessment of the dance scene in the country, bearing in mind that only two years before the ACARTE programmes had brought to light the fragile state of the field, which had «such a long way to go». According to José Sasportes (1988):

The moment when dance in Portugal is going through the most fruitful period of its history, though there is such a long way to go, is perhaps a suitable occasion for all of us to reflect on its future possibilities and its place within the framework of contemporary choreographic creation. Hence the perfect timing of this Conference on Perspectives on Dance at the end of the 20th century, conceived as an opportunity for various experiments in European and American dance to meet and confront each other.

Only two years had elapsed since Madalena Perdigão, on the occasion of the Mostra de Dança Holandesa [Showcase of Dutch Dance], had stated her hope that «the example of the Netherlands» could «bear fruit» in Portugal.

And in fact, in the span of only two years the heterogeneous group of choreographers and works that would later be labelled New Portuguese Dance (Nova Dança Portuguesa) began to emerge, in parallel with a string of ACARTE initia-

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109 Madalena Perdigão wrote, at the time, as an account of the ongoing aesthetic renewal and the questions it raised: «There is no yes without no. [...] Yes to a dance language that results from the dynamics of gestures and movement? No? Or not only that? Yes to a dance language with roots in literature? Or with close affinities with the theatre? Or so strongly imbued with music that music prevails? Or mixed with video and various technologies?» The conference, with talks extending into the evening, after dinner, included interventions by Carlos Pontes Leça, Marcelle Michel, Karine Saporta, Jan Murray, Richard Alston, Mark Haim, Jorge Salavisa, Gil Mendo, Rui Horta, Vanslov, Boris Eifman, Ine Rietstap, Ed Wubbe, Wanda Ribeiro da Silva, António Pinto Ribeiro, Roger Salas, Norbert Servos, Rosamund Gilmore, Margarida Abreu, Armando Jorge, Marinella Guaterini, Fabrizio Monteverde, Tomás Ribas, Vasco Wallemkamp, Olga Roriz, Ricardo Pais, Susan Foster, Victoria Marks, Jean Pierre van Aelbrouck or Marianne von Keerkhoven. It also included: an open class (Companhia Nacional de Bailado); performances: *Sopa do Dia* and *Sete Situações à Volta da Mesa* (Companhia de Dança de Lisboa); *Presley ao Piano* (Olga Roriz and Ricardo Pais, by the Ballet Gulbenkian).



tives that showcased or discussed dance – «contemporary» dance, as it was already called at the time – in cycles that often focused on the various national scenes, both revisiting trends and movements that were at times over half a century old (as in the case of German Expressionist dance), and more recent phenomena (namely Brazilian and Australian dance), in an attempt to trace its aesthetic lineages, influences and modes of production. On the occasion of the showcase of contemporary Brazilian dance – which was also extended to Porto, with the participation of students from the Escola Superior de Dança – Madalena Perdigão wrote in the programme notes about the enormous impact that some Brazilian mass culture phenomena, such as soap operas, had had on the Portuguese imaginary.

The Mostra de Dança Brasileira Contemporânea [Showcase of Contemporary Brazilian Dance] aims to complement the Portuguese public's knowledge of current trends in Brazilian art and culture. We have been exposed, and quite often, to Brazilian artists belonging to the so-called light and popular music, and Brazilian soap operas appear daily on Portuguese television, samba schools have visited the country, although certainly not in their full splendour. It seems to us that the other side of Brazil remains to be seen: classical music and dance, or its best theatre.

The dance critic Tomás Ribas offers this account of that season's intense dance programme:

Throughout the present Lisbon artistic season, Dance has taken centre stage as never before among us. Besides the usual seasons of the Companhia Nacional de Bailado, the Ballet Gulbenkian and the Companhia de Dança de Lisboa [...] and a few other truly significant performances such as those by the Dança Grupo [...] the ACARTE offered us a series of foreign artists and groups which, in one way or another, revealed to us some of the aesthetic facets of postmodern dance and some curious experiments in the field of dance theatre and contemporary dance. Of course not everything the ACARTE had to offer was of the highest quality; but, in any case, the various «Mostras de Dança Contemporânea» [Contemporary Dance Showcases] that took place there proved their value as pedagogical and dissemination vehicles...<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile in the press, mainly through António Pinto Ribeiro or Gil Mendo, teachers at the Escola Superior de Dança, one could catch a glimpse of the emer-

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110 Tomás Ribas, *A Capital*, 15-7-1988.

gence of the NDP, in texts addressing the work of pioneering choreographers and groups such as Paula Massano, Madalena Victorino, Margarida Bettencourt, Dança Grupo and Aparte, but also, under the direction of Jorge Salavisa, the Ballet Gulbenkian's Choreographic Studios (Estúdios Coreográficos), a privileged space for experimentation in dance:<sup>111</sup>

The closing programme of the current Ballet Gulbenkian season has unprecedented features: it will be entirely filled with works by young Portuguese choreographers in the early stages of their careers: Margarida Bettencourt, Vera Mantero, Gagik Ismailian and César Moniz. The initiative is the result of the commitment of the FCG Music Department to foster Portuguese choreographic creations and to open the way to the revelation and development of new choreographers, at the same time allowing for the Ballet Gulbenkian to establish its own identity through its repertoire.<sup>112</sup>

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111 It would be worth tracing the appearance of NDP in the press, given the insightful writings of its main critics, like António Pinto Ribeiro, Gil Mendo, Maria de Assis or, later, André Lepecki, among others, and cross-referencing it with the ACARTE's dance archive. It is also important to understand the creation of new production models and a market for dance, as Pinto Ribeiro says: «Dance is, at the end of this century, a profitable art. And the choreographies of the New Dance are objects of art with value and prices on the European and American markets. This new relationship that Nova Dança has created with the public was an element of revelation for the participants of the Conference on Dance in Southern European countries, which took place during the eighth edition of the Montpellier Dance Festival. It was also clear that of all the countries participating in the Conference, France is the country that makes the greatest effort to support this form of art. Substantial support is given to the hundred or so existing groups and companies, to the training of artists, to the systematisation of new dance techniques, to research, to the creation of choreographic centres and to the training of specialists in management and administration in the performing arts sector. It is in fact within these new production models, which no longer have anything to do with the company model, that the agents of creation and establishment of an international circuit for 1992 Europe invest the most. The participation of American technicians has contributed to the clarification of new forms of production and training, but above all it has extended the idea of artistic responsibility to the whole community. No one can avoid this responsibility, neither the public, nor the creators, nor the media agents, with special emphasis on the audio-visual media. [...] Without any initiating balletic tradition, but also without any cultural project in this area, the Southern European group of Greece and Portugal was referred. [...] from Greece it became known that a militant work was carried out there by an ex-dancer of the Béjart Company living in Thessaloniki. From Portugal, the ACARTE was advertised as a circulation point for European New Dance and contemporary American Dance. The conference papers by Gil Mendo and the author of this article also announced a group of new authors who, though diverse in their projects, fit into the typology of the New Dance –Paula Massano, Madalena Victorino, Margarida Bettencourt, Vera Mantero, César Moniz and Luís Carolino. The sense of a communal festivity that is conveyed by the dance festivals was a keystone for the creation of new festivals that constitute the European circuit of New Dance.» «O mercado da dança para 92», *Expresso*, 16-7-1988.

112 *Diário de Lisbon*, 16-7-1988.

But change could also be felt in the theatre world. In April, a Dutch Theatre Showcase (Mostra de Teatro Holandês), with supplementary exhibitions in Porto and Coimbra, presented the Netherlands as a prime example of support to contemporary creation, the result not only of a theatre policy over more than two decades (which included subsidies by local authorities and the Ministry of Culture), but also other forms of assistance «such as the transformation of factories, schools and churches into theatrical spaces or the facilitation of professional means, both technical and administrative, and support to young theatre directors», as well as the creation of a Dutch Theatre Institute (Theater Instituut Nederland), a key step towards internationalisation.

Praising the value of presenting projects which the Portuguese public was completely unfamiliar with, Lúcia Sigalho underlines the development of new potential theatrical canons made possible through the actions of ACARTE:

Bringing in groups unknown to the general public first of all affords the latter a perception removed from their usual framework, which normally conditions their assessment of national works, which, apparently, is unfounded.<sup>113</sup>

Fernando Midões, in turn, when faced with these new proposals, underlines how, thus far, French theatre had been predominant on the Lisbon stage:

Another time, one could see French theatre in Lisbon. Now, once in a while, companies from other countries also come to Portugal. And Portuguese companies go abroad as well, but no longer to Brazil, as was the case in the past.<sup>114</sup>

And if the 1988 ACARTE Encounters were an inescapably Lisbon-based event, they are also decidedly European, part and parcel of a young performing arts «scene» that gathered in Lisbon in September 1988, at a time when the rhetoric of the country's cultural diplomacy was tuned towards Europe. Madalena Perdigão's text in the same programme, strongly marked by a Europeanist rhetoric in which the role of Portugal was more often than not described in a Luso-tropicalist tone, is telling in many ways:

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113 Lúcia Sigalho, *Tempo*, 28-4-1988.

114 Fernando Midões, *Diário Popular*, 1-4-1988.

Portugal belongs genetically, culturally and geographically to Europe, a Europe whose civilisational values are largely our own, which has cast us as the spearhead of its dissemination across other worlds, and a Europe which a significant portion of our national community has chosen as the location for its creative activity, as pointed out by Rui Moura Ramos in his *Objectivo 92/No caminho da sociedade aberta*, [Objective 92/ On the path to an open society] by the Grupo de Ofir, where he concludes that closer relations with all the countries in this region and, in particular, with the European Community are an imperative.

Using the words of the «Grupo de Ofir», a Portuguese neo-liberal and Europeanist think tank, and echoing a narrative that was emerging in the 1980s, one that reframed Portugal on the global geopolitical plane as European and no longer Atlantic or colonial-oriented, casting it in the role of a «spearhead» of what would later be called globalisation, Madalena Perdigão, with an eye towards 1992, the date set for the signing of the Maastricht Treaty and a step towards open borders and the single market, explained that this edition of the ACARTE Encounters had received the support of the Commission of the European Communities, «in line with the programme 'A Fresh Boost for Culture in the European Community', outlined for the period 1988-1992, which aims to offer support to cultural promotion in the European regions by fostering cultural events with a European spirit».

And while the project of the ACARTE Encounters was concerned with the need to «make up for deficiencies in information and communication with the outside world and aspires to gain international projection in the future as a way of redressing the country's peripheral condition», this edition had the more specific purpose of «informing the public, examining the contours of European cultural identity, highlighting similarities as well as differences and promoting debate». In other words, the project still sprung from an openness to lack, but it seemed geared, rather, towards a form of «compensation» through «international projection», deemed not only «desirable» but indeed «indispensable» for the realisation of «major cultural projects», of which these Encounters are an example. And this year's edition, by investing heavily in the production and co-production of shows by the ACARTE, including several premieres (some of which worldwide premieres), did indeed leave a mark in the European Dance Theatre scene. The ACARTE produced Heiner Muller's *Medeia Materiais* (*Medeamaterial* in the original) and *Quarteto* (*Quartett*), with Jorge Silva Melo as the director and stage sets by Titina Maselli (accompanying an exhibition at the CAM). There was also

*Oedipus Rex* by Teatro da Comuna, in a stage version by João Mota. But one of the major novelties, perhaps the greatest, was the co-production of a play by Giorgio Barberio Corsetti which had opened the festival in the previous year, with a resounding success, with both Portuguese and non-Portuguese actors in the cast. As with the organisation of the Encounters as a whole, the key point was the creation of habits of cultural collaboration across borders, habits that would later become one of the leitmotifs of European cultural policies – particularly in the performing arts, a field in which there was a continuous appeal to artist mobility and «internationalisation». However, as we have seen, the proto-internationalism of artists, or even of institutions, is rather different from the internationalism of the market or from one driven by «spectacular» cultural policies, as attested by the criticisms artists and cultural agents levelled at events such as LX94, Europalia or EXPO98. In aesthetic terms, besides the pieces mentioned above, and according to Brugmans's and Cimetta's account, the 1988 edition focused on Dance Theatre in its various manifestations – Reinhild Hoffmann (Germany), Maguy Marin (France), Jean François Duro (France) and Josef Nadj (Hungary/France) – and on visual and plastic theatre, examples of which are Plan K (Belgium), Remondi and Caporossi (Italy), Station House Opera (UK) and Harry de Wit (Netherlands). The Encounters included a cycle of dance videos (which showed key works of contemporary performing arts, among which the eagerly awaited works of Pina Bausch), organised by Jean Marc Adolphe, alongside several workshops with the artists. The event proved an overwhelming success. And, though it was only their second edition, the Encounters were already perceived as habitual, commonplace. Indeed, perhaps the dimension of «the encounter» was one of the main reasons for it to take root so quickly in the Lisbon scene, as if creating a temporary community, an annual moment that turned the occasion into something belonging to everyone, something *common*.

This is where it begins. The 88 ACARTE Encounters clearly function as a prologue to Lisbon's cultural activity. [...] No matter how different the shows are, they all carry the mark of their physical proximity – the space where they are presented – of the temporal dimension – yesterday I saw this, today I see that, tomorrow I will see something else – as well as of the testimonial one – the audience remains virtually the same.<sup>115</sup> Despite their still brief existence, the «ACARTE Encounters» [...] have already taken deep roots among us, particularly among a vast audience of young people, artists and

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115 Carlos Quevedo, *O Independente*, 16-9-1988.

intellectuals who enthusiastically attended last year's edition of these encounters and, no less enthusiastically, in only a few days sold out all the shows in this year's edition.<sup>116</sup>

Its impact was such that when this edition of the Encounters came to an end Jorge Listopad would write: «The ACARTE Olympic Games are over»,<sup>117</sup> a reference that takes us back to John MacAloon's already classic work on the modern Olympic Games, in which he traces the close links and parallels between the Olympic Games and institutions such as the United Nations, suggesting that new institutions breed new metaphors.<sup>118</sup> Thus, beyond and in parallel with the public's encounter with the shows (i.e. with new trends and languages) and of a community of artists among themselves (especially young people within the «dance» scene and foreign critics and programmers), there is a wider ongoing encounter, an encounter with «Europe», a cultural Europe (running parallel to, and inextricable from, the economic one) that is being forged throughout the EEC. For a cosmopolitan and European public, in a now cosmopolitan and European country, cosmopolitan and European forms of consumption.

## 1989

The 1989 ACARTE programme began with a *Mostra de Dança Portuguesa Contemporânea* [Showcase of Contemporary Portuguese Dance], an initiative that would have been difficult to conceive only a few years earlier, but which now, in the wake of showcases of contemporary dance from various parts of the world presented by the ACARTE and given the fresh vitality of this genre in the country, proved particularly significant. Although some critical voices still considered it a «risk» for the ACARTE Department to wager on «those who have yet to prove their value»,<sup>119</sup> the need to create the spaces and the means required to develop what seemed to be a strong form of expression in the country was already evident. A testimony to the decentralisation efforts of the Department, the showcase travelled to Porto, to the Teatro Carlos Alberto, and to Coimbra, to the BUC (Bial Univer-

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116 Tomás Ribas, *A Capital*, 15-9-1988.

117 Jorge Listopad, *Jornal de Letras*, 26-9-1988.

118 John MacAloon (1984).

119 Tomaz Ribas, *A Capital*, 16-1-1989.

sitária de Coimbra [Coimbra University Biennial]), a festival that played a pivotal role in revealing the choreographers that would later be part of the heterogeneous ensemble grouped under the term New Portuguese Dance. The festival included: *Linha*, by Rui Horta and friends; *Voos Domésticos*, by Dança Grupo; *Con(m)certo Sentido*, by the Aparte (Agentes de Pesquisa na Área da Arte, a wordplay with ACARTE, composed mostly of dancers from the Ballet Gulbenkian). In the programme notes, Madalena Perdigão acknowledged that this showcase wanted to include companies crated *ad hoc* or on the margins of official or institutional circuits.

It is a question of creating an opportunity for experiments that might otherwise be marginalised, and making these small companies feel that we are on their side, that we sympathise with their efforts and that we want to help them continue on the path of experimentation and innovation. [...] I only hope that the public will live up to our expectations, showing their interest, stirring controversy, but also affection, around the dancers, lighting technicians, musicians and choreographers who take part in this first Mostra de Dança Portuguesa Contemporânea [Showcase of Contemporary Portuguese Dance].

In February, performance art, which had been absent from the ACARTE programme in 1987 and 1988, made its return. It did so, however, already in the form of a tribute, as part of a cycle on Experimental Art («Ciclo de Arte Experimental») in honour of Ernesto de Sousa, who had died in the meantime, and included some of the names that defined the first years of the ACARTE's activity. The month continued with a music programme: «Vertentes de Teatro Musical» [Aspects of Musical Theatre], a cycle that showcased the collaboration between Pedro Calapez and Mário Vieira de Almeida; Constança Capdeville and Manuel Cintra's experiments within the course «O Teatro Musical e o Intérprete Hoje» [Musical Theatre and Today's Performer]; and the cycle «Vozes do Mundo» [Voices of the World], this time featuring music from Thailand and Mauritania. Theatre returned in March with Guillaume Apollinaire's *Zone*, and in April with Jean-Paul Wenzel's *Doublages*.

Reflection and debate reappeared with a cycle that had a significant public impact: «O Sagrado e as Culturas» [Cultures and the Sacred], with a series of intellectuals, the philosopher Agostinho da Silva foremost among them. António Pinto Ribeiro would use the occasion to reflect on the place of the body and dance in contemporary society, putting forward the notion of «hi-fi bodies», that is to say,

bodies achieved through technical training.<sup>120</sup> The bimonthly presentations of the «Jornal Falado de Actualidade Literária» organised by the Portuguese PEN Club continued, while puppet shows returned. In May there was the third edition of «Aspectos da Dança Contemporânea» [Aspects of Contemporary Dance], focusing this year on North America: a critic would speak of a «body which, in action, becomes more of a body» and «is nowadays governed by a different set of laws» – «what used to be libertine» is now «libertarian».<sup>121</sup>

In June, the ACARTE hosted the conference «Operações do Gosto» [Operations of Taste], which asked to what extent could institutions such as the ACARTE, Ar.Co, Centro Nacional de Cultura or Cooperativa Árvore be thought to have contributed to a change in the nation's «taste»? The initiative was attended by many emergent specialist and media critics.<sup>122</sup>

After the usual «Festa da Música Europeia», there followed the «Encontros Luso-Americanos sobre Arte Contemporânea» [Luso-American Encounters on Contemporary Art], in which the ACARTE organised a series of well-attended video and film drive-in screenings, dealing with some of the decade's contentious topics, namely AIDS.<sup>123</sup> The following month started with the IV edition of «Dança no Anfiteatro».

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120 Cf. Ribeiro (1994).

121 Rui Edardo Paes, *Diário de Lisbon*, 19-5-1989.

122 The critic Rui Eduardo Paes offered an account of this initiative, explaining the sociological nuances of the proposal, what the «sociology of taste» is and the influence of Pierre Bourdieu in this field: «Although Orlando Garcia, a prominent personality in the Associação Portuguesa de Sociologia [Portuguese Sociological Association], had his doubts about whether 'it will be possible to hold on to "visibilities" in the field of taste', there is a phenomenon he agrees much more readily: 'culturally-oriented institutions, such as those pointed out above, are in place today and have been contributing 'to modelling or remodelling taste', and this at a time when we are witnessing 'segmented cultural behaviours'. Resorting to Pierre Bourdieu's definition of taste ('the propensity or aptitude for the apprehension of classified or classifying cultural objects', in a typically sociological language), Garcia summarised its meaning and praised the formative and informative role of the 'cultural innovation agencies' as promoters of a 'classification system' that multiplies the 'capacities to appreciate and differentiate practices and works' and even to sustain 'choices that constitute lifestyles'. They are the 'creative-mediators', as the sociologist chose to designate such institutions [...]. But not before Orlando Garcia alerted those present to a fact: if the 1970s were of 'sociocultural animation', at present the task bears a different sign and goals, in the sense of a 'cultural action' that nurtures 'dispositions', as the sociologist characterised it, in a word, results in plain sight» (*Diário de Lisbon*, 2-6-1989).

123 Rui Eduardo Paes followed the initiative closely: «It's like car windscreens: they slide to one side and to the other. It may use television discourse, try to enter the mass-media market, or it may constitute itself as a form of art leading to very specific types of consumption and, in either case, operate along the same kind of objective, intervening, transforming functionality. We are referring to the video record,



After «Jazz em Agosto», September was the month of the most densely-packed and intense of the ACARTE Encounters under Madalena Perdigão, and the last she programmed alongside George Brugmans (and without Roberto Cimetta, meanwhile deceased). This edition finally brought Pina Bausch and Tadeusz Kantor to Portugal, major names in the world dance and theatre scene, together with emerging and experimental projects. There was a deluge of reports and reviews in the press, which followed the often-sold-out events in detail, even if some were not to the personal liking of this or that specialised critic. Tadeusz Kantor's *Je ne reviendrais jamais* triggered much debate and reflection in the press – the question at stake being the revitalisation of the country's theatrical scene through new references. A text by Mário Vieira de Carvalho mentioned some of the companies that did not come to Portugal for the occasion, when their presence would have been, as he saw it, «essential»:

Among the companies that didn't come, when it would have been essential for them to have come – and we don't know if they ever will – there are, for example, the Berliner Ensemble (of which Brecht was the founder and director) or Moscow's Taganka Theatre (which Juri Liubimov returned to, thanks to the «Perestroika»). Meanwhile, Giorgio Strehler's Piccolo Teatro di Milano was here more than twenty years ago, in a flash. However, to retrace the trail of the theatrical avant-garde since the Postwar and to link it to the most current experiences is a challenge to which the ACARTE and its director, M.A.P., will certainly want to rise to.<sup>124</sup>

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which appeared in the midst of an era of political radicalism [...]. We are talking about the Encontros Luso-Americanos de Arte Contemporânea [Luso-American Contemporary Art Encounters], which are still ongoing, now dedicated to video-mania. [...] And yet the idea of the women who made these videos was to demonstrate that they are not 'sugar and spice and everything nice'. Quite the contrary, as one 'suburban queen' tells us on the small screen: 'I'm a woman, I can bleed for days and not die'. American feminism today is quite different, at least when compared to the image we had of it in Europe after the radical years, and this feminism is about relationships between people and no longer about wars of substitution. [...] America is a fantasised, romanticised, dramatised society, a soap opera, and this feminism appears as a form of lucidity, it pinpoints the problems, it lists them (from loneliness to incommunicability, from insecurity to the loss of meaning). [...] As was pointed out in the multipurpose room of the Centre, in America there is, for example, an organised gay movement, while in these parts there is a typically Iberian guilt complex in the public assumption of non-standard sexualities. [...] The cultural, political and social system in place favours the end of digressions, the one and perpetual love, chastity, distance, coldness, desexualisation: it is a planetary campaign linked to the campaign against AIDS, and in the United States [...] one feels that gay culture is being eradicated» (*Diário de Lisboa*, 1-7-1989).

124 Mário Vieira de Carvalho, *Sete*, 14-9-1989.

Carlos Porto also commented on the event, highlighting the contradictions in the adjective «new» and questioning canons and reference points:

Incidentally, one should underline the demagogic content that the adjective «new» sometimes carries in the art world. [...] If watching Tadeusz Kantor and Pina Bausch was both a lesson and a pleasure, the void of our ignorance calls for other experiments that we urgently need to learn about: Bob Wilson, Richard Foreman, in one field; in another one, shows by Giorgio Strehler, Peter Stein, Turi Liubimov, Peter Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine, Gruber, Antunes Filho, for example, are indispensable to us. Doesn't this theatre also fit into the adjective *new*? One would have to experience it first-hand.<sup>125</sup>

Wim Vandekeybus' return to the ACARTE, with a performance and a workshop for Portuguese dancers in which many young choreographers, such as Vera Mantero or João Fiadeiro, took part, won the enthusiasm of both the press – which labelled the choreographer's work as «kamikaze theatre»<sup>126</sup> – and the public. However, it was Pina Bausch's *Auf dem Gebirge hat man ein Geschrei gehört* (Portuguese title: *Ouiu-se um Grito na Montanha*) that was the centrepiece of the reviews, reflections and analyses in the press, which seemed awestruck by the piece, discussed it endlessly and lavished praised on the ACARTE Encounters.

This same year, a show on the work of Erik Satie by Constança Capdeville e Manuel Cintra, accompanied by a concert from Banda do Anjo marked the celebration of Music Day (Dia da Música) and a conference on Judaism in Western Culture included the premiere of Patrick Süskind's play *O Contrabaixo* [The Double Bass], directed by Anabela Mendes, and *Conversa Entre um Contrabaixo e uma Inquietação* [Conversation between a Double-Bass and a Disquiet] with music by Constança Capdeville and text by Manuel Cintra. There was also the third edition of the course «O Teatro Musical e o Intérprete Hoje». Continuing its support for the production of contemporary dance pieces, the ACARTE produced the cycle «Solos para Nijinski» [Solos for Nijinski], within which Vera Mantero presented her *Uma Rosa de Músculos*.

On November 9, 1989, the Berlin wall came down, marking the end of a historical period. On December 5, news of Madalena Perdigão's death surfaced. At

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125 Carlos Porto, *Diário de Lisbon*, 7-10-1989.

126 *Sete*, 2-8-1989.

the ACARTE, the Mostra de Dança espanhola Contemporânea [Showcase of Contemporary Spanish Dance] was then taking place: sessions were suspended for a few days and one of the latest texts by Madalena Perdigão was read over the speakers when the showcase resumed, as reported in the press:

We had the opportunity to see [...] the Multipurpose Room of the CAM completely packed, at more than full capacity, a fact that is likely related to the cancellation of the shows [...] in the wake of the death of Maria Madalena Azeredo Perdigão. In her honour, an extract from a text by her, included in the programme notes for this show, was read (over the speakers, before the start of the show), which we transcribe here: Contrary to the millenarian vision that heralded a catastrophic end to the century and the ruin of civilisation, we have the privilege of witnessing the end of a millennium that acknowledges and celebrates culture and its values, which are based on the most authentic humanism, rooted in the human condition itself. The ACARTE Department of the FCG, which was born in this optimistic decade, bears witness and takes part in this rapprochement between cultures. There are walls that crumble, borders that come undone because they make no sense and, at the same time, we see peoples exchanging cultural experiences in the fields of Science, Technology and Art. Aware of its minor role, the ACARTE is proud to be in step with its times and to have contributed, in a modest but timely fashion, to the spirit of this era.

The year came to a close with another Editions of «Dezembro Infantil» [Children's December] with the presence of the Black Lantern Theater.

## 1990 <sup>127</sup>

In January 1990, two months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the conference «Utopia, Mítos e Formas» [Utopia, Myths and Forms] was held at the ACARTE, organised by Yvette Centeno, who signed the text of the programme with Madalena Perdigão:

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127 Although it falls outside of the chronological scope of the present book, some excerpts from introductory texts in the 1990 programmes have been included here, since part of this year's programme was still written by Madalena Perdigão.

We have entered the 1990s, the millennium decade. And we have one wish: to celebrate change, in the positive sense of the myths we hold to memory. [...] The ACARTE, through its director, Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão, has committed itself fully to the conference that is now underway. [...] Such a feat is not the fruit of chance. It is the result of the continuing efforts throughout the 1980s, in many respects a happy decade.

Still programmed by Madalena Perdigão, there followed the «Mostra de Dança Portuguesa Contemporânea II» [II Showcase of Contemporary Portuguese Dance], which featured many of those who were to form the New Portuguese Dance. The showcase, still programmed by Madalena Perdigão, included: *Alto Contraste* by Dança Grupo; *Divagações* by the APARTE; *Jardim de Inverno* by Olga Roriz; *Estranhezas* by Paula Massano; *Interiores* by Rui Horta; *Mecanismos* by Joana Providência. Sommer Ribeiro, acting director, signed the programme notes, citing the former director's words:

Hence the presentation of this Showcase of Contemporary Portuguese Dance, necessarily incomplete, seeking out companies formed off-hand or not included in the official or institutional circuits. What is at stake is creating the opportunity for experiences that would otherwise be marginalised, making these small companies feel that we are on their side, that we understand their effort and that we want to help them to continue on the path of experimentalism and innovation. Her [Madalena Perdigão's] proposal was fully embraced, both by the public and the artists, dancers, musicians and choreographers, and so, in the programme she left us she included the II Showcase of Contemporary Portuguese Dance. We hope that this initiative will be as warmly received by the public and that it will serve as a stimulus for emerging figures of Portuguese Dance.

In April 1990, as the culmination of an ongoing interest that had emerged in the first years of the Department's activity, there was a major cycle on mime. There was also the premiere of Tchekov's *Platonov*, directed by Rogério de Carvalho in a co-production with the BUC, an initiative that had been in preparation since the 1989 ACARTE Encounters. José Sasportes, the successor appointed by the former Director, included the play as part of the Department's decentralising efforts.

Decentralisation means bringing the centre and the periphery closer and this approach may be interpreted in two different ways: exporting the shows presented in the capital or bringing to Lisbon the shows created in the rest of the country. The ACARTE has been trying out both modalities and the presentation of TEUC's *Platonov* is a new example of this will to break with geographic compartmentalisation and to make aesthetic creations circulate.

A large portion of the programme of the Encontros ACARTE 89' was also drawn up with Madalena Perdigão. However, as mentioned by George Brugmans, the only one left from the festival's original proposal, the change of decade and the fall of the Berlin wall already announced major changes in the performing arts.

Having established themselves unequivocally as a living tradition, the ACARTE Encounters present themselves once again in the form of a «Tour de l'Europe». But Europe has changed since the last Encounters. Much of the recent historical events have impacted mentalities much more than any artistic performance could ever do. It's no coincidence that Berlin's usually crowded theatres were virtually empty for months while the public watched history unfold from their own windows. Art cannot live in a vacuum. In fact, the ACARTE Encounters 90 sit between two decades, the 1980s and the 1990s, and their programme still reflects the dominant trends of the earlier decade: the voluptuous French dance, this time represented by Jean-Claude Gallotta and Karine Saporta; Germany's troubling neo-expressionism, initiated by Bausch but performed, this year, by Laokoon; Italy's visual theatre, where Corsetti has masterfully taken pride of place; the new wave of raw energy that is rising in London and other cities in the UK and which has found a fresh voice in Lloyd Newson, of the DV8; Arena Teatro emerging as a new member of the vibrant Spanish scene; the impressive mastery of the dramatic art that is to be found in Moscow, in its various studios, notably Studio Five; the unbridled experimentation with marginal theatre in the Netherlands and Belgium, a notable example of which is the collaboration between Jan Ritsema and Johan Leysen; and finally the The Flemish Wave ... this year represented, in the field of music, by Maximalist, and in the theatre by one of the 1980s true masters: Jan Fabre.

In the 1990 ACARTE Encounters one can already glimpse some of the European initiatives to come, such as the major meeting of the IETM that was to take place in Lisbon in 1991, or the first steps in preparation for Europalia. The IETM Lisbon meeting would welcome the International Association of Theatre

Critics, under the motto «Theatre and the Interpellation of the Real» («O Teatro e a Interpelação do Real», in its Portuguese version), which would result in a book. A few months earlier, on the anniversary of the ACARTE, the CAM hosted a review of, and tribute to, the Department's activity, with particular emphasis on the role of its founder and first Director. On that occasion, Sommer Ribeiro and José Sasportes said:

In the words she wrote a week after the creation of this new Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão mapped out what these six years would be like. However, while the map was drawn, the territory it mapped was still missing, and this was in fact what her work was about. Maria Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão had detected a blank space in the Portuguese cultural scene and, with her unique sensibility, she was able to respond to the longings of a new public and the needs of young creators.

The Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão/ACARTE award was instituted at this time to distinguish innovation in the field of the performing arts. João Fiadeiro would win the award one year later with his piece *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto*.

## «What we aim to do»

In the last item of the ACARTE programme, Madalena Perdigão lists what the Departments intends to carry out.

### 4. What we aim to do

#### 4.1. In the THEATRE

In-house productions of multidisciplinary projects.

Collaboration with Portuguese Companies or Groups (including co-productions), namely with itinerante Companies or Groups.

Presentation of small foreign companies or theatre groups.

Promotion of young authors, favouring research-based projects.

#### 4.2. In DANCE

In-house productions of multidisciplinary projects

Presentation of series of shows by independent Portuguese dance groups.  
Working sessions with foreign and Portuguese key figures leading to performances.  
Presentation of small foreign avant-garde companies or dance groups.

#### 4.3. In CINEMA

Screening of art film.

Organisation of film screenings for children.

Screening of animated films.

Organisiton of cycles, namely of Contemporary Cinema.

Project for an Animated Film direction course in collaboration with the Royal College of Art, London.

#### 4.4. In MUSIC

Informal lunchtime concerts featuring young musicians.

Jazz concerts in the Mutipurpose Room and in the Open Air Amphitheatre.

Contemporary Portuguese music concerts.

Fanfare Bands and Popular music concerts in the Open Air Amphitheatre.

Promotion of young composers.

Interdisciplinary Projects.

#### 4.5. In LITERATURE

Interdisciplinary Projects.

Conference series.

«Writers talk about themselves and their work».

Commented reading of literary works.

Bio-bibliographical exhibitions.

#### 4.6. In the VISUAL ARTS and ARCHITECTURE

Promotion of young artists.

Interdisciplinary artists.

Thematic and didactic exhibitions.

Presentation of contemporary art pieces and current research outcomes.

#### 4.7. And also VIDEO, PHOTOGRAPHY, MIME, CIRCUS, PUPPETRY, etc.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's relevant departments and services, in particular the Centre of Modern Art, will be key consultants in all the activities of the Animation, Artistic Creation and Education Through Art Department, which has

requested the collaboration of these services, as much as possible and necessary, for the execution of its programme.

Very near the end of her life, Madalena Perdigão (1989) would claim that the ACARTE's activity had largely stabilised: two seasons of contemporary dance a year (usually in May and November); Lunchtime Concerts, in May/June; Dance in the Open-air Amphitheatre, in July; Jazz in August; Fanfare Bands in the Amphitheatre in August/September; ACARTE Encounters – New European Dance/Theatre in September; theatre by Portuguese artists (twice a year, one of which in October); and, «in the interim», multidisciplinary projects, performances, puppet shows, film screenings for children, video screenings, etc.

And while in the hundreds of introductory texts Perdigão wrote the relevance of virtually every project she directed is conspicuous, one can also discern its fruits, and understand how events beget other events. A close reading of the press clippings and programme material available in the ACARTE archive uncovers some recurrent voices, of the artists themselves as well as of journalists and critics. From these, one can trace a habitual community (of those that accompanied the initiatives) and track its changes over time, in a period where we also witness the emergence of a new kind of specialized criticism and a new type of audience. Gleaning the archive reveals, for example:

- the rigour with which Madalena Perdigão presented each initiative;
- some strong critical voices, such as those of Carlos Porto, José Blanc de Portugal, Tomás Ribas and Manuela Azevedo, especially in the early years, and the gradual appearance of a wider number of critical voices as the years progress, namely in the writings of Eduardo Paes Mamede, Maria de Assis, Helena de Freitas, Gil Mendo or António Pinto Ribeiro (who would later integrate the Department);
- the overwhelming presence of references to the potential of the Gulbenkian space and how it is used «unreservedly» by the ACARTE: the CAM cafeteria, the open air amphitheatre, the CAI pavilion and the Gardens;
- the conspicuous presence of projects whose *raison d'être* can be traced back to different periods, as well as coming from very various parts of the world;
- the common use of English terms and various references to the international affirmation of the English language, which is not widely mastered, as testified by the texts in the press at the time;
- the frequent mention of the large attendance, especially of young people, at the Department's initiatives;



- the way in which a series of events and initiatives, mainly but not exclusively dance, put forward uses of the body and of the word that seem, in themselves, to be an important learning process for both performers and the public, (often in thematic cycles, and including different kinds of projects, but always accompanied by debates and discussion);
- the vast difference, in terms of the pace and intensity of the programming, between the early and the later years, with the year 1987 and the creation of the ACARTE Encounters (which coincided with the country's entry into the EEC) as pivotal moments that brought about an acceleration of the programming activity;
- the ongoing efforts of the Department to support new creations and commissions, while still leaving room for *ad hoc* external proposals;
- the ways in which the Department's activity is imagined and perceived as seminal
- one can clearly discern the emergence and training of both artists and technicians, of producers and critical voices, many of whom would later work in other institutions and events that appeared in the meantime, such as the CCB, Culturgest, «LX94 Lisbon Capital da Cultura» [Lisbon Capital of Culture], «Festival dos 100 dias» and «Expo 98» (the 1998 Lisbon World Exhibition);
- the creation of, and participation in, national and international networks, the most visible sign of which is the ACARTE Encounters, though one should also mention the ongoing training in the fields of animated film, jazz music, musical theatre, performance art, Fanfare Bands and world music, among others;
- the intensity of the debate and the polemics that accompanied many of the initiatives;
- the way some of the Department's projects, such as the ACARTE Encounters, are perceived in the press as common – as already customary – even though they have only existed for a brief period of time;
- the way in which a series of initiatives establish themselves and develop a strong identity very early on – this was the case with Jazz em Agosto (which continues to this day), but also the regular and expanded action of the Children's Art Centre (Centro de Arte Infantil) or the Animated Film courses;
- the crossovers between the ACARTE and a host of emergent spaces, symptomatic of which is, for example, the hiring of António Pinto Ribeiro (at the time a dance critic in the weekly *Expresso* and a lecturer at the then recently opened Escola Superior de Dança), or the collaboration with the Bienal Universitária de Coimbra [Coimbra University Biennial], or the recently created IFICT.

PART V

Epilogue



## NEW PORTUGUESE DANCE: *RETRATO DA MEMÓRIA ENQUANTO PESO MORTO*

– Well, the pretext for this interview is the ACARTE / Madalena Perdigão Prize you received on the 9th of this month. It is said that any prize is a stimulus. Is it the case with this one?

– It is a great stimulus. First of all, the prize itself, but also the name of the prize, because Madalena Perdigão and the ACARTE – and well before the ACARTE – were undoubtedly the main support for this thing we call Nova Dança in Portugal: it is to them that seven, eight, maybe ten, young choreographers, each with their own project, owe their existence.

JOÃO FIADEIRO, interview with *O Jornal Ilustrado*, 24-01-1992

*In a black and white shot, a boy runs at full speed towards the left side of the screen and in long strides crosses some stone arcades, in a line running parallel to our gaze. His silhouette is dark. He wears jeans and an unbuttoned shirt over a t-shirt that, because of the speed at which he moves, flutters backward, parallel to the boy's long hair. The image conveys urgency; the sound, muffled, low and rattled, has a syncopated cadence, a beat that expresses the speed. On a rectangular sheet of paper, against a black background, one reads «PORTRAIT OF MEMORY AS A DEAD WEIGHT», in capital letters, between inverted commas. The sound's continuity foreshadows the continuity of the image of the boy running. Cut to the image of the running boy.*

*People with their backs to us enter a room, shot from the shoulders up. The sound changes. Foyer ambient noise. Suddenly, shot in a different space (the black box of a theatre?), we see the image of a sturdy man, João Fiadeiro, in black trousers and shirt, with a smaller body on his shoulder, both in sync, their black trainers facing us. The man strikes violent blows against a mirrored surface but the feet on his shoulder act as springs against the surface, pushing the two away from it. They move in tandem: resisting, cooperating, responding, proposing. Cut. The shot shows us once again the same persons as before, now from the front: a man smoking, a television in the distance. The*

noise of the foyer grows louder. A new cut to the previous scene allows us to see that it is a couple: a man, João Fiadeiro, and a woman with straight brown hair. They are both young, wearing trousers and a black shirt. The man grabs the woman by the arms and pushes her against a mirrored surface. To the noise of the foyer adds to the thud of the body against the surface. Another cut to the previous shot, which we now realise is that of the entrance to a theatre. A lady collects entry tickets, people enter the room. A new cut brings us back to the couple in the black box of the theatre – not the same couple, but another one. They are facing each other. They are equally young, clothes of a similar kind, the same kind of movements. The woman is leaning against the mirrored surface, the man faces her, defiantly, a clash of couples. On a white sheet of paper one reads «Companhia João Fiadeiro RE.AL Resposta alternativa».

*Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto*, whose first minutes in video I have just elliptically described, was awarded the first Madalena de Azeredo Perdigão / ACARTE Prize.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, it was the piece that would lead João Fiadeiro to take part in the dance showcase presented in Belgium, in the Klapstuk festival, as part of the Europalia exhibition, in 1991, where the New Portuguese Dance was first revealed internationally. The piece was initially produced by Pós d'Arte, a group formed in 1987 by Francisco Camacho, Vera Mantero, Carlota Lagido, André Lepecki, João Fiadeiro and Paulo Abreu, and later by Arte Empresa, a production company recently created by Miguel Honrado and Guillaume Baschet-Sueur. This was also the show that gave birth to the production company RE.AL – Resposta Alternativa.<sup>129</sup> In the words of João Fiadeiro,<sup>131</sup> it was the «founding

128 Special mentions were also attributed to Duarte Barrilero Ruas, with *O Povo das Chuvas Ácidas*, and Alberto Lopes with *Frágil Frágil*. The jury was composed of: António Laginha, Jorge Listopad, José Blanc de Portugal, Maria Helena Seródio and Eugénia Vasques. In an interview with André Lepecki in 1992, the choreographer states: «André Lepecki: How do you justify the prize that *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* received? João Fiadeiro: I think I won the prize because... The prize itself, I think, is exceptionally relative. It's a 'conjecture' (*laughs*). If the jury or other critics had been different, the prize would have gone to someone else. In fact, I said this when I gave my thanks for the prize: I said that it could have been someone else just as easily as me. Given that it was me, I feel somewhat like the representative of a movement that is receiving a prize. [...] But I think it has everything to do with a very specific moment, my piece has more impact, it has a lot of people, it's set a convent, that kind of thing...» (*Blitz* 11-2-1992).

129 REAL, created in 1990 as a space for the choreographic creations of João Fiadeiro, from early on devoted, by way of experimental projects, co-productions, residencies, festivals, workshops and publications, a special attention to the creation of a demanding and constructive dialogue with the artistic community, the public and cultural agents. REAL was one of the structures that took part in the New Portuguese Dance movement of the 90s, and João Fiadeiro, within that movement, gained his place through the creation of his first pieces, regularly presented all over Europe, but mainly in Germany and France.

130 Interview with João Fiadeiro (17-8-2011), Lisbon. The present chapter leans heavily on the elements provided by Fiadeiro in this interview.

object», the beginning and prefiguration of, at one and the same time, New Portuguese Dance, the work of João Fiadeiro as choreographer, and a new decade, the 1990s. It was also the culmination and consolidation of the framework of an era that coincides with the first years of the ACARTE project.

*Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* arises out of an invitation from Europalia 91 to the collective Pós d'Arte. The various choreographers would then produce works to be presented at the «Bienal Universitária de Coimbra» [BUC]<sup>131</sup> in 1990 and the decision would then be made as to whether they would be invited to develop a new work to integrate the dance programme of Europalia 91, at the Klapstuk festival in Leuven, one of the privileged stages for the affirmation of the emerging Contemporary Dance in Europe. Very ambitious in terms of production (with original live music, four dancers, video projections, a film screened in the foyer) the piece was presented at the BUC but João Fiadeiro was not chosen to take part in Europalia. The choreographer, who in the meantime had left the Pós d'Arte collective, would end up, through Arte Empresa (an emergent production structure), renting the Convent of Beato and putting together the show to coincide with the coming of a series of curators and programmers to the FCG, in March 1991, at the Annual Meeting of the IETM (international Network for Contemporary Performing Arts), organised on this occasion by the ACARTE. The work met with such success that Fiadeiro would not only be invited to take part in Europalia, where he would present *Solo para Dois Intérpretes* [Solo for Two Performers] but *Retrato...* would win the first prize in the recently established ACARTE/Madalena Perdigão award.

This account signals the continuity between the ACARTE Department, the newly-created European network IETM, the BUC in 1990, and the Portuguese participation in the Klapstuk Festival in the context of Europalia 91 (where Portugal

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131 The 1970s saw a revival of university theatre throughout Europe. In this decade, a series of international festivals were created, like the Lyon International Festival, the International Festival of Experimental Theatre in Palermo, the International Festival of University Theatre in England and the biennial *Semana Internacional de Teatro Universitário* [SITU – International Week of University Theatre] in Coimbra, in 1978, which in 1986 would change its name to *Bienal Universitária de Coimbra* (BUC – Coimbra University Biennial). It is important to mention that through the networks that defined the experimentalism associated to 1970s university theatre (see section «Ideas of Europe for ideas of theatre: the creation of the ACARTE» in chapter 10 of this book), the BUC was also present in the IETM, and it possibly came into contact with the ACARTE in a meeting of this network outside Portugal. Since then, the two structures began to collaborate, as stated by António Augusto Barros, director of the BUC (interview on 20th September 2011, Coimbra). An example of this was the ACARTE's co-production of Anton Chekhov's *Platonov*, by Rogério de Carvalho, in 1990.

was the guest country) – a continuity that becomes even more explicit if one bears into account both the influence of the ACARTE in the trajectories of the young choreographers Vera Mantero, Francisco Camacho and João Fiadeiro (at the time, or until recently, still in the Gulbenkian Ballet), and the places where the story narrated by Fiadeiro unfolds (the *movida* of late-1980s Lisbon). Furthermore, its protagonists, a number of programmers, critics and producers – mostly men, generally quite young (under 40 years old at the time)<sup>132</sup> – would then start to play prominent roles in a wide effort to build a Europe founded on Culture, one in which exhibitions, trade fairs, festivals and exhibits would multiply, often linked with large-scale European initiatives, leading to the opening of new venues and facilities.

From João Fiadeiro's interview, besides the BUC, in Coimbra, the ACARTE in Lisbon, and Europalia/Klapstuck, in Leuven, one should also mention the Lisbon nightlife (the nightclub Frágil, in particular) the Studios of the Companhia de Dança de Lisbon, the underground meetings of the Post-D'Arte collective, in the home of the young filmmaker Paulo Abreu, or the television series *Fame*, all part of the same exhibitionary complex, that of 1980s Lisbon. Through this list of products, places, habits, but also, and above all, emerging desires, one can perceive modernisation as an «event», and account for the meteoric nature of a series of products and how they change daily life (Ross 1994). In this interview we also become familiar with his childhood memories of thearnation revolution, his choice of dance as a boy (uncommon at the time), a certain adolescent and generational break with what was then seen as the aesthetics of «April» (rural and nationalist, with neo-realist influences), or the visits to New York, a yearned-for destination. Taken together, these are contradictory signs of an era where there is a profusion of references to the dissemination of an audio-visual culture that runs alongside the appearance of new places and the development of new elites.

In the Post-D'Arte archive there is a newspaper clipping from 1991 where Expo 98 is already mentioned (Portugal made its bid at the time): one then realises how, between 1989 and 1991, the major cultural themes that would define the 90s

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132 João Fiadeiro explicitly mentions the names of: Georges Brugmans (co-programmer of Encontros ACARTE and programmer of the Springdance Festival, in Utrecht), Bruno Vergbert (director of the Klapstuck and later co-director of the Springdance festival), Gil Mendo (Teacher at the Escola Superior de Dança and dance critic, later dance programmer at Culturgest), José Ribeiro da Fonte (Artistic Director of the Teatro Nacional São Carlos), António Pinto Ribeiro (Assistant to Madalena Perdigão at the ACARTE, lecturer at the Escola Superior de Dança, critic at the newspaper *Expresso*), António Augusto Barros (Director of the BUC) or Miguel Honrado (Founder of Arte Empresa, later Director of the EGEAC).

were being outlined, as one can also discern from the acceleration of the ACARTE's programming after 1987. What stands out there are the efforts of a group of young people who wanted to belong to, or enter into dialogue with, what was taking place in a Europe that included Wim Vandekeybus and others, ushering in something quite different from what the Gulbenkian Ballet had to offer. Many of these young people were regular presences in the ACARTE.

*Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* is explicitly influenced by Wim Vandekeybus. The way in which this influence is pivotal to its legitimisation has parallels with what happened with Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker's *Fase: Four Movements for the Music of Steve Reich* (1982), as analysed by Rudi Laermans and Pascal Gielen in *Europe Dancing* (Stephanie Jordan; Andrée Grau 2000, 12-23). In this book, Laermans and Gielen attend to the mechanisms of institutionalisation of contemporary dance in the Flanders region where, in the early 1980s, there was scarcely any modern or post-modern dance, and other genres were likewise rarely welcomed, with the ballet tradition still hegemonic. In this context, ballet became a negative reference point for the new generation of choreographers for whom it was hard to gain recognition. If contemporary dance was not at that point an autonomous field of cultural production, not even an independent subsystem, to do something other than ballet amounted simply to «doing some random stuff» (Bourdieu 1982, Luhmann 1995 *apud* Laermans and Gielen). This would explain the accusations of amateurism the Flemish critics, accustomed to ballet, would often level at choreographers whose training was ostensibly non-classical, such as Jan Fabre, Alain Platel or Wim Vandekeybus, a recrimination accentuated by the lack of a professional distribution network that could lend these works a professional aura. In this context, Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker and Jan Fabre developed – more or less consciously – specific strategies to legitimise their first productions, among which the selective reference to forms and standards that were already internationally validated. Gielen and Laermans refer to this as a «distinctive appropriation» of the dance canon. Thus, their works would inscribe themselves intertextually into an already established international lineage, which at the local level would have a counter-hegemonic effect (*idem*). Keersmaecker's *Fase: Four Movements for the Music of Steve Reich*, a resounding and immediate success both in Flanders and in international festivals such as Dance Umbrella,<sup>133</sup> was a representative example of

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133 It was to Val Bourne, Director of Dance Umbrella, that Madalena Perdigão initially sent a letter asking for contacts of small dance festivals and saying that she wanted to bring small contemporary dance groups to Portugal.



this process. Not only had Keersmaecker just returned from New York, where she had finished her studies at the Tisch School of The Arts, but the choreographical piece, as its title underlines, appropriated American dance's minimalism.<sup>134</sup> *Fase* became something of a *fait accompli* in the Flemish context: only ill-informed and narrow-minded «rustics» could deny it the professional status of a work of art and if they did, they would not only have to refute its choreographic value but also contest its international references and therefore the international dance community itself. Through an argument driven more by attention to the conditions of reception of the work than to the work itself, the authors claim that *Fase* and the work that follows from it, the 1983 *Rosas danst Rosas*, by drawing explicitly on an already established style, operated within a safety zone defined by the artistic prestige or symbolic capital of American minimalist dance (Bourdieu 1992 *apud* Gielen and Laermans). By establishing an explicit link with an «indisputable (aesthetic) fact» (Latour 1987 *apud* Gielen and Laermans) they strengthened their own instances of recognition, which could only happen without the immediate derogatory label of «imitation» by virtue of a combination of the choreographic idiom in question with very particular movement material: in this case, a combination of repetitive series and everyday gestures (such as sitting on a chair, falling to the floor, combing one's hair...). Thus, the movement's semantic richness circumvented the purposefully analytical and «void» tendency of minimalism, building a unique authorial style that combined an emphasis on structure with a strong emotional charge.

If I may venture a parallel with the Portuguese case, it would be interesting to see in *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* not only the author's distinctive traits (originality, the performers' virtuosity, the specific features of the composition), but also the signs of an international lineage recognisable in Portugal (in this case, as a more direct reference, the choreographic proposals of Wim Vandekeybus, which had been widely celebrated in the ACARTE, in 1987 and 1989). This, as in the case of Keersmaecker, would go some way towards securing the work's acceptance, and indeed its legitimacy.<sup>135</sup> This legitimisation comes at the tail end of a period of

134 As in the case, for example, by Lucinda Childs, who made *Dance* in 1979, a choreography for Steve Reich's minimal music. Cf. (Banes 1963 *apud* Gielen and Laermans 2000).

135 In an interview, about the initial legitimacy of his work in Flanders, Wim Vandekeybus told a story that has parallels with that of Fiadeiro. Having worked for several years as a performer for Jan Fabre, alongside whom he travelled widely on tour, and during which time he came into contact with IETM members, Vandekeybus (whose own original creative work was taking its first steps) found a way to take part in an IETM meeting, at the time reserved only for programmers and occasionally for established artists. His presence at this meeting was fundamental, he says, to his emergence as a choreographer. (Interview with Wim Vandekeybus, 31-7-2010.)

intense activity by the ACARTE Department, one which sees contemporary dance go from being virtually non-existent, as testified by the programme of the «Mostra de Dança Holandesa Contemporânea» [Showcase of Contemporary Dutch Dance] in 1986, to the «most fruitful moment in its history», as José Sasportes writes in 1988 in the programme of the Conference «Perspectivas da Dança nos Finais do Século XX» [Perspectives on Dance at the End of the 20th Century].

Concerning Jan Fabre's pieces *The Power of Theatrical Madness* (1984) and *Das Glas im Kopf wird vom Glas: The Dance Sections* (1987) – also presented in the ACARTE – Gielen and Laermans suggest another type of «distinctive appropriation» in the *performance art* tradition within the visual arts, combined with an explicit commentary on, and a de-identification with, a ballet tradition which had Balanchine and Forsythe as its key reference points (in *The Dance Sections*, for example, the performers execute a series of elementary ballet movements in slow motion, with their hands tied by a pair of trainers). This kind of negative self-definition would quickly become dominant in the new discourses on dance, running parallel to the emergence of the aesthetic proposals of this generation of choreographers, especially in the texts of the bi-monthly publication *Etcetera*. Unlike what had happened, for example, in the US, where the artists' own discourse defined this kind of experimentation as following from what was taking place in the streets, emphasising its political vein;<sup>136</sup> and where the specialised debates would later zoom in on the specific differences between modern and postmodern dance,<sup>137</sup> in the pages of the magazine *Etcetera* the term «contemporary dance» served as a label for «everything that was not ballet», operating above all through a generic de-identification, bound to the field of dance framed as synonymous with ballet, without paying particular attention to the political genealogy of the proposals or even their relation with the history of modern dance. It is also important to mention the continuity between this magazine, launched in 1983 by Johan Wambacq and Hugo De Greef, and the Kaaitheaterfestival in Brussels, of which De Greef is the director, and which, together with the Klapstuk in Leuven, where the New Portuguese Dance would later premiere, would become one of the most important stages for the «Flemish wave».

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136 The fact, for example, that it democratises the entire body surface as a point of contact; that it subverts gender roles in dance; that it widens the scope of what may be perceived as dance and who can be perceived as a dancer; or that it breaks with the authorial tradition, often replacing it with collective creative processes...

137 On this issue, see the well-known polemic between Susan Manning and Sally Banes in Manning (1988).

While ballet was associated with attributes such as «superficial», «commercial», «empty», «old-fashioned», Contemporary Dance is described by epithets such as «natural», «genuine», «personal», «true», often grounded on a positive emphasis on the supposed primacy of «the body» over everything else, along a line of reasoning in which at times a moral bias took the place of an actual debate or a specific aesthetic and political contextualisation of the pieces, which the authors associate with a lack of theoretical reflection on dance and, in particular, on this kind of proposal. This would lead to an interpretation of the work of Fabre and other choreographers associated with the new «Flemish wave» (and later, contemporary dance in general) as a search for an expression of authenticity.

Returning to the parallel with *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto*, one should mention not only the boom of cultural supplements where a new form of criticism would have room to develop, but also the appearance of institutions such as the ACARTE, where young choreographers would begin, timidly at first, to appear side by side with acclaimed authors, at the Bienal Universitária de Coimbra (BUC), their privileged stage, and, later, at Danças na Cidade, created by this generation.<sup>138</sup> These institutions are the basis for the emergence of some sites specifically devoted to the presentation of new proposals or training structures such as the Fórum Dança and, later, the cem – centro em movimento, which would serve as platforms for the affirmation and dissemination of contemporary dance as a specific genre. Also symptomatic of this process is the seminar «A Crítica e as Artes do Corpo» [Criticism and the Arts of the Body] that took place at the Encontros ACARTE 89, organised by the dance critic and essayist António Pinto Ribeiro, at the time assistant and consultant to Madalena Perdigão at the ACARTE, where the attempt to define and problematise an emerging kind of art – «the arts of the body»<sup>139</sup> – appears explicitly associated with a new type of specialised criticism.

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138 *Danças na Cidade* is created in 1993 to make up for the lack of platforms for the presentation of Portuguese contemporary dance. On this issue, see Maria de Assis, «Danças na Cidade – um projecto singular», available on the festival's website.

139 *Arts of the Body* [*Artes do Corpo* in Portuguese], a concept coined by António Pinto Ribeiro (1997), appears in the literature of the time as referring to certain trends in dance, performance, song and theatre or, alternatively, to certain trends in physical theatre, dance, performance art and music, which is emblematic of the difficulty in finding new words for practices that seem to seek to escape from fixed categories. More than seeking to trace the genealogy of the concept, its origin or its exact contours, it is important to underline the difficulties it faces and its momentary operationality. It is as if the term «Arts of the Body» applied to what was happening in the European performing arts at the time, and to what was happening in the ACARTE in particular.

While in the Belgian case the break was specifically with the ballet tradition, in Portugal a number of other factors have to be taken into account, among them the abrupt transformations that Portuguese society was undergoing. In a country where the Escola Superior de Dança [Higher School of Dance] and the Companhia Nacional de Bailado [National Ballet Company] were founded in 1983 and 1977, respectively, the teaching and transmission of this type of dance was restricted to a handful of mostly private schools and private tutors, with the FCG, via the Gulbenkian Ballet, its Ballet School and its Dance Seasons, once again standing out as a key institution. Thus, while there was certainly a reception of these trends via Europe, with the «Flemish wave» and the «French wave» at their peak; and a strong presence of Jazz Dance, through the impact of both the American television series *Fame* and Rui Horta's recently founded Companhia de Dança de Lisboa; the direct and indirect role of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is incontestable. Several dancers that would later come to embody the heterogeneous set of proposals that made up the «New Portuguese Dance» would often come through the FCG Ballet company, founded by Madalena Perdigão more than two decades earlier, in 1965; and it would be from the Escola Superior de Dança, recently created within the framework of the Commission for the Reform of the National Conservatory, also chaired by Madalena Perdigão, that a host of other choreographers and dancers would also receive training which was itself taking its first institutionalised steps in a higher education format.<sup>140</sup> Without the Ballet Gulbenkian or Madalena Perdigão there would hardly be a New Portuguese Dance, since the training of its main choreographers was only possible as a result of its continuous action, which also planted many of the seeds from which other structures would emerge, structures where nowadays this dance tradition is transmitted. The Portuguese state, which had just entered the «Europe of Communities», and which would later be so keen to use the New Portuguese Dance as part of the country's international cultural affirmation, in fact spent next to nothing on its creation. But its emergence was also undeniably tied to the changes in Portuguese society of which the ACARTE is an integral part; changes that pick up pace as soon as the country joins the EEC, as the ACARTE programme clearly shows. Like any sudden historical transformation, this would entail a reconfiguration of the subjects' sense of corporeality (Lepecki 2003).

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140 On the role of this school in the 1980s see Vera Mantero's documentary *Corpos Decentes* (2008).

As explained by the choreographer, *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* is made up of fragments. A piece «in fits and starts» in which the audience unwittingly walks into the scene, realising it only once the curtains open, then taking their seats (Fiadeiro 2011). A choreographic sequence for two performers, built from improvisational experiences borrowed from Wim Vandekeybus and Trisha Brown, together with *contact-improvisation*, the piece's pivotal idea, intermittent, multiplied and scrambled, is *interruption*: to see, to fail to see, and then, once again, to see, in «fits and starts» (Fiadeiro 2011). With an aesthetic where the influence of contact-improvisation is conspicuous and where the creation of high-intensity affective atmospheres takes the place of a traditional narrative, now, with the hindsight of more than a quarter of a century, it seems evident that *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* is also a portrait of a young urban subculture, with their Reebok black trainers and zest for life, obsessed with its own inner states and processes and with testing the limits of their own body as well as the bodies of others, brooding to the sound of repetitive music, in open defiance of the outside world.

## «WE HAD FASCIST BODIES»

Jorge Silva Melo tells us that in 1996, while observing the movements of a group of young people rehearsing, Glécinia Quartín commented: «look, this is the greatest conquest of the 25 of April, the freedom with which these boys are moving. We had fascist bodies».<sup>141</sup> This was in preparation for Jorge Silva Melo's play *O Fim ou Tende Misericórdia de Nós* [The End, or Have Mercy on Us], in which João Fiadeiro worked as a movement assistant. The play, directed by the author, was produced by Artistas Unidos, a company that formed in the wake of the premiere of *António, Um Rapaz de Lisbon*, also by Silva Melo, in the Encontros ACARTE 95.

Glécinia Quartín's observation seems to somehow echo Alexandre Melo's 1993 article «Os portugueses não têm corpo?» [The Portuguese do not have a body?], written after seeing the young Vera Mantero and Francisco Camacho on stage, in a performance that reframed the question of the reconfiguration of the experience of corporeality. André Lepecki, when writing about the complex process of «activating [a] dancing body, immersed in contemporaneity and reflecting the nervousness of history» which was given the name *Nova Dança Portuguesa*, argues that this shift occurred *massively* only after the end of the colonial regime in 1974, against the background of a cultural opening to Europe and the World. It intersected, then, with the profound change that the end of the empire would force upon the country's self-image, which in the space of a few years went from colonial to European; from an understanding of the body as non-existent, a pure negativity, to the body as an agent of transformation, with the malleability and capacity to choose that this implies (Lepecki 2001, 29). This transformation is to be framed by the formation of the complex and heterogeneous group that Rui Bebiano labels «*pop* people», a term that signals not only the incompleteness that defines

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141 Jorge Silva Melo in an interview with Anabela Mota Ribeiro (August 2011).

any process of modernisation (made up of an incessant kinetic: always lagging behind a further modernising step), but also the contradictory forms that this process took on during the dictatorship, which would shape its future (the contradiction between the people of the nation and the *pop* of global consumption).

Having underlined the fact that in 1984, a few years before joining the EEC, the ACARTE opened its doors with a season around Almada Negreiros – he who, in 1917, had called for the transformation of the Portuguese into Europeans by exhorting them to go see the Ballets Russes<sup>142</sup> – it is now important to mention what happened when Almada actually went to see the Ballets Russes. In the conference on Almada organised by the ACARTE, José Sasportes claims that Almada's relationship with dance reflected «his hesitations» towards «the modernist avant-garde», embodied, in the field of modern dance, in Isadora Duncan and the Ballets Russes. And while in 1917 Almada even dreamt of becoming a dancer, of experiencing the sense of «physical liberation that comes from reclaiming the body as a category of the spirit», this enthusiasm was there «before Almada had seen any of the manifestations to which he alluded». It was, therefore, «a hear-say enthusiasm, from having read celebratory reviews in foreign newspapers», an «enthusiasm of desire», since Almada had never left the country (Sasportes 1985, 133-143). In this matter, Almada was at the opposite pole of my previous examples. In other words, if for both Glicínia Quartín and Alexandre Melo it is the presence of a certain corporeality and gesture that exposes its negative (seen as a «fascist body» or as a «non-existent» one), in Almada this corporeality was idealised through what Sasportes calls «the enthusiasm of desire», an appeal to its potential future.

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142 Grigoriev, a member of the Ballets Russes, describes the company's stay in Lisbon in his diaries. From his description one can glimpse the social and political context to the visit of the Ballets Russes, against the background of the convulsions afflicting the Europe of the time (Grigoriev 1960): «The theatre in Lisbon at which we were to appear was enormous and resembled a circus. It was indeed called the Coliseu des Recreias. Diaghilev greatly disliked it and resented having to exhibit his company there. But nothing else was available, what had formerly been the Royal Theatre being closed. On the day after our arrival Diaghilev and I were on our way to the Coliseu, which was not far from our hotel, when, just as we were about to go in, we heard some firing, then some people appeared, running and being chased by mounted police; on which others took cover quickly in doorways. They informed us at the theatre that a revolution had broken out, and advised us to return as quickly as possible to the hotel and stay there. (...) For the following week, while the fighting among the Portuguese continued, we led a most strange and uncomfortable life. We had to sleep without ever undressing, either on the floor of our rooms or on the stairs; we had very little to eat, since the hotel had only meager reserves; and we were excruciatingly bored. This enforced inactivity was a torture to Diaghilev, and since it was at this juncture that news arrived of the Communist coup in Russia, he began cursing the revolutionaries of every country.»

According to the claims José Sasportes presented at ACARTE in 1984, the coming of the Ballets Russes to Lisbon was amply discussed in the circles in which Almada moved. Yet, after the performances, he would cease to evoke them, not even in the context of his own – starkly opposed – experience of putting together ballet shows, from as early as 1918. Trying to account for «why dance ceased to be an important constellation in Almada’s universe», Sasportes claims that this change occurred after the shows. Not only was the series of performances in Lisbon reputedly one of the worst the company had ever staged – against the backdrop of Sidónio Pais dictatorial coup, the war in Europe and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia – but the repertoire they presented was mostly in the *Art Nouveau* style. These were not modernist shows: neither Stravinski; nor Nijinsky; nor even the Picasso-Satie-Cocteau *Parade* for Massine. Instead, they performed Massine’s *Le Soleil de Nuit*, a popular Russian theme in a constructivist vein, read by the critics as a «work for the deranged». As for the season, it was divided into «oriental-style dances» and «neo-romantic-style dances». <sup>144</sup> The Ballets Russes that Lisbon saw, then, hardly matched what was announced in the text *Os Ballets Russes em Lisbon* and the «enthusiasm of desire» voiced there would come up against very clear limits when confronted with the actual lived situation. This hints at the need to examine the negotiations between modernity’s «enthusiasm of desire» and the concrete contexts in which it is expressed, the directions it takes, what it distances itself from, and that which it is specifically responding to – its «colonial mirror», to draw on the notion explored by Lepecki, after Taussig (Lepecki 2003). In other words, it underlines the need to thoroughly investigate people’s perceptions of their own historical moment and the coordinates that serve as reference points for those perceptions; as well as the idealised construction of the «desired objects», their concrete reception and future appropriation, thus drawing a more detailed grid, with a greater number of nodal points and more indirect intersections of aesthetic and political meanings and trajectories.

But Sasportes also alludes to the disappearance, or rather the *fading away*, of the body in his analysis of the place that dance occupies in Almada’s work, bearing in mind the «enthusiasm of desire» expressed in *Os Ballets Russes em Lisbon* and his own subsequent ballets. The latter were «sweet fairy tales, delicately staged in an atmosphere of genial amateurism and scarce choreographic means», devoid of any «lust or sensuality» – in stark contrast to the futuristic aesthetics which they were, in a sense, meant to «make forget» – and framed by the orderly and solid space of neoclassicism through which Almada inaugurates an «aesthetics of naivety», leav-



ing behind «the terrain of the liberation of the Lusitanian soul». More importantly still, this Lusitanian soul «deemed captive to all manner of vices, now becomes a bearer of previously unknown virtues, the salvation of humanity itself» – as if Almada's «Portuguesism» negated his initial cosmopolitanism, the engine of his own interest in dance, which, while it did not go away, would become progressively hazier (*ibid.*, 143).

What Melo's notion of «having no body», or the «fascist bodies» mentioned by Glicinia Quartín, or even Almada's appeal to the creation of a «European body» bring to the surface is the biopolitical character of modern governmentality, its impact on bodies and souls that, thus described and arranged within the frame of this description, become the «people» of governance. This sudden emergence can be framed, among other things, in relation to the becoming-*pop* of that people, and with it the spread of the kind of governmentality that defines what Gilles Deleuze called «societies of control». What can this sudden emergence mean, then, if, as we have seen, the formation of what I have been referring to as a «*pop* people» seems to be a drawn-out process with specific points of intensity, skipping over the Revolution, preceding it and continuing after it? And what can it mean if, within this so-called «*pop* people», that is, in this urban and cosmopolitan middle class for whom, during the dictatorship, cultural and social consumption often became *in itself* a locus of dissent, bringing together imaginaries of two very different planes (the militant and the cosmopolitan), these imaginaries part ways, as Rui Bebiano suggests happened after the 25 of April and even more so during the years of so-called «democratic stability»?

There are moments when certain practices which *in themselves* can be said to be vehemently political (because of their modes of production, the way they offer the world to the senses, the collective experiences they create, or the redistribution of the roles they propose through their procedures and in the way they set the scene) will be received as apolitical or even depoliticising. This may happen for a number of reasons; either because of their apparent abstention from conveying explicit *verbal* political messages, thus distancing themselves from a politically recognizable aesthetic, connoted with the «April» spirit, and therefore founded on distinct objects and practices; or because their wide reception coincides with moments of accelerated depoliticization such as the 1980s, when there is a break with the country's earlier political period and new elites establish themselves, using their specialist knowledge, among other things, as a form of distinction; or because the interpretation of these works, often in a paternalistically didactic vein, privi-

leged a formalistic explanation within which they appear removed from their context.<sup>143</sup> And if, as the massification of cultural consumption progresses, it undeniably helps to draw elitist distinctions, forming differentiating «tastes» and consumer niches within a neatly divided market (which is unable to think of itself as a collective subject of action); it is also true that the impact of many of these practices that *in themselves* can be perceived as the fruit of political conquests will blur the clear-cut distinction between political and apolitical, as they traverse the subjects' body and unfold their gestures.

In his «Notes on the Gesture», one of the few essays where he addresses dance explicitly, Giorgio Agamben claims that, if since the end of the 20th century, the biopolitical character of modern governmentality led the Western bourgeoisie to «los[e] its gestures» (a process which films like Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* would parody); the high-speed spread of consumption and the massive entry of a series of objects into everyday life (cars, refrigerators, electrical appliances, desks, computers) in the transition to what has been here called *the logic of the abundance of things and their images*, a change that would turn the sphere of daily intimacy in itself into a terrain for the learning of new gestures. And it was important, politically, to make these gestures visible as such (as certain films by Jacques Tati or even Hal Hartley did).

This ties in with what Agamben refers to as the «pure mediality» of gesture, its exposure, removed from any kind of transcendence, in its own being-in-a-medium: not an act, which would be an end unto itself, nor a doing, which would have an end distinct from itself, but an exhibition of its mediality (Agamben 2000, 57). The same occurs in a series of performative and artistic practices like the ones we have been addressing here: contemporary dance, animated cinema, musical theatre, lunchtime concerts, visual and concrete poetry. In other words, in the ACARTE's programmes of these years one finds a reflection on – an embodiment of – this gap between subject and gesture, allowing us to access, after the fact, to a kind of ongoing critique of modernisation as an event (Ross 1995).

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143 An example of this is a reception of American post-modern dance that limits itself to contextualising it in the field of dance, without mentioning the cultural period in which it participates and in which it emerges, shaping it.



## INDOORS: SCENARIO OF MODERNITY OR OUR GULBENKIAN?

It is no mere detail that what was to be seen and experienced in the framework that we have addressed here took place in the southern wing of the Gulbenkian complex. And it must be situated *there, in* the newly created ACARTE, *in* Portugal, *in* Lisbon, *from 1984 to 1989, in* the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, *in* the context of a country emerging from a 48-year-long dictatorship, 10 years *after* a revolution, *within* the period of the country's entry into the EEC. And it must also be situated in the specific place occupied by a museum of modern art that is conceived as an art centre, the first in the country, and taking into account the distinguishing features of its construction and action. To *situate* is to define a prism through which to see the ACARTE, which, like an *Aleph*, offers itself to be seen, *heterotopically*, at the crossroads of the different times and spaces that converge on it (Foucault 1967), at the same time as it unfolds through a series of other spaces – that is to say, through the exhibitionary complex of which it is an integral part (Bennet 1995). With this in view, we made a long chronological journey through «Architectures of culture» in order to locate points of reference and ideas of culture that define specific historical contexts and moments. In its specificity, this «situating» unfolds the multiplicity of times and spaces that converge on the ACARTE, bringing to light the particular heterochronias of a programming practice steered by an *openness to lack* that would become a privileged way to access the perceptions that contemporaries had of their own historical moment and the coordinates that served as reference points for those perceptions.

As was the case with the history of *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto* or the comment by Glicínia Quartín, the image of the *Aleph* also emerged from an interview. Often functioning a-chronologically, memory sometimes allows access to underlying emotional tones that would otherwise go unnoticed. In order to think together the reconfiguration of corporeality and the action of an Gulbenkian Foundation presented here as somewhere between a *scenario of modernity* and *our Gulbenkian*, it would perhaps be necessary (among other things) to investigate the dif-

ferent uses of its complex in Avenida de Berna – from its inauguration in 1969 to its reopening after the Gulbenkian park had been reconfigured, which coincided with the beginning of the ACARTE, in 1984. This would imply a focus on the ways in which the museum is put into practice, or performed, paying attention to institutions' *instituting* character and seeing them as the result of negotiations between practices, discourses and ways of understanding and experiencing the world.

But let us now return to Alberto Pimenta's poem «Abriu em Portugal».

In 1968, so the poem tells us, a GNR [National Republican Guard] officer cited two young men who were found kissing in Parque Eduardo VII. The Gulbenkian complex, with its museum, library and gardens is inaugurated one year after this episode, in 1969, already in the period known as the «Marcelist spring». But the promises of modernisation announced by Marcelismo soon floundered against the background of the continuation of the colonial war and of a dictatorial regime that was especially repressive towards those who contested it, in a succession of events that would lead to the outbreak of the revolution on 25 April 1974. In 1974/75, in a well-documented polemic in the weekly *Expresso*, with the telling title «Que Gulbenkian temos, que Gulbenkian queremos?» [«Which Gulbenkian do we have, which Gulbenkian do we want?»],<sup>144</sup> the FCG is occupied by the workers and a series of dismissals and political purges would follow. In 1979 the construction of the CAM in the south wing of the complex was agreed upon. Thus, amid environmentalist demonstrations against the destruction of the park, the construction of the complex begins, to be completed in 1984. This brief chronological account points to the need to consider the ways in which the Gulbenkian space as a whole – the garden, the library, the cafeteria, the museum – was used between its inauguration in 1969 and the coming into operation of the ACARTE in 1984, showing how throughout these fifteen troubled years a series of changes occurred, possibly affecting the ways in which the space was used. In addition, the park was under construction during some of this period. Thus, while in 1975 to say that the Gulbenkian was «ours» would imply a potential nationalisation, or at least point to a more participatory management of an institution which, as time went by, came to be seen as belonging to everyone rather than as a *scenario of modernity*, perhaps, conversely, in 1979-81, at the time of the environmentalist demonstrations against the construction of the CAM, the Gulbenkian Foundation, as a result of *its use*, was already considered «ours», of those who used it?

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144 *Expresso*, «Que Gulbenkian Temos, Que Gulbenkian Queremos?», *Dossier Gulbenkian*, March 75.

Through the press one can see that the protests against the construction of the CAM are also, but not only, tied to the fact that this was one of the most pleasant parks in the northern part of the city, a nice place «to be in». This should be seen in the light of a «way of being» that, after the 25 of April, people were learning to enjoy freely. If we recall for a moment the unfortunate and absurd episode that took place in 1968, as evoked by Alberto Pimenta, this «being» was now free from any interference from the GNR as defenders of morality and virtue, on an «island» where, given the openness of the space (even if surrounded by walls), such a defence would prove impossible. Assuming this free use of the park was in place, the long works for the construction of the museum would have interrupted these appropriations of the park, which would only returned to public use in 1984, when it reopened, allowing to discern, in terms of the uses of the space, continuities between the inauguration of the ACARTE and what preceded it.<sup>145</sup> Education Through Art played a role in this, allowing us to see the creation of this Department as part of an integrated project of pedagogical experimentation that can be traced back to the late 1950s, with important developments in the following decade and no less significant setbacks in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which to an extent accounts for Madalena Perdigão's return to the Gulbenkian Foundation, after a brief period in the Ministry of Education. In short, from the point of view of the uses of the Gulbenkian complex, and of the emergence of a Gulbenkian defined as «ours», it would be necessary to trace them back to the experiments of the «Long Sixties» which, as we have seen, also lie behind the architecture of the CAM and the ACARTE and the spatiality they propose. One would need to do so by discerning continuities, interruptions and changes – paying special attention to the aforementioned tension between the *scenario of modernity* and *our Gulbenkian*, understanding the limits and potentialities both of its action as a *scenario* (promoting encounters – but between *who*, or with *what*, and according to which

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145 All the more so since, in 1984, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation continued to occupy a prominent place among the parks and gardens of the northern part of the city. It would be worth, however – as previously mentioned – to carry out a study on the forms of appropriation and use of the various spaces of the Gulbenkian complex between 1969 and 1984, taking into account the type of activities that took place there, as well as the type of corporeality involved, which would also relate, among other things, to what type of clothing was worn. The course of time and generational changes should also be taken into consideration, that is to say, it is likely the users of the Gulbenkian garden in the 1970s were not the same (or at least not in the same way or with the same schedules) as those that would use it ten years later. This change in the forms of appropriating the space would entail it both a change in gestures and in those performed them – which resonates with Glicínia Quartín's comments when looking at a group of young actors in rehearsal.

«script»? and the fact that it is defined as *ours* (but who is this «us»? and what does an answer to this question entail?).

In these enquiries one would do well to follow Tony Bennet's suggestion that it is necessary to attend to how people act in these *indoor public spaces*, places where the organised crowd offers itself to be seen and sees itself. These are places, then, where a series of gestures, forms of knowledge and skills can be experimented with, where subjects shape themselves as subjects. This means one needs to pay particular attention to the kinds of activities that take place there – whether they be leisure, educational or cultural consumption activities. In this sense, it would be fruitful to look more closely at the schedule of these activities (the Lunchtime Concerts, for example, in which one could experience the Museum space while enjoying a meal, or the Animated Film Marathon, in the evenings, or even the mini-concerts after the shows during the Encontros ACARTE) but also the kind of gestuality and potentially «unfettered» use of the space sometimes underlined by the press, linking it with phenomena such as the massification of holidays, the opening of large commercial spaces, Lisbon nightlife, the suburban sprawl and the commuting that comes with it, or the appearance of colour television.

In the case of the ACARTE, because it operates through what has been called a *curatorship of lack* (bringing together activities whose *raison d'être* was grounded on notions of culture and education that came from different historical moments, as we have seen), and was inaugurated at a watershed moment (between the end of a cycle that began in the «Long Sixties» and the inauguration of another cycle marked by the country's entry into the EEC), it would be difficult to frame its activity merely as a «scenario of modernity» (though that was also the case: consider, for example, the major European initiatives it hosted); or merely as an instance of the «common» (as it is often portrayed in the press, and as certain controversies around it seem to attest); or even to refer to it simply in terms of «cultural consumption» (which in fact would be massified in Portugal somewhat later, from the 1990s onwards, with the opening of spaces such as the CCB or Culturgest), or as a form of «cultivation» for certain elites (which it undoubtedly was, and is, *also*). Sharing with a number of other institutions of its time the *ethos* of a belief in progress (reflected quite plainly, for example, in Madalena Perdigão's final text); of attention to the new and the «young» as the primary subjects of the present (for whom the majority of the ACARTE's activities was directed); of an openness to risk and experimentation (through a rhetoric that, widely disseminated in the 1980s entrepreneurial world, could be traced back to the institutional critique of the 1960s);

and often operating by commission or buy (i.e. «by project»), the ACARTE certainly takes part in the elaboration and dissemination of this type of conception of fragmented and precarious time, notions that nowadays betray their limitations and problems in a clearer light. But it did so at a time when it was hoped that the state would finally safeguard, in a stable and lasting way, a set of fundamental rights, namely the right to education and culture, while within the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation projects such as the Gulbenkian Ballet, the Gulbenkian Choir and the Gulbenkian Orchestra were already well established. And it is not easy to fit its action into watertight categories, since not only does it accelerate exponentially between its early and final years amid a tension that, schematically, can be said to oscillate between the «Long Sixties» and the entry into the EEC (with the programming between 1984 and 1985 closer to the first, and from 1987 to 1989 more in tune with the second), but it cannot be subsumed under dichotomies such as high/low culture, rural/urban, national/international or classic/innovative. Likewise, one cannot fully grasp it by attending to a simple arrangement by artistic genre, or *star system*; not even by thematic cycles or regular initiatives.

Interdisciplinary and open but perfectly regular, the ACARTE's action in 1989, five years after its inauguration, was guided by a seasonal cadence without neglecting «the intervals»: in other words, showing a degree of openness to what might *still* «be lacking». And the *curatorship of lack* that would define the way Madalena Perdigão operated in the ACARTE would give this space a plasticity that would allow it, at the time – even if not programmatically – to accommodate initiatives that tried to deal with, or at least not overlook, questions of post-coloniality (for example, in the show *Eclipse de Sol*, by the IFICT, which the ACARTE hosted, or the already mentioned «Jornadas de Artes e Letras dos PALOP» [Seminars on Arts and Letters from the PALOP]), while simultaneously joining in the great celebration of «Europe» (at the ACARTE Encounters); continuing a dialogue with Fanfare Bands from all over the country (who went to Lisbon for that explicit purpose); helping to equip children's playrooms and training monitors of artistic expression workshops (through the Children's Art Centre) or supporting Animated Cinema and promoting the emergent New Portuguese Dance. In tuning the ACARTE's activity to this openness, Madalena Perdigão – and perhaps no one else but she could have done it, since, as we have seen, her programme is tied with a series of pedagogical experiments that go back to the «Long Sixties» and to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – turns this space in the 1980s into a meeting place that, rather than being concerned with its own identity, is open to what «is



lacking». It is shaped by this openness and, through it, it shapes a whole era. A place that trained technicians, artists and critics, playing a truly seminal, generative role, essential for any understanding of the Portuguese cultural and artistic scene after the 1974 revolution. Along with the ACARTE, the Modern Art Centre – a fulfilled promise, born out of a desire to have a museum of modern art that was first expressed in the Postwar; housed in an structuralist architectural space characteristic of the 1970s and inaugurated in the 1980s, whose activity was in tune with the efforts to create a «cultural Europe» that defined the 1990s, but can also be perceived as a prefiguration of the curatorial shift towards the discursive, the performative and the relational that would take place in museums and art centres in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Through its focus on the body – by displaying *extreme* bodies, the kind of bodies that had traversed the whole tradition of post-modern American dance and performance art, forged in the «Long Sixties» (such as Jan Fabre, Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, Wim Vandekeybus, La Fura dels Baus); or *classical* bodies, such as those that occupied theatrical works never staged in the country (such as *Hamlet*, the cycle «Retorno à Tragédia» [A Return to Tragedy]); or bodies coming from other cultures, or cosmopolitan ones (such as *Ka-ze-no-Ko*, «World Music» seasons, *Jornadas de Artes e Letras dos PALOP* [Seminars on Arts and Letters from the PALOP]); or simply bodies keen to experiment with aesthetic forms (such as Constança Capdeville/Colecviva, or the improvised music sessions); or *learning* bodies, such as those of the young performers in the Lunchtime Concerts; or «rural» bodies, as in the case of the Fanfare Bands in the Amphitheatre; or even virtually *impossible* bodies, as in the case of Animated Film; or simply bodies with a general predisposition to cultivate themselves and enjoy the proposals in a more or less sensorial way, in a more or less «initiated» way and/or – above all – by displaying and putting all these bodies *together*, in dialogue. The fact that it is traversed by all the tensions and contradictions that have been addressed here is what makes its action both so singular and so explosive. Opening itself to what is lacking is, one should point out, is pointedly different from trying to «keep in step», «catch up» or «close a gap» – in other words, from overcoming a supposed «backwardness». Its action, then, cannot be summed up as a «burst of modernity», since it operates within a plurality and intersection of temporal frameworks. While there is still a *lack* in our knowledge of what ACARTE was and of how it carved the way to what came after – not only through its initiatives and shows but, more widely, in being one of the key sites for a change and liberation of gestures – to trace it allows us, thirty years later, to experience the present as something other than what is *lacking*.

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## Interviews

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Interview with Zepe (José Pedro Cavalheiro), 21 August 2011, Lisbon.

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Files of Pós D'Arte, indly provided by Vera Mantero.

File *Retrato da Memória Enquanto Peso Morto*, Re.al, courtesy of atelier Re.al.

Files on the creation and action of the Conselho Consultivo de Teatro [Theatre Advisory Board] of the ACARTE from 1984 to 1989.

Production files on the letters sent by Madalena Perdigão in 1985, expressing an interest in presenting performance groups in the ACARTE multipurpose room.

### ACARTE Archive

The full list of references on programmes, photographs and press clippings that inform this study, see Ana Bigotte Vieira, *No Aleph para um olhar sobre o Serviço ACARTE da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian entre 1984 e 1989*, PhD thesis submitted to Universidade Nova de Lisboa, May 2016, Lisbon. Accessible at <http://hdl.handle.net/10362/19417> (where it is also possible to access the website of the Timeline Digital ACARTE 1984-1989 [ACARTE Digital Timeline 1984-1989], which can be consulted at the Biblioteca de Arte da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian [Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Art Library]).

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