

Aldoar.

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TFG Jose Gálvez Ruiz

editor's letter

The main purpose of this publication is to show the process of creating an idea, in this specific case, an architectural idea. It does not pretend to be a guide or pedagogical model but the definition of a personal procedure that arises with a certain order and is acquiring form from different factors that finally conform a determined aesthetics. These factors are the body of the articles that make up the magazine, and which try to convey to the reader the origins, on a few clear occasions and on more complex ones, on which the conceptual idea of the project to be defined is based.

Presented gradually, the articles address different theoretical and visual themes with the aim of capturing the essence of the building while progressing in its reading. This synthesis relates all those relevant

influences that for a brief period of time have contributed to generate not only a project of architecture but also an emotional maturity.

Porto will be, apart from the location of the project, the cornerstone on which to build all the arguments that define this idea. Photography, colour and drawing by hand will be both language and tool in discovering new realities in the space of the city, as mental devices that capture an idea or an emotion within the visual narrative. Thus, simultaneously functioning as an art and an element of research, the three allow rediscovering how architecture integrates and gives expressions to various dimensions (social, political, historical, technical, etc) and is responsible for the construction of the reality that surrounds us and to which we belong.

Jose Gálvez Ruiz



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a task

— pool complex —



It's defined as a specific sports complex, with use of swimming pools (indoor and outdoor), gym and spa as main elements.

Located in the neighborhood of Aldoar, an old town next to the ocean annexed to Porto due to the expansion of the city, the place is currently a large green area with about 39,000 m² next to 'Parque da Cidade' (the largest urban park in Portugal, with 830,000 m²) that was conceived from the outset as a new extension of the same, containing also the architecture in charge. The land has different urban plans along its entire perimeter that form new social districts and equipment of little architectural interest. However, there is a direct connection to the village, on a small scale and with vernacular constructions in its entirety, which will be the starting point for the design of this whole new space.

Aldoar is located on a small hill from which the ground descends until arriving at 'Parque da Cidade'. The new building, with an approximate surface of 3000 m², leaves from this hill and descends at the same time as the own land, mimicking

with this one and acting like filter between the town and the new garden. In order to have a more exact reference to the dimension contained in the different functional packages of the whole complex, the spaces that take place in each of them are defined in more detail below:

[01] Indoor pool (2500/3000 m²) includes:

- Atrium.
- Bar.
- Medical post.
- Pools space.
- Bleachers.
- Dressing rooms.
- Administrative office space.

[02] Outdoor pool (400 m²).

[03] Health Club (520 m²) includes:

- Anaerobic and aerobic room.
- Cardiovascular room.
- Dressing rooms.

[04] Spa (260 m²).

Aldoar.

—place & no place—



Aldoar is an old Portuguese parish of the county of Porto, whose origins go back previous to the Romans, probably to the Galician town. On other occasions, this city was halfway between Porto and Bouças, now Matosinhos. It was a very quiet village, a village of farms whose main occupation was land. With the extension of the city the small disappeared as such, passing an officially included in Porto on November 21, 1895. Since then, it has become part of the urban plot of the city, currently mixing the rural part with the urban one. It has had an exponential growth at all levels, showing the progress of the country during the last decade, even having suffered a severe economic crisis. Highlights include

‘The Psychiatric Hospital Magalhães Lemos’ and the ‘Park of the City’, the most beautiful green spaces of Porto, connected with the ocean.

As a result of this growth, new areas have been annexed in the vicinity of what was the picturesque village, seriously transforming the landscape, since it is a new urban implantation, different approaches and plots have taken place that have generated great equipment for one part and social districts on the other. These new additions are far from maintaining a dialogue with each other, in addition to the old village of vernacular constructions. In the center of all of them stands a large green space,

SELF-DESCRIBED AND SELF-DEFINED

which leaves the village to the north, the hospital to the west, social neighborhoods to the east and the 'Parque da Cidade' to the south, being this the area where the project is located, through which it aims to create a continuous green space containing the project program and connect the park with the village, so that the new unfortunate annexations are in the background.

Thus, this location aims to become a new space of relationship, to exist is to relate, with people and with the elements of the immediate environment, with what surrounds us. This pattern defines the concept of place. The notions of space and place are references of great interest to understand the essence of architecture, since they grant a unique and differentiated character.

However, these two concepts can be clearly differentiated. The former has a real, theoretical, generic and indefinite condition, and the latter has a concrete, empirical, existential, articulated and definite character. Modern space is based on measures, positions and relationships. It is quantitative, unfolds through three-dimensional geometry, is a mental construction. It tends to be infinite and unlimited. The place instead is defined by nouns, by the

qualities of things and elements, by historical and symbolic values, it is environmental and is phenomenologically related to the human body.

All these definitions produce resonances with respect to the phenomenological concepts of Heidegger, who establishes the idea that architecture by essence is based on the idea of 'place'. The spaces where life develops must be places, and have to adapt to the different personalities of the communities that inhabit them. Architecture for people.

Marc Augé coined the concept of 'no place' to refer to those places of transience whose notoriety is insufficient to be properly considered 'places'. Anthropological sites are historical or vital, as well as those other spaces in which we relate. A 'no place' is the opposite, it is a space of transition, impersonal, occasional, casual. It does not generate significant contributions to identity because it is not easy to internalize its aspects or components and in them the relationship or communication is more artificial. It is these 'non-places' that have been created together with Aldoar. Through this intervention is intended to connect the village with the only human part, getting the dialogue between two vital spaces: the town and the park.

Karavaichuk.

— aesthetic experience —

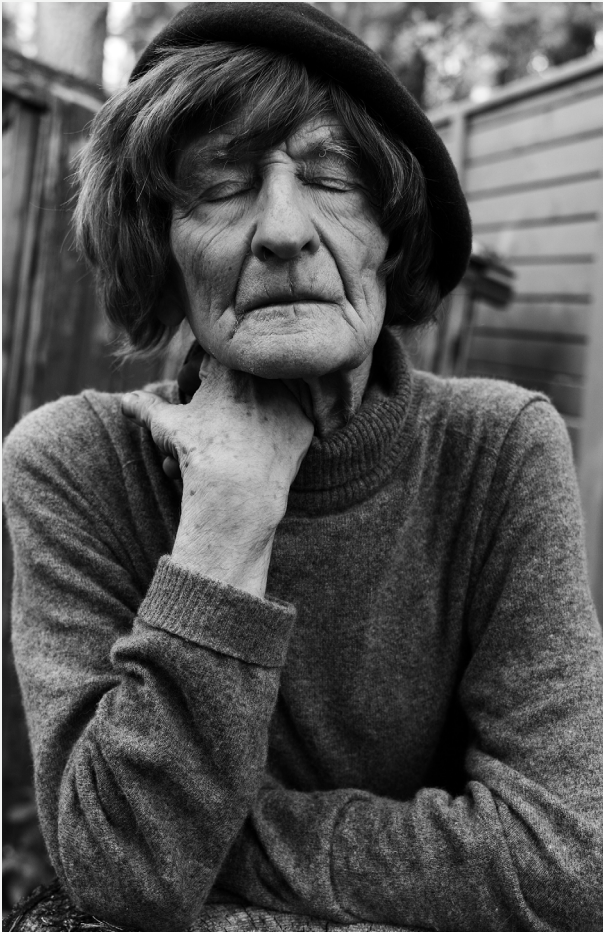


Inside the Hermitage, Russian pianist and composer Oleg Nikolayevich Karavaichuk tells us about what it is like to be restored to the hands of art, after crossing the snow walls that surround the museum where he has been taking refuge for decades. For 30 years, under Soviet rule, he was banned from playing in public, after introducing Stalin to the piano as a child prodigy. Oleg's life follows the history of Russia, politics, society, the arts. For this peculiar man, genius is something inseparable from the fabric of the shirt that is worn. It shows us with equal emotion its favorite tree, now dead, or the street in which Tarkovski, Akhmátova and Shostakovich lived. If he were alive, he would be 90 years old this 2017. Andrés Duque's film preserves a lost world in which Oleg, with closed eyes and delicate movements of the hands, makes us enter.

It's difficult to forget the sensitivity that impregnates the composer and slides next to him, almost like an aura that stages from a first contact that we are faced with an unusual, extremely interesting character. From his androgynous appearance he exposes issues of transcendental importance within the intellectual world, fruit of his musical gift

and experience, probably transforming him into a unique individual. These visions have been woven within his privileged brain an inner cosmos that the musician does not intend to abandon in favor of experiencing a real world where there are no real artists, since those who have the potential to become so are allowed to be deceived and corrupted by the money, blind and immature to come to realize that their own ingenuity, their own art is the only possibility they have of, like Oleg himself, to be able to forge his own reality, to ultimately allow them to survive on a planet where more is advocated for the pragmatic than for the intangible. The evolution of the experience and the ingenuity grant the artist an incomparable compensation in front of all material aspect.

Living through your gift, your sensitivity, your aesthetic experience about everything that surrounds you is what really generates your way of appreciating life. This question is, however, only within the reach of a privileged few. The field on which you stand out is only a catalyst to enjoy your own ingenuity, and it is the high command of it that leads to investigate beyond the academy and begin



Oleg. Photo by Timofey Kolesnikov (2009).

to question their methods when you reach an intellectual domain that oppresses within the theoretical postulates defined so far. Karavaichuk's hands play a music far from the conventional, are his feelings, a divine gift that leads him to the interpretation of basic concepts (anger, serenity, beauty, tragedy, etc. like the great philosophers and thinkers), inside his aesthetic experience that is ultimately his way of life. Experimenting with his work plunges you directly into the depths of his speech, making you a participant in it.

It also deals with aspects that contribute to the destruction of the sensibility, since the easy access to information in the present time allows you to discover realities in advance of reaching the necessary maturity that allows you to interpret them and appreciate them in all their aesthetic splendor and that contribute to generate your own inner world. It exposes as an example pornography, how it destroys your sensuality, suppresses the essence, the discovery of the first great harmonic experience of the human being, from which it is believed began to form aesthetic thought, with erotic, with feeling indescribable with another human being who

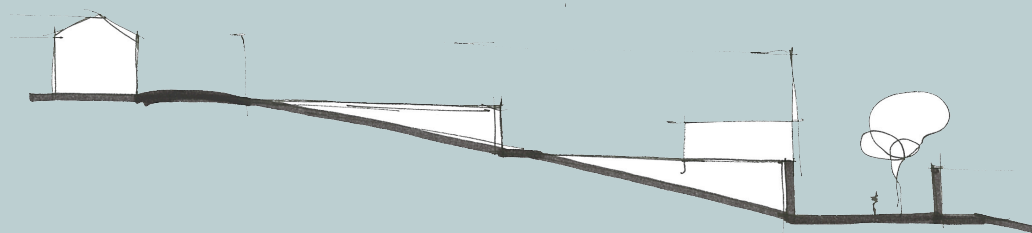
changes the perspective of the environment until the known moment. This fact supposes a setback in the creation of the personal cosmos and contributes to destroy any new experience that could appear.

Going beyond the appreciation of the world, it separates absolutely any frivolity (fame, wealth, etc.) focusing only on that which implies an aesthetic experience, from his favorite tree, to the exceptional piano of Tsar Nicholas II in The Hermitage, which is only allowed to play exclusively to him on Monday mornings. It has been years without any concert in public, not even by request of the Queen of England, because it is so disillusioned with the humanity that it does not think able to any public to get to really interpret what it wants to transmit. Reminiscence to Plato's famous 'Allegory of the Cavern', it seems that Oleg has the ability to break free of the chains and approach the intelligible world, a deeper and more complete reality, cause and foundation of the first that is composed only of sensitive appearances. As in the allegory, the pianist wishes to free the rest of his peers in the cavern and show them the new reality of which he has just been conscious, although his disappointment does

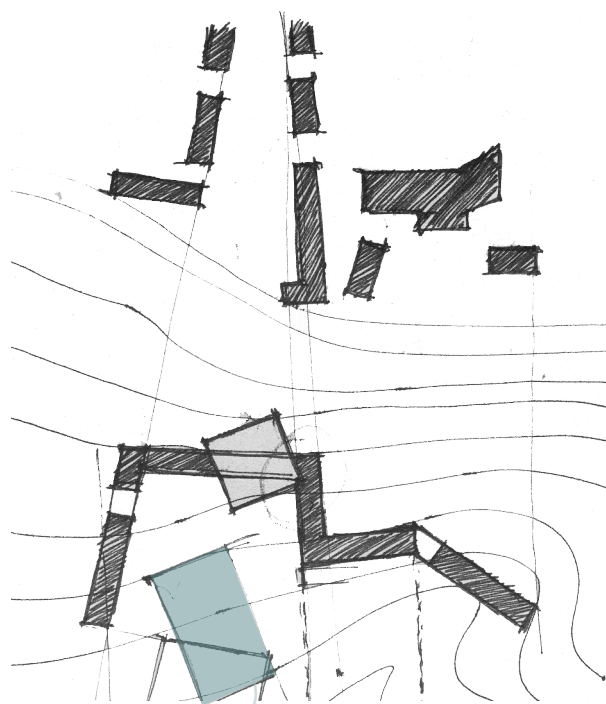
not take time to appear when he observes the disinterest and fear generated by the knowledge of a truth that can alter all present logic so far. While he sleeps he seems immersed in this debate. When interpreting, his face shows great alterations that go from absolute serenity to the most radical tension. He dreams of his ghosts, with characters like Stalin or Catherine the Great, who according to him have contributed to the decadence of the world. They are the only ones who seem to return Karavaichuk to the interior of the cave, staying in it momentarily to return, always next to his music, within his own self.

A idea

environment



‘A thin line of water is introduced sinuous inside the stone wall giving place inside an underground source on which is a beautiful garden. It is in this garden that extraordinary things really happen.’



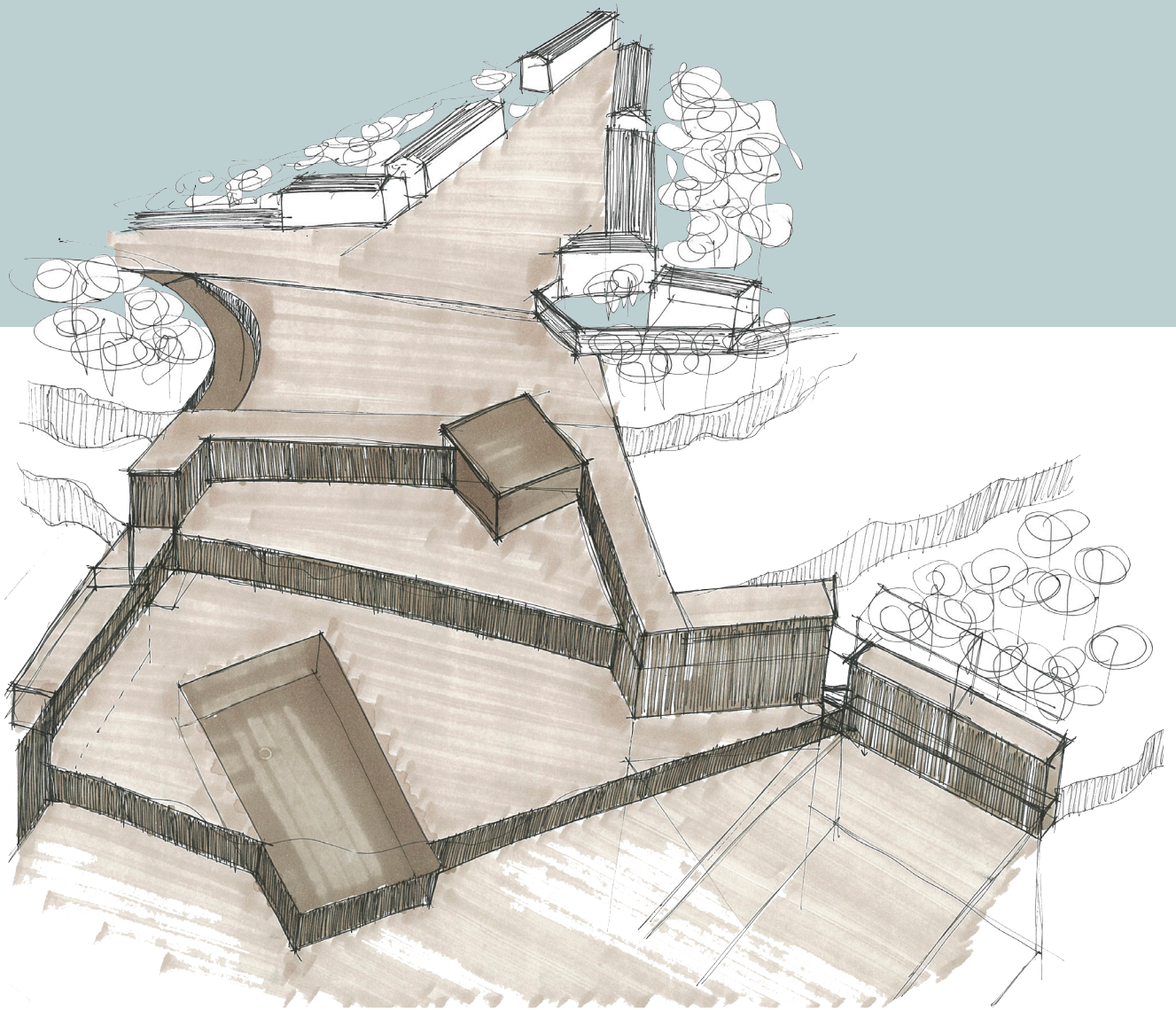
The common place of the landscape, in its dimension strongly linked to the experience and the perception of places and especially in the decline of the cultural landscape, seems to foment a fruitful encounter of multidisciplinary interests, converging towards the objectives of the project based on the attention to the material culture and the process, in which spatial categories are joined by temporal ones. The concept of the landscape as palimpsest, continually subject to erasures and new writings, allows the project to be seen with a productive and transformative vision, outside canonical patterns and a cage of objectivity, but on the contrary, involved with the dimension of experience and of individual and collective feeling.

Instead of simply continuing to promote a western architecture driven by scientific instrumentality, under the guise of ideological, aesthetic, or technologically open products, the possible questions of reconciliation between the standpoints of phenomenology must be explored, within the recognition of an incarnate body and conscious, with a meditation on architecture as a linguistic artifact, culturally specific. Living and creating architecture places

the human being as a point of origin, his five senses in four dimensions, the person who travels through space in time. To dwell is to understand the fullness of our existence, to dwell is to perceive the scale, the proportion, the light, the sounds, the colors, to exist after all. The architectural experience thus becomes an act of deep sensitized awareness.

One of the characteristics that most helps to strengthen the emotions that are wanted to transmit to the people who experience these architectures is the environment where it happens, as long as both are in harmony, either emphasizing the work on the place or merging with it. The environments that we intend to transmit these sensations are obtained, apart from the shape of the project, with the palette of materials chosen in each case, light being understood as the most important of them all.

All these questions open the way to expose the concatenation of references that make it possible for this project to emerge within a sensitive context, in which it starts from an abstract idea that is taking shape when the aspects defined in the poetics that lead this article. This idea is part of the

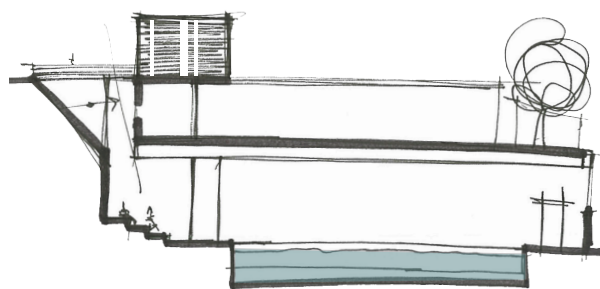


continuation of a village that only has one street (Rua de Vila Nova), once studied the environment where the sports complex will be located. The objective is to extend this street by adapting the new architecture to the terrain in descending slope that leaves from the existing village towards the plot object of the project, understood like an expansion of the City Park (*Parque da Cidade*) the most interesting landmark within the zone. In this way the project aims to be an element of transition, a filter, between the farming people and the new garden that would form part of this immense existing green mass.

Thus, the new building is understood as an amalgam between the vernacular constructions of the village and the garden. This is achieved by forming terraced levels, from the village level to the center of the new green space, within which the different functional spaces of a complex of these characteristics take place, in order to allow a sequence between them new materials and vegetation, progressively connecting the constructed elements with the organic ones. A new square next to the old village serves as a link between it and the new garden, which is accessed through the platforms

that form the building, adapted to the terrain, where progressively the vegetal elements are acquiring notoriety.

From the 'Parque da Cidade' there is a fine line of water that crosses the whole plot and disappears inside the earth. It is at this point that the stone wall of the project is raised, which contains the ground creating the new levels, and under which the water is filtered metaphorically into the cavernous space, illuminated in a zenith, the new indoor pool, with a poetic expression.







The building is conceived as the extension of the village of Aldoar, continuing the plot of its unique street creating a border that serves as a filter between the town and the park. Integrating the complex into the terrain the journey through the green space starts from the decks to the lake.

The project is resolved in different natural levels of the ground, adapting to it and dialoguing with it, from the building itself to the fountains, squares and paths of the park.



level -16,70/-13,46

- 01 cobert pool
- 02 warehouse/facilities
- 03 coach room
- 04 parking -01
- 05 parking 00
- 06 facilities room outdoor pool
- 07 outdoor pool vase
- 08 spa
- 09 male changing rooms
- 10 roof indoor pool/green space



level -13,46



level -10,22



level -6.98

- 11 gym/fitness
- 12 first aid room
- 13 female changing rooms
- 14 outdoor pool
- 15 sports shop
- 16 hall/acces
- 17 bar/cafeateria
- 18 cafeateria square
- 19 offices
- 20 viewpoint 01
- 21 square's acces to the complex
- 22 square's principal acces
- 23 principal square
- 24 viewpoint 02



level -3,74



level -0,50



lights

—inside & outside—

‘In a building I like the light, but I also like the gloom and even the darkness. They are related and complementary things, because in a country of the south like Portugal this idea of the depth and the variation of the light is very important. I always think of structures like the Alhambra in Granada, where the garden is flooded with sunlight, but then we enter another space and cross a courtyard with arcades, which provide shade and protection. We move from a loggia, where the light is already less intense, to more than one room, full of only penumbra, and so we move towards total serenity. Architecture can never lose sight of these dimensions and must use them.’

Álvaro Siza,
Richard Copans e Stan Neumann, L'École de Siza, 1990.

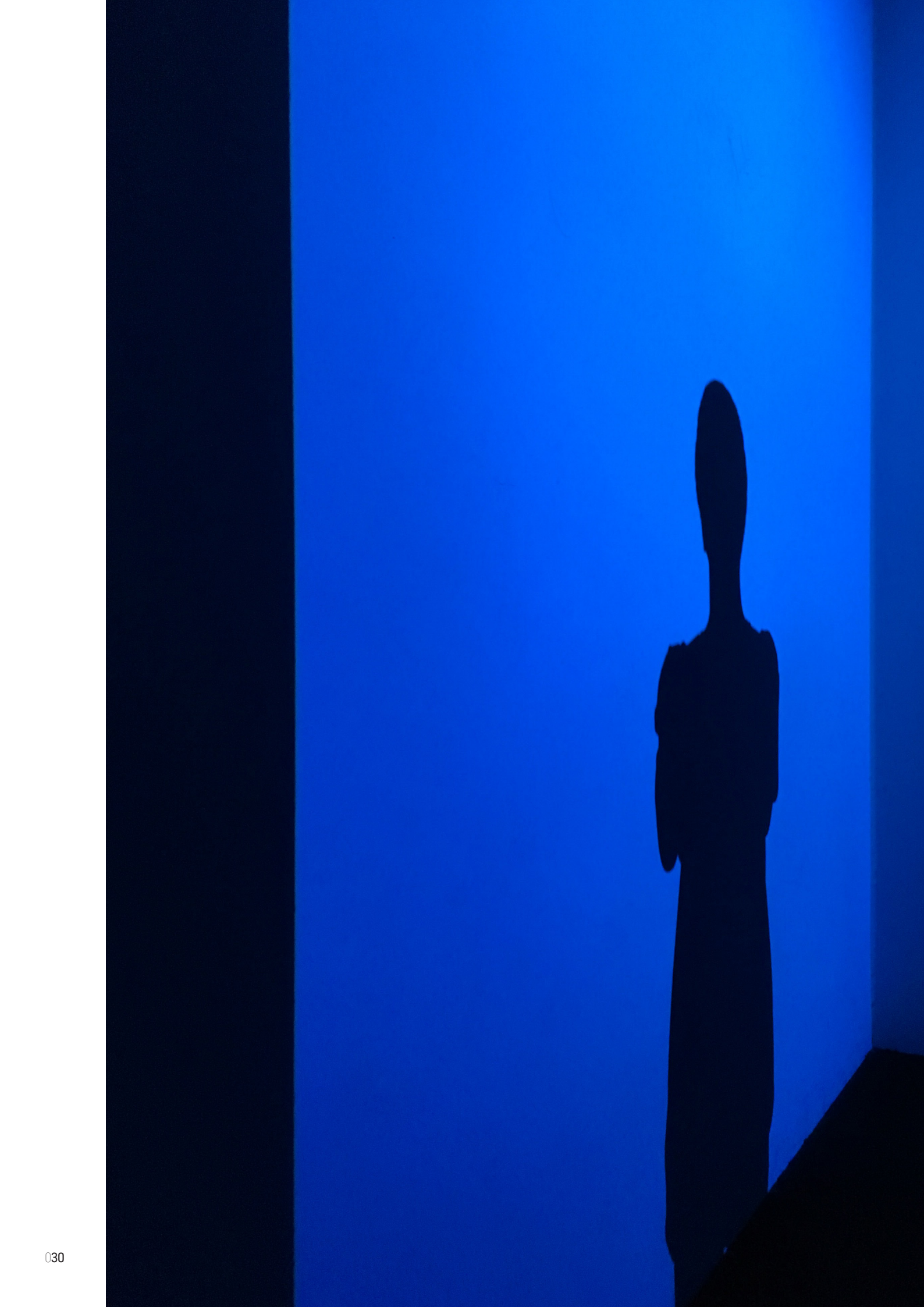


When, at last, an architect discovers that light is the central theme of architecture, then, he begins to understand something, he begins to be a true architect. Light is not something vague, diffuse, which is taken for granted because it is always present. Not in vain does the sun go out for everyone, every day. Yes it is the light, with or without corpuscular theory, something concrete, precise, continuous, material. Measurable and quantifiable matter where they exist, as physicists very well know and seem to ignore the architects. Light, like gravity, is inevitable. fortunately inevitable, since in short, architecture marches throughout history thanks to these two primordial realities: light and gravity. Architects should always carry with them the compass, direction and inclination of light, and the photometer, amount of light, as always carry the meter, level or plumb.

And if the struggle to overcome, to convince gravity, is still a dialogue with her from which arises architecture, the search for light, its dialogue with it, is what puts that dialogue at its most sublime levels. It is then discovered, precise consciousness, that light is the only one that is truly capable of

overcoming, of convincing gravity. And so, when the architect puts the appropriate 'traps' into the sun, into the light, this, piercing the space formed by structures that, more or less weighty, need to be linked to the ground to transmit the primitive force of gravity, breaks the spell and floats, levitate, fly to that space. Saint Sophia in Istanbul, the Pantheon in Rome or the Ronchamp Chapel in France, are tangible evidence of this portentous reality, but not only the great works, this phenomenon appears more daily than we imagine, you just have to know how to look. Porto is an enlightening and inspiring example of this theory.

Could we now consider that the key lies in the deep understanding of light as matter, as matter, as modern material? Could we not understand that the moment has arrived within the history of architecture, a tremendous and exciting moment, when we must face the light ?. Let there be light! And the light was made. The first material created, the most eternal, universal of materials, thus becomes the central material with which to build, create space. The space in its most modern understanding. The

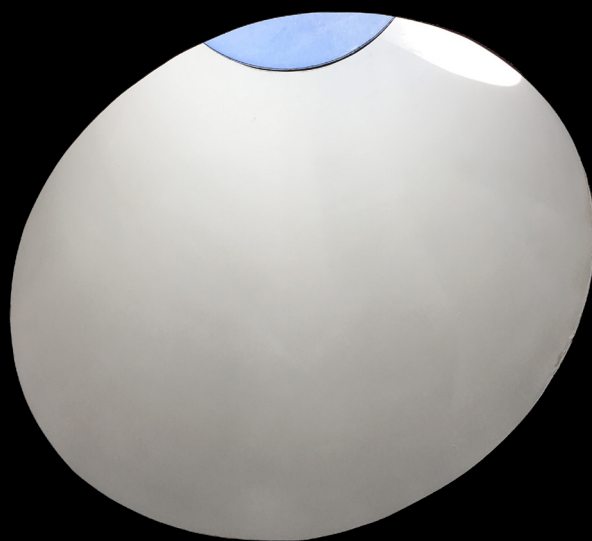


'Light is the most luxurious material there is,
but as it's free, we don't value it'

Alberto Campo Baeza,
Jot Down, 2009.







architect thus returns, to recognize himself once again as creator, as the ruler of the world of light.

In short, light is transformed into the *raison d'être* of architecture. The history of architecture has always taken place with the search, understanding and control of light. In the Romanesque there was a dialogue between the shadow of the wall, the penumbra, and the solid light that penetrates through the weak slits open in them like a knife. The Gothic is the exaltation of the light that ignites and colors the incredible spaces in ascending flame. The Baroque can not be understood as anything other than an alchemy of light in which the diffused lights are mixed to give way to a ray of light that is capable of producing in its spaces the vibration and exaltation pursued in this style. With the Modern Movement, once the walls are lowered, there is a flood of light that we still try to learn to control properly, to dominate once and for all.

Deepening and reflection on light and its infinite nuances must be the central axis of the architecture that is to come. If Paxton's insights and Soane's

successes were a prelude to Le Corbusier's discoveries and Tadao Ando's investigations, there is still a long and rich road ahead. Light is the theme.

When we talk about Porto, we are inevitably linking gravity with light. With the light that pervades ruin. The ruins, with the accumulation of time of abandonment, are no longer recoverable and become 'no places without memory'. For many, these non-places become meaningless and unnecessary, which legitimates the destructive act as inevitable condemnation. Some of the images published in this article may be the last references of the spaces portrayed. They become a deformed mass, obsolete inhospitable, even aggressive at times, which leads to the loss of the value that justified their existence. It's an infallible method to decree his death.



decline

— dust & ash —

Like all things in life, architectural constructions also wither away, and unless conditions of restoration, political will, and precautionary measures of preservation exist, tend to disappear. According to Françoise Chay, ‘ruin has an inalienable right to its own uselessness’, as it is granted when the former ‘utilitas’ begins to transform until disappearing, ‘firmitas’ is increasingly questionable with the passage of time and ‘venustas’ evolves to show a facet to the unknown moment, equal or more beautiful than the previous one, which makes perceptible the great ephemerality to which it is subject.

If we understand the building and the city as a living being that, like people, are subject to inexorable laws of ruin and physical devastation, we come to the conclusion that they do not cease to have an aesthetic dimension that demands a preservation effort as an end to a possible recovery. It is always necessary to document, on a case-by-case basis, the physical stocks of the built heritage and deal with the memory and aesthetic wealth found in it.

Portugal has long been a sadly enlightening example of this uncontrolled anti-patrimony. The abandonment of part of the architectonic memory,

once significant, is simply left in a state of silent agony, in the name of an abstract idea of progress. The effect of the iconoclast and a series of disastrous restorations are the main causes that have generated this situation, not forgetting that the unconsciousness of the rulers, who with the lack of legal documentation of preservation and the unscrupulous speculative ambition, have contributed to the loss of memory and sensitivity of the new generations.

They are silent ruins but also full of voices that inhabit them, crumbs from times past that still whisper stories, raise questions and invite us to know more. They are portraits that tremble, some beautiful, surviving covered with debris and moss, buildings swept by the wind and stained by neglect, awaiting death. It’s not questioned what these works were, what life they had, what artists worked them, what people kept under the embrace of those walls, what dramas, glories and miseries enclose those devastated spaces.

Actually, they mix with the turmoil of turbulent clouds and a dense chiaroscuro of ashes testifying to the rapid obsolescence of a life that is suburban



and poor but also worthy, certainly better than that which happens in the terrible surroundings of Porto and Lisbon.

The collections of Portuguese architecture that are important to preserve are those that are most valuable for their intrinsic qualities, for their integration into the fabrics of the urban or rural landscape, and for the historical memory they inevitably contain. That is why fragmented cases, threatened with stoning, already devoid of visible utility and doomed to disappear, are in themselves interesting case studies, classified within the History of National Art, in which at least the memories that disappear can become part of its referential body. What was published in the 'Charter of Venice', in the theories of authors like Camilo Boito or Cesare Brandi, in defense of patrimonial values was absent in the official Portuguese practice, in which the monuments were not considered great creations, although over time they acquired a cultural meaning.

These fragmented memories of a past about to disappear without remission, allow to follow a kind of subterranean narrative of a country condemned

by the abandonment of memory. Despite the extraordinary richness of heritage, it seems that society turns its back on more mundane matters, propitiated within the paradox of the 'Information Age'. Before the scandalous abandonment of places with historical memory are silent accomplices of speculative acts, such as the recovery in post of aggressive tourism in boom, brutal crimes.

Now, the study of architecture should cohabit as a rule with the analysis of the additions suffered during the course of its existence, because all of them create the 'aura' that defines the work, not to be altered by restorations or functional additions that, as such, let to a demoralization by the lack of registration and to the deidiology. When construction is disintegrated into new spaces and contexts, threatened by the growth and dehumanization of the inhabited territory, it tends to lose the balance of space with the first sense and the dimension that once presided over a true 'spirit of the place'. The fundamental characteristics of 'authenticity' can not be diluted inexorably. With this fragility, the work enters a state of ruin and silence, creating an 'aura' that surrounds the city of Porto.





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